



PRESS CONFERENCE

EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork: Transition from chemical pesticides to microbial plant protection products must start now

I wish to thank our host, Member of Parliament **Martin Hlaváček**, as well as the **Microbial Plant Protection Products Task Force** for the opportunity to contribute to today's conference and put words on young farmers' challenges when it comes to plant protection.

Good afternoon, my name is Diana Lenzi. I am a wine grower from Tuscany and the President of the European Council of Young Farmers. I have been running my family farm since 2008, year in which I took over the winery my parents built around the existing multifunctional farm. And I have been working and fighting against the odds every day to keep their legacy alive.

In an ever-changing world, challenges we are facing as farmers seem to be getting greater and greater every day – whether it is about adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change, preserving natural resources, delivering high-quality production or facing market disruptions and the uncertainty inherent to all farming activities. Facing this, our primary objective is to build upon a multidimensional sustainability on the farm, able to lead to economic viability while ensuring food safety and delivering ecosystem services for the greater good of the whole society. Believe me when I say; it is not an easy mission to accomplish.

The European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy, in that context, need to address the constraints we are facing. They need to answer to our most important challenges, by giving us the enabling tools to reach out for more sustainability while keeping in sight, at all times, that our economic stability is the fuel, the primary condition of our capacity for action.

Because we will be the ones taking stock of the progress we have made in the horizon 2050, we, as young farmers, have both the right and duty to think outside the box and build a different future for our agricultural systems. A future where vulnerabilities are addressed, by ensuring our environmental balance and creating that solid economic framework that would attract new actors into the sector.

This is the pathway CEJA has taken. For the next two years, our organisation is committed to build the young farmer-driven way to sustainability. We are looking at every step, every factor, every elements that constitutes our farming system and searching for ways to improve it, make it more sustainable, while delivering also a rewarding food system for all: us as farmers of today and tomorrow, with civil society at large as our most important interlocutor.

In this context, of finding all the possible alternatives, all the possible solutions to improve our farming systems, and to broaden the toolkit that farmers need to achieve a more sustainable farming practice, we welcome, and exhort the Commission to accelerate the approval process of Biological Plant Protection Products (PPPs) that can be an essential tool in sustainable agriculture in Europe.

As components in effective Integrated Pest Management (IPM), together with further investment in knowledge and good practice sharing, they can most definitely contribute to environmentally responsible production systems, which is the goal that we are working to achieve in the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy.
