Overview – Copper situation in France in 2016

Copper Conference
Berlin – 17 & 18 November 2016
Organic production in France

- Organic market growth of +20% in 2016
- Organic market: 6.9 billion € by the end of 2016 (forecast)
- Each day: 21 new organic farm
- More than 1.5 million ha as organic
- More than 10% organic wine growth sales

(Source: Agence Bio)

=> Florishing organic production and market
Legal framework
Current situation and possible future legislation
Current legal framework

- Annex II of EU organic Regulation (889/2009): 6kg/ha/year or 30kg/ha in 5 years with the smoothing mechanism.
- Quantity allowed until 2018 (expiry of marketing autorisation)
- Smoothing mechanism:
  - Farmers are decision makers: adaptation to the annual climate condition.
  - Tool to lower the use of copper (security reserve).
Potential evolution of the legislation

- **Peer review conclusion (2008 and 2013):** 4.5 kg/ha/year, no smoothing mechanism

- **French Agency** dealing with sanitary safety in food and the environment (2008), conclusion: 4 kg/ha/year, no smoothing mechanism

- **French Agriculture Ministry (DGAL),** as the “rapporteur” for Europe for copper products, conclusion 2015: keep 6 kg and smoothing mechanism (now evaluation skills transferred to ANSES)

- **But new copper products in 2016:** marketing authorization at 4 kg/ha/year

=> What about the situation and needs of organic farmers on the ground?
• Organic farmers need to have a clear vision of the legal framework after 2018.

• Problem with the current state of the art on evaluation of copper (studies EFSA and ANSES):
  – Studies carried out in vitro, not in vivo = No real production conditions! => Need for IN VIVO studies
  – Studies carried out at 4, 8 or 12kg/ha/year: Why not at the legal limitation of 6 kg/ha/year? => Need for studies at 6kg
  – Studies carried out without the smoothing mechanism: testing 4 years at the same level of copper doesn’t reflect the reality! => Need for studies with smoothing mechanism
On the ground situation for organic farmers

1/ Vinetage 2016
2/ Study from 2008 to 2012
• Bad climatic conditions: late frost, rainy spring season, hail
• Mildew pressure: on foliage and grapes
• Decrease of the yields
• Threat to the wine stocks, and sometimes to the whole wine yard
• Organic farms are going back to conventionnal production (250ha in Burgundy)

=> Copper is currently the only solution in organic farming. No alternative available.
The situation keeps repeating itself

Study from ITAB (French Research Institute on Organic Farming) and IFV from 2008 to 2012, on copper use in France.
• 2008 and 2012: bad climatic conditions,
• 2009, 2010 and 2011: good weather conditions,
• More than 500 study participants:
  – 420 wine growers
  – 50 fruits growers
  – 42 potatoes growers
The situation keeps repeating itself

Yields loss (%) due to mildew in 2012

Strong mildew pressure (2012): **Northern** (Champagne, Burgundy) and **Atlantic** (Bordeaux, Loire) regions: from 15% to more than 25% loss
The situation keeps repeating itself

Annual copper use: from 2kg/ha to 6.5kg/ha

Important variations between years

-> Keep the smoothing mechanism

Copper use (kg/ha) in 4 regions 2012-2008
The situation keeps repeating itself

% of farms using more than 4kg/ha of copper in 2008, 2011 and 2012

Impossible to stick to 4kg/ha/year when bad climatic conditions
The situation keeps repeating itself

Conclusion:

- **Strong mildew pressure**: Northern (Champagne, Burgundy) and Atlantic (Bordeaux, Loire) regions.
- **Annual copper use**: from 2kg/ha to 6,5kg/ha

-> **Need to keep the smoothing mechanism**

- Impossible to stick to 4kg/ha/year (bad climatic conditions and no alternative available)

-> **Need for natural alternatives**
What organic farmers need is...
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• RESEARCH on natural alternatives to reduce copper use while protecting the wine, fruits and vegetable productions.

• Meanwhile: Keep the only effective dosis: 6kg/ha/year with the smooting mechanism (30kg/ha/5 years).

• Debatte on ecological impact of organic farming: copper reduction vs. synthetic chemical products?
Thank you for your attention!