

## **Shaping IPM with NGOs and retailers**

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In many European countries the general public fears the risks of pesticides, especially on fruit and vegetables. Members of national Parliaments and NGOs urge governments, primary producers and food chain partners to reduce the risks of pesticides. Long-lasting and fierce public debates have resulted in retailers imposing ambitious residue restrictions on their suppliers. The objectives of this paper are 1) to improve the understanding of the dynamics behind transitions in food chains, and 2) to show IPM researchers how they can help farmers and growers in meeting the residue requirements of retailers and their customers (i.e. the general public).

The first objective has been addressed in ENDURE by analysing the public debates on pesticides and crop protection in the Netherlands and France, using newspaper articles and questions in Parliament over the period 1995-2008. In the Netherlands the dynamics of the public debate has been charted through a dramaturgical analysis of the newspaper articles and questions in Parliament. The second objective has been addressed in PURE by collecting the residue requirements of German retail companies for fruit and vegetables. Furthermore, the price premiums for exported tomatoes from Spain, Italy, France, Belgium and the Netherlands to Germany have been calculated on the basis of Eurostat data.

The dramaturgical analysis of the Dutch public debate on pesticides resulted in a flow chart of the dynamics behind transitions in food chains. The flow chart shows pressure coming from citizens, NGOs and the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture. These parties first commission knowledge partners to clarify the problem, and then challenge primary producers and food chain partners to improve 1) production practices, and 2) product qualifications. This twin innovation is crucial. Otherwise the efforts of the primary producer in improving product quality and meeting residue requirements vanish in the bulk of conventional products on the consumer market. Hence, a willingness-to-pay of consumers cannot be cashed. Consumer willingness-to-pay for high quality and low pesticide residue levels is clearly expressed in the price premiums of tomatoes exported to Germany from Spain, Italy, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. German retail companies impose high quality standards on their suppliers but in return they also pay higher prices. This price premium of high quality tomatoes is €0.10-0.40 per kg.

NGOs and Members of Parliaments challenge retailers to reduce pesticide residues on fruit and vegetables. Low pesticide residue levels provide producers access to the top segment of the consumer market. This market segment is willing to pay price premiums. IPM researchers should help primary producers to meet the residue requirements of this market segment by e.g. market intelligence, biological control and decision support.