

CDG ARABLE CROPS – SUGAR & HOPS SECTORS**DG SANTE – WRITTEN CONTRIBUTION**

Information made by the Commission on establishment and new developments from the minor uses coordination facility

On 1st September Mr Jeroen Meeussen started work as coordinator for the new EU Minor Uses Coordination Facility. Minor uses of pesticides are uses on niche crops with a high economic value for farmers, but usually of low economic interest for the agro-pesticide industry. The mission of the Facility is 'to enable farmers in the EU to produce high quality crops by filling minor uses gaps through efficient collaboration to improve availability of chemical and non-chemical tools within an integrated pest management (IPM) framework'.

Jointly funded, initially, by the EU and the governments of France, Germany and the Netherlands, the Facility is hosted by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) in Paris. Its work will be overseen by a Steering Group representing all of the funders.

The EU has committed to provide 50% of the costs of this Facility for the first three years. The work of the Facility will benefit growers in all Member States, and one of its tasks will be to develop a sustainable funding model for continuing the work in the longer term. All Member States and stakeholders will need to play a role in securing its future.

The main task of the Coordination Facility will be to address gaps in pest and disease control measures available for so called 'minor crops' and for minor pests on other crops for farmers as well as for gardeners. It is emphasized that the Facility will coordinate and support minor use work among all Member States. Furthermore it is envisaged that the cooperation between the Coordination Facility and the ERANET on Integrated Pest Management (IPM ERANET) will result in more tools – chemical as well as non-chemical – becoming available for farmers in the field of pest and disease control.

Regarding 'visibility' and 'communication' early November 2015 the minor uses website has been launched (www.minoruses.eu). The Coordination Facility will continue to update the website.

The further work on the transfer and enhancement of European Minor Use Database EUMUDA will be one of the key issues within the next months. It is envisaged that EUMUDA will be used as a tool to manage all minor uses projects (standardised format, clear overview of ongoing projects).

The Coordination Facility has developed a first version of a EUMUDA-Extranet which will provide for team folders for the different expert groups with agendas, and documents for meetings, as well as discussion groups. This will be further developed within the next months, and should be operational before the next meetings of the expert groups (25-27 April 2016).

The Coordination Facility will continue to prepare and update the list of minor use contact points (within Member States, crop protection companies and growers associations).

On 16 November 2015 a meeting with the chairs of the Commodity Expert Groups (CEGs) was organised followed on 17 November 2015 by a meeting of the Horizontal Expert Group. For both Expert Groups draft Terms of Reference have been prepared (expected to be finalised by end January 2016). In addition a policy on reimbursement of expenses has been prepared.

The Coordination Facility will also start working on the format for a draft Registration Report (dRR) for minor uses alongside a Guidance Document for applicants (industry as well as growers associations) on registration issues for minor uses. Such a Guidance Document should be a compact overview on all registration issues and focus on existing differences between Member States in interpretation of data requirements, data protection, data ownership, zonal procedure, mutual recognition.

The Coordination Facility attended the annual meeting of the C-IPM ERANET and will be closely involved in the developments as regards the minor uses projects –looking at non-chemical solutions- which are part of the first and second call.

The Coordination Facility attended several meetings with stakeholders (e.g. Agri-food round-table on plant protection in which 14 growers- and producers associations are represented).

The Coordination Facility has started the procedure to recruit an IT officer. The job description has been prepared and is uploaded on several websites (EPPO, MUCF, COM). Deadline for application was 1 February 2016.

The meeting of the Minor Uses Steering Group took place on 9 December 2015. A main point of discussion was the first Interim Narrative Report of the Coordination Facility (covering the period 15 April 2015 – 15 November 2015) which according to the grant agreement has to be submitted to COM by 11 December 2015. This report provides an overview of the activities of the Coordination Facility and an indication about the level of achievement of the objectives as laid down in the proposal.

The address of the European Union Minor Uses Coordination Facility is: 21 boulevard Richard Lenoir, 75011 Paris, France. Jeroen Meeussen can be contacted via e-mail jeroen.meeussen@minoruses.eu or by phone +33(0)1 84 79 07 55 (direct line)/+33(0)7 60 82 22 36 (mobile).