Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation proposal

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Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sustainable use of plant protection products and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

What is changing and why?

The European Commission has withdrawn a proposal for a Regulation that included the goal of reducing the use of pesticides in the EU by 50% by 2030. EU farmers have protested about the proposal, which had already been rejected by the European Parliament. The Commission therefore decided to withdraw the proposal and launch a new "Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture" involving all stakeholders in order to find greater agreement on agricultural policy.

The main points of the Commission's original proposal were:

- Target: to halve the amount of pesticides used in the EU by 2030, compared to the average amount used between 2015 and 2017. This would have included reducing the overall use of pesticides, as well as reducing use of the most hazardous pesticides.
- Measurement: better methods to measure how much pesticide is being used in the EU. Each pesticide would also be given a score according to how potentially hazardous it is.
- Integrated pest management (IPM): EU countries would have been required to identify non-chemical methods of pest management, as well as low-risk plant protection products. Professional pesticide users would have to demonstrate that all other options had been considered before using chemical pesticides.

Some of the originally proposed strategies to achieve pesticide reduction in the EU included:

- not allowing the use of pesticides in sensitive areas such as parks and zones with important ecosystems
- limiting the spraying of pesticides from airplanes
- setting strict rules for professionals who use pesticides
- making sure that pesticides are disposed of safely
- running campaigns to make people more aware of the issues.

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Actions

The proposed Regulation addressed the use of pesticides by European producers, and so would have only affected non-EU countries indirectly.

Timeline

The Strategic Dialogue will hold a series of meetings before the end of June 2024. It aims to present recommendations to EU policymakers by the end of August 2024. This may lead to a new proposal on the sustainable use of pesticides, but there is currently no timeline for this process.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

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