

Preface

Plant protection equipment must dose and distribute products exactly and function faultlessly. In order to achieve this, plant protection equipment should be inspected regularly to be able to identify and eliminate any technical defects.

However, there are three main arguments for the inspection:

- good control of the pest with the minimum possible input of crop protection product
- less potential risk of environmental contamination by crop protection products
- safety hazards for the operator

The inspection of plant protection equipment is becoming more and more interesting for the Member States (MS).

The 1st European SPISE workshop (Braunschweig, DE) took place in April 2004 in prompted by the publication of European Standard 13790; the 2nd European Workshop aims to support the MS in introducing inspections for plant protection equipment. This Workshop represented a platform on which to discuss further regulations for introducing, putting into practice and monitoring the inspections in the MS and for co-ordinating them. This was carried out in the form of lectures, working groups or excursions.

In some MS such as Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, equipment inspections have been developed and established over the past few years, and although they are organised in different ways (state-run, private sector), they have all resulted in high-quality technical inspections, ensuring reliable and efficient plant protection equipment.

Within the 2nd SPISE workshop (Straelen, DE), the legal/statutory regulations and technical standards for successful plant protection equipment inspections already in force in the countries stated above have been presented as examples and described in detail. The excursions to the three MS have shown their practical implementation which could be analysed and taken as a basis for implementation in one's own MS.

The 3rd SPISE workshop (Brno, CZ) represented a platform on which to discuss further regulations for introducing, putting into practice and monitoring the inspections in the Member States and for co-ordinating them. In the meantime the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides obliges the Member States to ensure that pesticide application equipment in professional use shall be subject to inspections at regular intervals. The 3rd European Workshop informed the participants about the newest legal developments and showed which procedures/documents accompanying the article 8 of the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) under the responsibility of the Member States are required. The Directive determines the key points. The development of procedures between the MS is left to the Member States according to the principle of subsidiarity. They have a fair amount of leeway and are able to take their own experience and conditions into consideration.

The 4th SPISE workshop took place in Lana, South Tyrol in March 2012. The aim was to support the introduction of inspections of plant protection equipment already in use in the Member States (MS) of the EU. Following the publication of Directive 2009/128/EC in October 2009, the Member States have to introduce technical inspections for plant protection equipment at regular intervals and ensure that all items of plant protection equipment have been inspected at least once by 2016. Due to the region of South Tyrol the focus this time was on the air-assisted sprayers. During the workshop the attendants were invited to register themselves in Technical Working Groups (TWGs). These 7 TWGs have the task to discuss and to prepare advices regarding up to now not clear details of article 8 of the SUD.

In October 2014 the participants of the 5th SPISE workshop met at Montpellier, France. During the 7 sessions the attendants were informed about the intermediate results of the TWGs. These groups met

in the meantime seven times. They presented the state of work and of the preparation of the so-called SPISE advices.

The SPISE 6 Workshop took place at Barcelona, Spain, on 13 to 15 September 2016. The locally organisation was under the responsibility of the Escola Superior d'Agricultura de Barcelona, Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), Spain. The 6th edition of SPISE workshop covered important aspects: The recently published harmonized EN ISO 16122 for inspection of sprayers in use, and the deadline according the EU Directive 2009/128/EC – November 26th 2016 – for the accomplishment of the official mandate. It was an interesting opportunity to evaluate the present situation on MS and to understand the difficulties encountered and the necessary actions needed to solve them. It was also possible for the participants to evaluate and discuss about the recently entered in force harmonized standard on the inspections of sprayers used in greenhouse (ISO EN 16122-4). More than 40 presentations from the participants plus 7 posters showed the ongoing activities in the Member States and the current situation regarding the introduction of plant protection equipment mandatory inspections in the MS. As usual the second day was dedicated to practical demonstration of the sprayers' inspections activities this time with particular effort to the inspections of sprayers used in greenhouse.