

Mission and role of the demonstration farms

Demonstration farms act as national pilot farms. In various German regions, they are set up to implement the latest findings and methods of integrated pest management in practice and demonstrate these to other farmers, advisers and the public.

The demonstration farm activities are individually supported by advisors, knowledge transfer and decision support systems which go well beyond usual advisory support. The demonstration fields are intensively monitored by experts of the German federal states' plant protection services. Based on those findings farmers receive tailor-made information and comprehensive support for implementing available and new promising integrated plant protection measures.

Project schedule

The demonstration project was launched in 2011 with 27 farms specialised in viticulture, fruit production or arable farming. The second phase started in 2014 adding more farms and other areas of specialisation (cultivation of field vegetables and hops). The project peaked in 2014 and 2015 with a total of 66 farms involved.

Participation is limited to 5 years/growing seasons in order to collect and analyse relevant data on implementation of integrated pest management, trends and research needs. The current demonstration project ends in 2018.

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Demonstration Farms for Integrated Pest Management



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The National Action Plan

The National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (NAP) was adopted by the Federal Government on 10 April 2013 in line with paragraph 4 of the German Plant Protection Act. The NAP aims to further reduce the risks that may result from the use of plant protection products. The main focus is on limiting the use of chemical pesticides to the necessary minimum, thus avoiding unnecessary application. At the same time, use of non-chemical measures shall be promoted. Additional costs occurring through integrated plant protection measures, such as monitoring and non-chemical alternatives or preventive measures, can be partly compensated by cost savings for unnecessary pesticide applications.



Promoting innovation

The NAP focuses on promoting innovation in plant protection and on developing integrated plant protection methods. This will be complemented by appropriate measures implemented and funded by the Federal Government and the 'Länder' (federal states). These include the development and use of resistant crop varieties of crops, decision support systems and non-chemical measures such as biological crop protection.



Demonstration of new techniques

An important measure of the NAP is the implementation of new integrated plant protection methods at farm level. The model project "Demonstration Farms for Integrated Pest Management", funded by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), was launched within this context. The Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) is supporting the project as the executing agency.

The Julius Kühn-Institute (JKI), Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants, is lead coordinator.

The following institutions are contributing to the model project:

- Bavarian State Institute of Agriculture (LfL)
- Service Centre for Rural Areas of Rhineland-Palatinate (DLR)
- Julius Kühn-Institute - Federal Research Centre for Cultivated Plants
Institute for Strategies and Technology Assessment, Kleinmachnow
- Saxony-Anhalt State Institute for Agriculture, Forestry and Horticulture (LLFG)
- Agricultural Technology Centre Augustenberg (LTZ)
- Regional Office for Agriculture, Food Safety and Fisheries of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (LALLF)
- Chamber of Agriculture of Lower Saxony
- Chamber of Agriculture of North Rhine-Westphalia
- Chamber of Agriculture of Schleswig-Holstein
- Darmstadt Regional Commissioner's Office
- Thuringian State Institution for Agriculture (TLL)
- Central Institute for EDP-based Decision Support Systems and Programmes in Crop Protection (ZEPP)

The key stakeholders are:

- Demonstration farms (practical application)
- Plant protection services of the Länder (regional project management)
- Julius Kühn-Institute (national scientific coordination)