



*Redefining Pest Management - a Holistic Approach*

## Practice Abstract N° 13

### Focus Group and end user assessment of OPTIMA IPM strategy in vineyards (Italy)

During OPTIMA, regular meetings with selected vineyard growers and advisers, a Focus Group (FG), were held in order to agree on the project developments, so to achieve tangible results applicable in the field on a broad scale. This regarding: 1) timing of application using the OPTIMA Decision Support System (DSS); 2) management of application using OPTIMA Early Detection System (EDS); 3) selection of crop protection strategy and PPP/bio-PPP; 4) use and set up of smart sprayers. Three sessions of FG meetings were held from January 2020 to July 2021 and a questionnaire was submitted to further end users and advisers who took part in field demonstrations at the OPTIMA experimental vineyard plots. The feedback received, both from FG and end users, indicated that OPTIMA DSS was considered useful and well structured, even if still to be improved especially concerning the prediction downy disease model and concerning the spatial resolution. EDS was generally considered promising, but still not mature to be used in current field activities as it requires too much time for scouting. The introduction of alternative PPPs and bio-PPP with respect to those typically applied was welcome as it would provide an added value to the grapes product, nevertheless there were still some doubts about their efficacy in comparison to conventional products. Finally, the OPTIMA smart sprayer for vineyards was very much appreciated, especially the electric fan able to modulate the air flow in function of the canopy density and the spray variable rate were rated as the main improvements enabling to reduce PPP consumption and spray drift. Growers however underlined the need to keep the final cost of such sprayers contained, in order to get an economical benefit from the achieved savings in PPPs and fuel.



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