



Summary

The most robust and extensive transitions towards IPM practices involve producers who are well integrated in groups and in lasting collective dynamics. In these groups, they build together technical solutions which are adapted to their own situations, often with the help of an advisor and sometimes researchers. Such transitions are also facilitated by public subsidies such as agri-environmental schemes and the support given to IPM in public debates.

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About ENDURE

ENDURE is the European Network for the Durable Exploitation of Crop Protection Strategies. ENDURE is a Network of Excellence (NoE) with two key objectives: restructuring European research and development on the use of plant protection products, and establishing ENDURE as a world leader in the development and implementation of sustainable pest control strategies through:

- > Building a lasting crop protection research community
- > Providing end-users with a broader range of short-term solutions
- > Developing a holistic approach to sustainable pest management
- > Taking stock of and informing plant protection policy changes.

Eighteen organisations in 10 European countries are committed to ENDURE for four years (2007-2010), with financial support from the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme, priority 5: Food Quality and Security.

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Website and ENDURE Information Centre

www.endure-network.eu

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Social Science Insights on Crop Protection

The conditions of transition towards Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices



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Food Quality and Safety



Origins of the results

The results are based on qualitative interviews among stakeholders in the pomefruit and wheat production chains, including producers, producer organisation leaders, and advisers; on collective work conducted in four countries: Switzerland (CH), France (F), The Netherlands (NL) and the United Kingdom (UK); and on a comparative analysis.

Farmers' trajectories towards IPM appear to be gradual

Integrated pest management (IPM) practices can be analysed on a scale that goes from input efficiency (E) to input substitution (and/or reduction) (S) and to the redesigning of the whole agricultural system (R) (ESR model (Hill, 1985, see Table 1). Farmers can move forwards at their own pace along this scale or stay at the same stage; the concept of progression is what is important. *“Very quickly, we became aware that it was not enough to lower the number of treatments in order to improve fruit quality, that other factors, like manuring, pruning, etc were worth taking into consideration” (Swiss apple grower).*

Therefore, a fundamental issue is to make this progression possible.

Table 1. The Efficiency, Substitution, Redesign (ESR) model

E	Improve input efficiency Improve efficiency of conventional practices <i>But without reducing dependence on external inputs</i>	Low IPM, precision agriculture
S	Substitution of chemical inputs by biological inputs Replace conventional practices by more environmentally friendly ones	High IPM, some forms of organic agriculture Use of biological control, lengthening crop rotation etc
R	System redesign for a natural regulation of soil fertility and pest population while maintaining acceptable production levels Elimination of problems occurring in E and S (prevention), functions on a new ecological balance	Some forms of organic agriculture High IPM

Source: Adapted from Hill, S.B. 1985. Redesigning the food system for sustainability. *Alternatives* 12(3/4):32-36.

The more producers are involved in groups, the more robust the transition is to IPM

In producer groups, farmers learn from one another, which results in them feeling more confident with their decisions as they can discuss them with other farmers. Together, they build technical solutions which are adapted to their own situations, often with the help of an adviser and sometimes researchers. Many IPM farmers are very much involved in their professional bodies, and few are isolated farmers.

Five conditions for promoting IPM

Farmers are often keen to talk about rationalising their practices and about their economic expectations. Their first rationale to reduce the use of pesticides, is usually to save costs. Consequently, incentives

and regulations (for example, Switzerland) and/or strong environmental motivation (for example, the case of some French arable crop grower groups who are involved in local water quality projects) are necessary to ensure continued use of IPM, especially when prices increase and returns on yield are higher. To this extent civil society, through the adoption of the environmental impact of agriculture as a public issue, has a determining role to play. Other important conditions are the involvement of research and extension, the existence of collective dynamics among farmers and the creation of specific marketing strategies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Main conditions for the adoption of IPM in four European countries

	<i>Apple (CH)</i>	<i>Apple (F)</i>	<i>Wheat (F)</i>	<i>Apple (NL)</i>	<i>UK</i>
<i>Role of public policies</i>	Strong; ecological requirements for direct payments	Might become stronger at national level and local level (for example, watersheds)		Pesticides Action Plans 1991 and 2001	UK Pesticides Strategy 2006
<i>Involvement of research and extension</i>	Strong especially during the 1970s and 1980s	In pilot areas (research on IP fruit production)	In pilot areas (research on low input strategies)	Strong in pesticide action plan preparation; decreasing afterwards	Strong in the Pesticides Safety Directorate
<i>Collective dynamics among farmers</i>	Strong especially during the 1970s and 1980s	Market led (producers' group for marketing)	Strong in some pioneer groups	Market led (cooperative) and study groups	Strong in some pioneering groups
<i>Translation in marketing strategies</i>	Supermarket and producer organisation schemes not very successful among consumers	Supermarket schemes	Almost none (except for short circuits and a few cooperatives)	MRL requirements of retailers	Supermarket schemes and assured schemes
<i>Involvement of civil society</i>	Strong: public voting on agriculture/ environment	Low except in CSA schemes		Increasing via MRL actions of NGOs towards supermarkets	Increasing (PAN actions)

Source: ENDURE DR3.5 report, 2008.

Market tools and legislation are not enough

The promotion of IPM through the market is limited by commercial demand. In fact, supermarket schemes were created after food crises, as insurance schemes for supermarkets. They focus on Good Agricultural Practices rather than on IPM.

Changes in regulations have to be accompanied by input from the agricultural advisory services and by education programmes. If not, there is a high risk of leaving behind a whole range of less skilled, less financially secure farmers who could not adapt.