



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Health and food audits and analysis
Director

Grange,
SANTE.F3.TG/mos

Dear Mr. Zink,

Subject: Pesticide-free sustainable agriculture in Europe

Thank you for your e-mail of 24 November describing the company “Bee Vectoring Technology”, which uses commercially-reared bees to deliver targeted crop protection.

The European Commission has responded to society's concerns regarding sustainability, including the use of chemical pesticides in agriculture via the European Green Deal and, more particularly, with the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.

As you state in your e-mail, the Commission announced in the Farm to Fork Strategy two targets to be achieved by 2030, namely a 50% reduction in i) the use and risk of chemical pesticides and ii) the use of more hazardous pesticides. In order to support the achievement of these targets, the Commission will propose a revision of Directive 2009/128/EC on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides in order to enhance provisions on integrated pest management, and promote greater use of alternative ways to protect harvests from pests and diseases.

The Commission has highlighted on several occasions that integrated pest management has a crucial role to play in achieving the sustainable use of pesticides. Since 1 January 2014, it has been an obligation for professional users of pesticides in the EU to implement the general principles of integrated pest management. The Commission has already taken a number of actions to support Member States, including promoting low pesticide-input pest controls techniques, such as integrated pest management and organic farming, and encouraging Member States to enforce these requirements. These actions include training of Member State experts, exchange of good practices identified at national level and keeping integrated pest management on the agenda of different events on the sustainable use of pesticides.

Integrated pest management as a concept requires priority to be given to non-chemical methods, using pesticides only as a last resort and starting with biological and low-risk products where available.

The method you present in your e-mail includes the use of plant protection products containing the microorganism *Clonostachys rosea*. As per Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, plant protection products can be placed on the market in the EU if they (a) contain active

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substances approved at EU level, and (b) are authorised in the Member States. The EU pesticide database¹ shows that: (a) the active substance *Clonostachys rosea* strain J 1446 is approved in the EU, (b) it is categorised as a low-risk active substance, and (c) there are plant protection products containing this active substance authorised in 15 Member States.

Therefore, in order to place on the market and use the plant protection products of Bee Vector Technologies, you may wish to apply for authorisation in the Member States of your choice. In order to do this, you need to submit an application dossier containing all the data needed for the purpose of authorisation, as laid down in Chapter III (Plant Protection Products), Section 1 (Authorisation) of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. Further information is available on the Commission's website at:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/authorisation_of_ppp_en. You can also contact the competent authorities in the concerned Member States for further advice on how to prepare an application.

Once the plant protection products have been authorised for placing on the market, Member States could promote the new crop protection methods and show their advantages via their demonstration at farms or by any other means. The Commission could provide its support at EU level, via the Toolbox project aiming at scaling up sustainable pest management practices.

I would like to conclude by thanking you for your e-mail and for your interest in this important topic. I can assure you that the Commission has a high interest in promoting new modern technologies, which contribute towards achieving the sustainable use of pesticides and, in particular, new methods and techniques for pest control. In this regard, the Commission will also provide financial instruments under the new Common Agricultural Policy through the agri-environmental and climate measures, eco schemes and support for organic production, all supporting integrated pest management principles. The Commission shares your concerns and the opinion that such new technologies have a role in achieving the targets of both the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)

Rubén Tascón
Acting Director

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/eu-pesticides-database/active-substances/?event=as.details&as_id=766