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COLDIRETTI



**Tools to support tobacco growing in the ecological
transition process towards sustainability**

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The cooperation between Coldiretti ed ONT

Tobacco growers can rest assured that Coldiretti monitors this sector closely.

The very close collaboration with ONT is a concrete demonstration.

The development of entire regions and the income of many businesses depend on tobacco growing.



How Coldiretti has supported and is supporting the tobacco sector in the ecological transition process: the specific case of plant protection

In these years Coldiretti has supported tobacco farmings and is supporting them in the ecological transition process required by the CAP with different tools. One of this is the IPM (integrated Pest management) because is one of the most important and difficult problem that farmers who produce tobacco have in this moment.

HOW?

- looking for new active substances of chemical and natural origin alternative to those are cut off by EU and products different from plant protection products (PPP) as biostimulants that have low impact for environment and human health
- Spreading sustainable new agronomic technics
- cooperating and involving the different actors interested to the development of tobacco supply chain

The model of cooperation

1. **COLDIRETTI**
2. **ONT**
3. **Philip Morris**
4. **CAI /Consorti Agrari d'Italia** that does research through experimental centres and sharing to farmers the results of research carrying out experimental field tests with plant protection products not yet on the market, biofertilizers, defense-inducing biostimulants, and biocontrol agents and other products to strengthen crops in order to know in advance the characteristics of the formulations to be used and identify the best defense strategies to adopt in the area.
5. **Public centres of research as CREA (Council for Agricultural Research and Economics)**
6. **Private centres of research as those of Research and Development of companies that produce plant protection products. For example a project of ONT and Coldiretti with Novamont has had as output the registration of a new herbicide for tobacco: pelargonic acid**

How works this team?

ONT reports to Coldiretti which parasite or tobacco disease is necessary for producers who ask for an active substance /agronomic technique to solve the pest OR

communicates if Philip Morris asks to substitute an active substance provided in the production specification of the agreement in the trade with an other one alternative that has more sustainability characteristics for marketing reasons.

Coldiretti contacts:

the various companies to check if there is an active substance already registered for other crops that can have from the Minister oh Health the authorization or asking an emergency use or beginning an experimentation with reasearch centres mentioned above to identify a new low impact active substance for human health and environment

Active substances requested by Coldiretti/ONT from 2009 to today for emergency use

Mandipropamide, Clorantraniliprole, Pelargonic acid (then registered)
Emamectina benzoato, 1,3d dicloropropene, Fluopyram, Indoxacarb,
Rimsulfuron, Dimetomorf, Etofenprox, Oxatiapripolin, Spinosad,
Halosulfuron-methyl, Cyantraniliprole

BUT:

IPM cannot be based on emergency uses (art. 53 reg. 1107/2009). Goal: to resort to emergency use to obtain final authorization for formulations. It is only a transitional tool. The repeated use of 1,3d (dichloropropene) is an exception. The latest authorization decree of Ministry has now introduced significant restrictions on the labeling, including a reduction in the dose and, initially, the requirement for mulching, even on tobacco. Thanks to Coldiretti and the scientific support of CREA, we have demonstrated to the Ministry that mulch film is incompatible with tobacco cultivation and therefore was not considered mandatory on the label.

Position of Coldiretti and ONT about the crops protection

- Emergency uses (art. 53 reg. 1107/2009): required only for new active substances that are required for tobacco and are to be placed on the market for the first time and have a dossier submitted to the EU Commission for final authorization.
- Emergency use (art. 53 reg. 1107/2009) of an active substance already authorized for other crops. The company that produce the PPP must have the scientific data to demonstrate to the Ministry its efficacy on tobacco, otherwise the application will be rejected.
- Minor uses (art.51 reg.1107/2009): extension of authorizations for minor uses use. Tobacco will be considered with a new decree as a minor crop (now is a main crop according to DM 16 settembre 1999). In this way you can benefit from this rule which allows for the granting of a definitive authorisation of the active substance. This is the tool that Coldiretti is trying to use for having definitive authorisations of PPP with minor crops.
- Active substances withdrawn by the EU: they are generally not required by Coldiretti and ONT (just in very exceptional cases) because they do not meet the environmental safety and human health criteria established by the EU. These formulations are very rarely authorized by the Ministry of Health. The companies that produced them almost always no longer support them for emergency uses. The specific and controversial case of 1,3D (dicloropropene)

How to use plant protection products based on new active substances

The new plant protection products are effective only if used in conjunction with other plant protection products composed of active substances of natural or chemical origin, as well as with the use of different products such as biostimulants.

The products authorized under Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2009 all have a low impact on the environment and human health. They have lower doses and more restrictive application methods (e.g., wider buffer zones). Therefore, they are effective but must be used as indicated on the label, as part of an integrated pest management plan developed by an agronomist based on the specific problems of the individual farm.

Important suggestions

Anyway, the most important step before to use plant protection products is the soil management, through good agricultural practices that increase the organic matter indicated in the guidelines and regional specifications of the National Quality System for Integrated Production

The second step is monitoring: collected data (such as the presence of pests, weather stations, and crop phenological stage) allow for precise timing and application of pesticide treatments, optimizing them to be more effective and less harmful to the environment.

Monitoring is essential for implementing integrated pest management plans, which include targeted interventions and the reduced use of chemicals, based on a thorough understanding of the field situation.

Conclusions

The ecological transition process currently required by the EU is long and complex for farms, including tobacco producers.

Farmers must be supported by technical and agronomic assistance services. It is necessary to invest big resources in training of technicians and farmer to manage well the new PPP for applying IPM. The new PPP have a different system of application compared with the previous ones.

Coldiretti and ONT are strongly committed to strengthening the network of assistance and training services for farms producing tobacco to help them successfully face the challenge of the ecological transition posed by the CAP, developing and promoting precision agriculture tools and increasing the digital maturity of farms not only digitalization.

Now the role of an agronomist who supports the farm in establishing an integrated production model is essential for the farm.

Coldiretti is developing a network of specialized consulting services for farmers within the AKIS (Knowledge and Innovation System). Consulting, in this context, is provided by professionals who support farms in the innovation process, connecting universities, research institutions, associations, and companies to transfer and apply new knowledge and technologies.