



Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides

Summary

The EU's Directive on the sustainable use of pesticides (2009/128/EC) sets a framework to reduce risks from pesticide use to human health and the environment. It encourages Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and alternative methods and requires Member States to implement National Action Plans (NAPs). A major revision is underway: the Sustainable Use Regulation (SUR), which would make rules stricter and directly binding.



Key Points

- Requires Member States to set pesticide risk reduction targets through National Action Plans
- Promotes Integrated Pest Management and low-pesticide approaches
- Obligates training and certification for professional pesticide users
- Proposes restrictions in sensitive areas like schools and water bodies
- Introduces risk indicators and harmonised reporting at EU level
- SUR proposal includes legally binding pesticide reduction targets

Timeline

- 📅 2009: Sustainable Use Directive (Directive 2009/128/EC) enters into force. Member States begin drafting National Action Plans.
- 📅 June 2022: European Commission publishes proposal for the Sustainable Use Regulation (SUR) to replace the 2009 Directive.
- 📅 2026–2027: If adopted, SUR could enter into force with a transition period.



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Direct Impact

- With SUR there will be new or stricter pesticide use limits, especially near sensitive areas
- More emphasis on adopting IPM techniques across all farm types
- Possible requirements to keep detailed pesticide application records
- Potential funding links between CAP payments and pesticide reduction



Tips

- Review your national action plan to check for changes in pesticide policy
- Seek local IPM training or advice to reduce chemical dependency
- Be aware of rules on spraying near water, homes, or public spaces
- Document your pest control practices to prepare for future compliance

Further Information

- Sustainable Use of pesticides:
https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/sustainable-use-pesticides_en
- Overview of National Action Plans:
https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/sustainable-use-pesticides/national-action-plans_en
- Farmer's Toolbox for Integrated Pest Management:
<https://datam.jrc.ec.europa.eu/datam/mashup/IPM/index.html>



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