



# EFSA in focus *PLANTS*

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## > Key topics

### EFSA concludes cold treatment proposal does not protect against whiteflies



A recent statement from EFSA's Panel on Plant Health concluded that a US report on a cold treatment to eliminate whiteflies from strawberry plants did not demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed treatment.

The Panel concluded that the report did not demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed treatment - cooling strawberry

nursery plants to -2.2°C for two weeks - in protecting against the whitefly, *Bemisia tabaci*.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) had asked the European Commission to consider a report justifying a treatment proposed to eliminate *B. tabaci*. It explains how the treatment would eliminate

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## > STOP PRESS

### EFSA launches public consultation on guidance for environmental risk assessment of GM plants

EFSA has launched a public consultation on the revised guidance of its GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) Panel for the environmental risk assessment of GM plants. EFSA provided updated guidance for assessing the impact of GM plants on the environment and held discussions with stakeholders and Member States as part of this work.

**For more information.**

### EFSA to launch new calls for Panel experts and external reviewers

EFSA will soon launch three separate calls to further maintain excellence in its scientific outputs. There will be calls to: 1) renew members of its food additives & nutrient sources and its food contact materials, enzymes & flavourings Panels (ANS/CEF starting a new 3 year mandate in 2011); 2) Extend the reserve list of members of EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels and 3) extend the reserve list of external scientific experts to review the quality of its scientific outputs. More information will be available on EFSA's website soon.

## Key topics

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this whitefly pest from strawberry plants intended for planting in the EU. The European Commission had asked EFSA for its opinion on the report. Protective measures are required under EU law as *B. tabaci* is a vector of many damaging plant viruses. Viruses carried by *B. tabaci* are not known to infect strawberries and no strawberry viruses, listed under EU law, are known to be carried by *B. tabaci*. However, these whiteflies could carry viruses of other plants and so could potentially introduce non-European viruses.

In addition, imported strawberry plants could themselves carry viruses, even if whiteflies are not present. For example,

the glasshouse whitefly, *Trialeurodes vaporariorum*, common in Europe, is known to transmit the strawberry viruses, Beet pseudo-yellows virus and Strawberry Pallidosis associated virus (SPaV). There is a risk, therefore, that SPaV, which is not yet present in Europe, could be introduced and further spread by *T. vaporariorum*.

[For more information](#)

## EFSA publishes new study on bee mortality in Europe

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a report on honey bee mortality and the ways that colony losses are monitored in Europe. The study was funded by EFSA and carried out by a consortium of scientific institutes led by the French national food safety agency *Afssa* (*Agence française de sécurité sanitaire des aliments*).

The report makes recommendations on how to improve bee surveillance systems and says further studies are needed to better understand the factors that affect honey bee health.

EFSA has been working on colony losses in honey bees since 2008, when it began collecting at European level information on chemical residues in honey, honey production in the EU Member States and bee surveillance programmes. The report, which has now been published, has been presented to the European Commission and will help to inform future research and surveillance activities to address the issue of colony losses.

[For more information.](#)



## > EFSA at work

### Reports on protected crop systems in Southern and Eastern EU Member States published

The Scientific Panel on Plant Protection Products and their Residues (PPR) has been requested by EFSA to develop a new EU Guidance Document on emissions from protected crop systems (greenhouses and crops grown under cover). The guidance aims to estimate emissions of plant protection products from these systems into the environment for use in environmental risk assessments.

To help develop the guidance, EFSA awarded grants to the Research Institute of Pomology and Floriculture in Poland, and to the Agricultural University of Athens to compile existing data on protected crop systems in Eastern and Southern EU Member States. Their two final reports are now available on EFSA's website.

The reports provide background information for developing a database on protected crop systems and the abundance of these systems in the EU, with a view to:

- Identify system characteristics that are useful for a classification of systems;
- Support the identification of potential emission routes and relevance of these for the classes of covered production systems (and under which conditions these are applicable);
- Determine when emissions from covered cropping systems are different from open field cultivations.

Supplementary data collection including a survey will be carried out in 2010.

[For more information on the report compiling data from Southern European Member States and Eastern European Member States.](#)

## Introducing the EFSA Journal: EFSA science at your fingertips

EFSA has made it significantly easier to access, browse and search its scientific work through the launch of a dedicated web area for its EFSA Journal.

The Journal is an open-access, online scientific journal that conveniently brings together the Authority's scientific outputs in one area, making them even more accessible than before. The new online presentation of the EFSA Journal will facilitate referencing of the Authority's scientific work in scientific literature and may enable bibliographical databases to index EFSA's scientific outputs thereby raising awareness of EFSA's work amongst the academic community worldwide. It will also raise visibility of the vast body of work being carried out by EFSA's Panel members, spanning the entire food chain covering food and feed safety, nutrition, animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection.

To keep up-to-date readers need only to subscribe online to receive titles from the previous month by email or through the dedicated RSS feed. Alternatively online users can quickly consult the latest articles, browse through previous issues dating back to EFSA's first outputs in 2003 or use the advanced search features to find specific topics of interest.

The EFSA Journal also offers a new function to facilitate citation of EFSA scientific outputs and the "send" option.

### For more information



## > Meeting reports

### 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Advisory Forum representatives on plant health

Parma, 20 October 2009

Member State representatives on plant health, members of the European Commission and observers from Norway, Turkey, Croatia and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, met on 20 and 21 October for a second special Advisory Forum meeting on plant health, focusing on data collection and emerging risks in plant health.

Availability of quality data had been identified at the first meeting (October 2008) as a major challenge to pest risk assessment and participants welcomed an update on EFSA's cooperation with scientific networks in Europe in this area. For example, EFSA reported on several Article 36 calls and a cooperation project with the Joint Research Centre of the EU Commission. These calls have been launched to ensure availability of data for ongoing work and in preparation for any emergency situation when fast-track advice is needed. The presentations covered ongoing projects such as PRASSIS (the inventory of data sources for pest risk assessment), Mopest (the knowledge database of models for pest epidemiology) and ClimPest (the framework for modelling pest climatic suitability). The reports on these projects will soon be published on EFSA's website.

The meeting gave EFSA's Plant Health Panel an opportunity to present a review of its activities and discuss its developing role in the European plant health system, including harmonisation

of pest risk assessment methodologies. EFSA's Director for Risk Assessment Riitta Maijala said at the end of meeting: "We had a very useful exchange. Although we do not have answers to all questions raised at this forum, we all agree that it is very important that we work closely together to find solutions."

A large part of the meeting addressed emerging risks in plant health. Risk indicators, pest surveillance and models for estimating the probability of the establishment and spread of new pests in Europe dominated the discussion.

EFSA's Plant Health Panel provides scientific opinions on plant health matters on requests from the European Commission, European Parliament, EU Member States and also on its own initiative. The requests for scientific advice are always accompanied by terms of reference that describe the background of the request and the relevant community interest at stake. EFSA's evaluation/pest risk assessment often includes evaluation of pest risk management options.

## > Article 36

Article 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation allows the Authority to financially support projects and activities that contribute to EFSA's mission. This financial support is exclusively given to a list of competent organisations capable of assisting EFSA in its work. The list was drawn up on the basis of nominations made by Member States in an EFSA Management Board decision.

### Article 36 calls awarded

**CFP/EFSA/CONTAM/2009/01**

#### **Toxicological study related to 3-MCPD esters**

University of Parma (Italy)

**CFP/EFSA/PLH/2009/01**

#### **Pest risk assessment for the European Community plant health - a comparative approach with case studies**

Central Science Laboratory (UK), Laboratoire National de la Protection des Végétaux (France), Plant Protection Service (The Netherlands), Natural Resources Institute of the University of Greenwich (United Kingdom), Plant Protection Institute (Bulgaria), Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) (France), Julius Kuhn Institute – Federal Research Institute for Cultivated Plants (Germany), Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety – AGES (Austria), Institute for

Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO) (Belgium), Benaki Phytopathological Institute (Greece), Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) (France)

**CFP/EFSA/PPR/2008/02**

#### **Impact of metabolic and degradation processes on the toxicological properties of residues of pesticides in food commodities**

Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety – AGES (Austria)

**CFP/EFSA/PPR/2009/01**

#### **Identification of Common Assessment Groups of Pesticides**

National Food Institute and National Veterinary Institute of the Technical University of Denmark (Denmark)

### Article 36 reports published

#### **Models for pest's epidemiology: review, documentation and evaluation for Pest Risk Analysis (Mopest)**

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/28e.htm>

#### **Bee Mortality and Bee Surveillance in Europe**

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/27e.htm>

## > Consultations

### EFSA consults on the assessment of allergenicity of GM food and feed

EFSA's GMO Panel has published for public consultation a draft report updating its assessment of allergenicity of GM plants and microorganisms, and derived food and feed. The document, which is an EFSA initiative, was prepared in order to review and update current methods of evaluation and provides conclusions for assessing the allergenic potential of GM plants and microorganisms.

GMOs could contain quantities of new or existing proteins which might cause food allergies in people and animals. EU legislation therefore requires that the allergenicity of GM foods is assessed before they can be placed on the market.

In the report, the GMO Panel makes some new recommendations for assessing the allergenic potential of the proteins contained in GM plants. In particular, it describes how to analyse the sequence of the proteins in order to identify possible similarities with known allergens; how to test the potential of the proteins to bind with specific antibodies (suggesting they could trigger an allergic reaction); and how to test the breakdown of the protein during digestion. Recommendations from this report are



aimed at updating and complementing EFSA's GM allergenicity assessment presently included in its guidance documents for the risk assessment of GM plants and microorganisms, and derived food and feed.

All stakeholders and interested parties were able to provide their comments up to 31 January 2010. In line with its policy on openness and transparency, EFSA will publish on its website a summary report of the comments received and will take them into consideration before finalising its report.

**For more information.**

## Mandates accepted: October-December 2009

Information on all other on-going requests is available in EFSA's [register of questions](#).

### Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Database of guidance on different toxicity end-points, risk assessment methodologies and data collection related to food, feed, animal health and welfare and plant health

Deadline: 31-Dec-09      Mandate number: M-2009-0317

### Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)

Revised molecular characterisation for Rf3 oilseed rape received from the Competent Authority of Belgium

Deadline: tbc      Mandate number: M-2009-0324

The assessment of allergenicity of genetically modified foods

Deadline: 30-Jun-10      Mandate number: M-2009-0311

Administrative guidance to applicants on the preparation and presentation of applications for authorisation of genetically modified plants and derived food and feed under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003

Deadline: tbc      Mandate number: M-2009-0299

Application for authorisation of genetically modified MS8xRF3xGT73 oilseed rape for food and feed uses, import and processing submitted under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 by Bayer CropScience (EFSA-GMO-NL-2009-75)

Deadline: n/a      Mandate number: M-2009-0289

Application for authorisation of genetically modified MON87769 soybean for food and feed uses, import and processing submitted under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 by Monsanto (EFSA-GMO-UK-2009-76)

Deadline: n/a      Mandate number: M-2009-0290

Application for authorisation of genetically modified NOVO Yeast Cream (pAK1214) as feed for pigs submitted under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 by NOVO NORDISK (EFSA-GMO-DK-2009-74)

Deadline: n/a      Mandate number: M-2009-0275

### Plant Health (PLH)

Cold treatment of strawberry plants to eliminate *Bemisia tabaci* whiteflies from consignments to be shipped to EU

Deadline: 10-Dec-09      Mandate number: M-2009-0312

### Plant Protection Products and their Residues (PPR)

Revision of the GD persistence in soil

Deadline: 16-Dec-10      Mandate number: M-2007-0151

Definition of protection goal options for environmental risk assessment of pesticides

Deadline: 30-Jun-10      Mandate number: M-2009-0271

Identification of pesticides to be included in cumulative assessment groups on the basis of their toxicological profile

Deadline: 31-Dec-11      Mandate number: M-2009-0270

Further development of a Soil Ecoregions concept, to be applicable in the context of environmental risk assessment of pesticides

Deadline: 31-Mar-10      Mandate number: M-2009-0269

### Pesticide Risk Assessment and Peer Review Unit (PRAPeR)

EFSA has received requests to:

- Assess MRL applications: EFSA received 19 requests to give a reasoned opinion on the modification of MRLs
- Advise on certain MRLs: Between October and December 2009 EFSA issued 17 reasoned opinions on 106 MRLs, responding to 22 requests.

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/mrls/mrlscdocs.htm>

#### Request for an EFSA peer review on the active substances:

##### **Buprofezin**

Deadline: 22-May-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0303

##### **Carbendazim**

Deadline: 30-Apr-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0301

##### **Dichlobenil**

Deadline: 30-Jul-10 Mandate number: M-2010-0012

##### **Diclofop**

Deadline: 01-Sep-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0323

##### **Dodine**

Deadline: 03-Jun-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0304

##### **Dicloran**

Deadline: 24-Jul-10 Mandate number: M-2010-0010

##### **Fenbuconazole**

Deadline: 15-May-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0272

##### **Metosulam**

Deadline: 26-Apr-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0291

##### **Oryzalin**

Deadline: 07-Aug-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0302

##### **Spiroxamine**

Deadline: 17-Mar-10 Mandate number: M-2010-0009

##### **Tau-fluvalinate**

Deadline: 17-Jun-10 Mandate number: M-2010-0011

## > Opinions and other documents

### List of adopted opinions and other documents per unit: October-December 2009

Disclaimer: This is not the full list of all EFSA opinions but only those considered relevant to this newsletter.

#### Assessment Methodology (AMU)

##### Assessment of the application of systematic review methodology into the food and feed safety field and the risk assessment process

Adopted on: 18-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-717

##### Good practice in conducting scientific assessments in animal health using modelling

Adopted on: 02-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00409

## Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)

**EFSA overall opinion on an application for renewal of authorisation for continued marketing of feed materials, feed additives and food additives produced from GT73 Oilseed rape (EFSA-GMO-RX-GT73\_8-1b/20-1b)**

Adopted on: 15-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00953

**EFSA overall opinion on an application for renewal of authorisation for continued marketing of food and food ingredients produced from GT73 oilseed rape (EFSA-GMO-RX-GT73\_8-1a)**

Adopted on: 15-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00952

**Scientific Opinion on applications (EFSA-GMO-RX-GT73) for renewal of the authorisation for continued marketing of existing (1) food and food ingredients produced from oilseed rape GT73; and of (2) feed materials, feed additives and food additives produced from oilseed rape GT73, from Monsanto**

Adopted on: 02-Dec-09 Question numbers: EFSA-Q-2007-149, EFSA-Q-2007-148  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1417.htm>

**Safety and efficacy of Finase® EC (6-phytase) as a feed additive for chickens for fattening and reared for laying, laying hens, turkeys for fattening and reared for breeding, ducks and other minor poultry species, piglets (weaned), pigs for fattening and sows**

Adopted on: 11-Nov-09 Question numbers: EFSA-Q-2008-748, EFSA-Q-2009-00676  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1380.htm>

**Statement on a scientific publication on vertical gene flow in rice and its potential ecological consequences by Lu & Yang (2009)**

Adopted on: 22-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00781  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1365.htm>

**Safety and efficacy of L-isoleucine for all animal species**

Adopted on: 02-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00611  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1425.htm>

**EFSA meeting summary report: EFSA and GMO risk assessment for human and animal health and the environment**

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scpublications/publication/gmo090914p1.pdf>

## Plant Health (PLH)

**Statement on the dossier for a derogation request of the US authorities concerning cold-treated strawberry plants intended for planting**

Adopted on: 08-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00937  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1416.htm>

## Plant Protection Products and their Residues (PPR)

**Outline proposals for assessment of exposure of organisms to substances in soil**

Adopted on: 16-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00691  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1442.htm>

**Request for preparation of the revised Guidance Document on Risk Assessment for birds and mammals on the basis of the Scientific Opinion of the PPR Panel on the Science behind the Guidance Document on risk Assessment for birds and mammals and its Appendices**

Published on: 17 Dec 2009 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00223  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1438.htm>

**Outcome of the public consultation on the existing guidance documents on aquatic and terrestrial ecotoxicology under Directive 91/414/EC**

Adopted on: 09-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-04987  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1375.htm>

## Pesticide Risk Assessment and Peer Review Unit (PRAPeR)

EFSA has issued 23 reasoned opinions on pesticide MRLs between October and December 2009:  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/mrls/mrlscdocs.htm>

## Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of the active substances:

***Lecanicillium muscarium* notified as *Verticillium lecanii***

Adopted on: **18-Dec-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00255**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1446.htm>

**Flonicamid**

Adopted on: **18-Dec-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00318**

**Fenugreek seed powder (FEN 560)**

Adopted on: **18-Dec-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00314**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1448.htm>

**Sulfuryl fluoride**

Adopted on: **17-Dec-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00311**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1441.htm>

**Triflumizole**

Adopted on: **04-Dec-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00610**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1415.htm>

**Picloram**

Adopted on: **25-Nov-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00241**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1390.htm>

**Oxadiazon**

Adopted on: **25-Nov-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00243**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1389.htm>

**Carbosulfan**

Adopted on: **16-Oct-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00730**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1354.htm>

**Proquinazid**

Adopted on: **13-Oct-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00320**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1350.htm>

**Haloxypop-P (haloxypop-R)**

Adopted on: **09-Oct-09** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00712**  
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1348.htm>

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