

O.05 - The crop protection industry: why we need pesticides in integrated crop protection in Europe

Doig, R.

The need for increasing food production on land available for cultivation has become dramatically exposed by the rapid changes in global food stocks and the escalation in prices seen over the past 18 months. There is now a consensus view that for the foreseeable future global demand growth for food will outstrip the growth in global supply, due to increasing populations, growth in per capita food consumption in major developing countries, and demand for bio-fuels. With little additional land available to bring into production, the necessary production growth will have to come to a very large extent from a growth in productivity of the land already being farmed. Only by using the best of modern technologies can the necessary productivity gains be achieved. For crop protection this means using pesticides as part of an overall programme of integrated pest management. The current regulatory environment in Europe is driving more and more crop protection products off the market, restricting choices for growers, limiting the modes of action available, and putting not only minor crops production at risk. The crop protection industry is committed to producing effective, safe products for the range of problems faced by growers today and in the future, and it is vital that European Union regulations encourage the necessary research and investment in such technologies.