



Redefining Pest Management - a Holistic Approach

Practice Abstract N° 15

Focus Group and end user assessment of OPTIMA IPM strategy in open field carrots (France)

During OPTIMA, regular meetings with selected carrot 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 April 2020 to November 2021 and a questionnaire was submitted to further end users and advisers who took part in field demonstrations at the OPTIMA experimental carrot fields. The feedback received, both from FG and end users, indicated that OPTIMA DSS was appreciated but needed to include references to the crop stage and the irrigation scheme, EDS was judged very promising and raised the interest of growers, provided it could be managed automatically while operating in the field. The introduction of alternative PPPs and bio-PPP was welcome and especially bio-PPP were considered interesting, as already some of them are coming into practice. Finally, the OPTIMA smart sprayer for carrots was very appreciated, especially regarding the achieved benefits in reducing spray drift and losses, with the possibility to customize the nozzle spacing on the boom in function of the crop bed swaths.



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