Case study: commercial perspective on safety testing in the food value chain

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Introduction
Introduction (I)

Two organisations....

Copa
Created in 1958, Copa represents 23 million European farmers and family members

Cogeca
Created in 1959, Cogeca represents 22,000 European agricultural cooperatives

Copa and Cogeca
In 1962, a joint Secretariat was created, making it one of the biggest and most active lobby organisations in Brussels
**Mission**
To ensure a viable, innovative and competitive EU agriculture and agri-food sector

**Who ?**
66 Member organisations and 34 Partner Organisations
25 agricultural sectors covered
European legislative framework
European legislative framework (I)

Official regulatory framework

• Regulation 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market
  – Strict authorisation procedure to ensure safety of the substances
  – Extension of authorisation for minor uses
  – Low-risk active substances

• Regulation 396/2005 on Maximum Residue Levels of PPPs
  – Fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on food and feed of plant and animal origin
European legislative framework (II)

- Directive 2009/128/CE on sustainable use of pesticides (SUD)
  - National Actions Plans (NAP) and Integrated Pest Management
  - Spraying equipment
  - Training and certification

- General Food Law
  - EU principles for food safety, including consumers interests and transparency
  - General obligations and responsibilities along the supply chain, control obligations and traceability

- CAP – marketing standards
Green growth at the heart of sustainable development
Three pillars of sustainability

– Green growth: developing productive capacity at the same time as improving resource efficiency

– Meet rising food demand and reduce hunger and poverty whilst facing up to finite land and water resources and the effects of climate change

– Three pillars of sustainable development:
  
  • environment: EU agricultural production meets the highest standards in the world in terms of food safety, traceability, environmental protection and animal welfare;

  • economy: providing greater market stability and fair prices for consumers and farmers;

  • society: creating employment and securing the viability of rural areas;
Integrated Pest Management - concept

– Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is (and was) not a new concept

– Is based on good farming practices that have evolved over time

– Since 1st January 2014 (SUD), it is mandatory in Europe to follow the general IPM principles

– Different definitions (e.g., FAO):

IPM means managing, in a given situation, populations of plant pests, diseases and weeds by the combination of all appropriate agricultural practices, with a holistic approach that reduces the impact of pests and damage to an acceptable level and at the same time ensures the protection of human health and the environment
Integrated Pest Management - development

- Non chemical and chemical combined/integrated
- Biological control products
- Preventive actions first but also curative if needed
- “As little as possible, as much as needed” (PPP)
- Day to day decision making on farm/field/crop: based on existing information, tools, solutions
- More exchange of field experience
- Less theoretical/macro research

Green growth at the heart of sustainable development (III)
EU food value chain
EU food value chain (I)

**Marketing standards**

- Safety is pre-requisite to place the products on the market

- Market dictates requirements which restrict farmers’ options (e.g. zero tolerance on skin quality)

- Economic threshold for certain products is often zero: the market allows no room for manoeuvre

- Quality is perceived by European citizens as a broad concept that includes many different elements such as origin, sustainability or health aspects

- Ensuring the quality of agricultural production is a priority for farmers and agri-cooperatives
EU food value chain (II)

Unfair Trading Practices

- Unbalanced power in the agri-food chain between the different actors
  - abuse of the dominant position
  - anticompetitive practices
- Demands by major retailers relating to price setting and condition for sales
- Not meeting secondary standards implies lower prices or no market at all
- Farmer complies with all legal requirements (food safety and quality) while at the same time try to make a living
- Additional testing represents disproportionate burdens on small- and medium-sized producers
Conclusions (I)

- The industry is in charge to put proven safe substances on the market
- Farmers use these substances in a sustainable manner
- Farmers and agri-cooperatives place their products on the market
- Consumers expect the highest quality at the lowest price
- There are additional requirements imposed by retailers
- Testing requirements imply costs and loss of competitiveness
- New testing requirements imposed to Farmers will not be acceptable
Thank you for your attention

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