

PURE: a new impulse for IPM implementation in Europe



In March the new FP7 EU project – PURE – was launched. PURE is a research project on Integrated Pest Management and will be providing field-tested practical IPM solutions, new knowledge and a research toolbox for IPM. PURE combines and involves researchers and all relevant key actors in pest management: farmers, farm advisers, policy advisers, and other stakeholders in the food supply chain.

PURE stands for “Pesticide Use-and-risk Reduction in European farming systems with integrated pest management”. It is one of the largest EU-financed projects in the Seventh Framework Programme. The total investment amounts to over 12 million euros over four years. Besides other universities and institutes, the PURE consortium includes industrial and advisory organisations from 10 European countries. The research will focus on the key European farming systems: annual arable and vegetable crops, perennial fruit crops, grapevine and protected crops in greenhouses, in which reduction of pesticide use and better control of pests will have major effects at the European scale.

PURE is developing and integrating existing and new knowledge. Risks, costs and benefits of different methods are compared, converted into models, and possible new solutions in the form of management strategies, biological and mechanical control methods will be tested under field conditions. An eye will be kept on economic and cultural aspects. A unique aspect of the project is the collaboration and consultation with all stakeholders: farmers and growers, industry and other chain partners such as buyers and retail organisations. The results of PURE will contribute to the implementation of the national action plans that European countries have to draw up to meet the requirements of the EU Framework Directive on the sustainable use of pesticides.

Over four years, PURE is expected to generate acceptable and sustainable solutions for farmers and growers in controlling pests and diseases in cropping systems including wheat, maize, field and greenhouse vegetables, and fruit.

The kick-off meeting of the PURE project took place in Avignon, France, at the end of March. In June, the PURE website will be launched.