



Redefining Pest Management - a Holistic Approach

Practice Abstract N° 3

Survey on user requirements for OPTIMA IPM system: results obtained in Spain

Spanish farmers from the pilot zone (Épila, Zaragoza), were consulted in the OPTIMA project framework, in order to catalogue their working conditions in apple fields. The objective was also to record their expectations with the IMP OPTIMA system and therefore serve as a realistic guide for future work in the project. Concerning plant protection strategy, the major part of the farmers declared to follow voluntary or mandatory protocols of IPM. Spanish producers, also declared to mix two or more synthetic PPP for the same application, but concerning the use of bio-PPP, it was observed that the farmers generally do not mix them together with other products. It has to be noticed that no specific bio-PPP are commonly used for treatments in the examined pilot area, at exception of the copper and sulphur based products, that are considered as “bio-PPP”, and they are very reticent to use this kind of formulates. Regarding spraying equipment, the majority of farmers are using a conventional axial fan sprayer, with or without deflectors. The majority of the interviewed farmers and field technicians has considered the development of disease early detection instruments and refined disease prediction models as the most promising activity within OPTIMA project. Concerning the spray adjustment, and determination of most adequate volume rate, most of farmers indicated that they do not consider the canopy structure to determine the volume rate. The only changes they use to arrange is the working pressure and, eventually, forward speed. They were a little bit sceptic to reduce the amount of liquid/pesticide.



THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT N. 773718

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