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## **Position Paper**

# **World Food Security**

Crop protection products play a major role in directly reducing crop damage and yield losses from pests, diseases and weeds. They also contribute significantly to safeguarding quality during storage and transport, and thus to preserving the quality of food and animal feeds.

Reliable food supply on a large scale and at reasonable cost can only be guaranteed with the help of crop protection products. Besides these products' direct benefits, a range of additional effects also helps society to reach the goal set by the World Food Summit, organised by the FAO in November 1996:

Crop protection products help to preserve the environment. They contribute to higher yields per unit area, and therefore allow for many millions of hectares to be excluded from cultivation, and for natural habitats to remain undisturbed. Although the world population has doubled in the last forty years, the area of land devoted to food production has remained virtually constant. This is an important contribution to safeguarding biodiversity. Herbicides are used in conservation tillage agriculture, which replaces ploughing dramatically and reduces soil erosion from wind and rain. This method also helps to protect soil organisms, birds and small mammals. Fundamental to human health and well-being, crop protection products help to provide sound nutrition and a balanced diet. They reduce food contamination from dangerous natural fungi and bacterial toxins. In an appropriate socio-political environment, crop protection products help to optimise farmers' return on investment and to maintain food prices at an affordable level.

Strong initiatives for the introduction of integrated farming are urgently required to achieve sustainable agriculture. Within integrated farming approaches, optimal use of all elements is required. These include the right crop variety at the right location, cultivation techniques best suited to the selected crop rotation system, appropriate fertilisation, and judicious use of

crop protection products. Above all, farmers must receive training, which will enable them to take the lead in developing optimal input for sustainable farming systems.

The crop protection industry has considerable expertise in the area of sustainable agriculture within an integrated farming approach. As such, it could significantly contribute towards reaching the Summit's goal. This know-how is available all over the world. Industry is willing to collaborate with the FAO. Together, we can broaden the application of sustainable agriculture based on Integrated Pest Management. Various projects have shown how successful collaboration between the crop protection industry, governmental and non-governmental bodies can be:

Integrated Pest Management initiatives on all continents, which combine cultural practices (e.g. crop rotation, pest monitoring) with biological, biotechnological and chemical pest control measures. Use of crop protection products must involve total integration of safety and respect for the environment. This is the goal of specific "Safe Use Projects" initiated and sponsored by the global Industry Association, CropLife International. These have especially addressed the situation in developing countries, such as Guatemala, Kenya and Thailand. These projects, with an emphasis on education and training, are now being extended to neighbouring countries. The focus is on working together with governments, academia, NGO's and the international community. The aim is to achieve lasting improvements in production, handling, use and disposal of crop protection products. Integrated Crop Management movements in Europe emphasise a holistic farming approach.

Thanks to intensive use of modern science, the members of CropLife International develop practically 100% of all new crop protection products. They currently hold 85% of the world market. All CropLife International member companies are signatories to the International FAO Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. They are fundamentally convinced that farming techniques exist which can help reach the goal set by the Summit. These methods could be introduced throughout the world.

Modern crop protection products will help to ensure that agricultural production continues to meet increasing worldwide food requirements. Both the products and farming will also remain economical, and compatible with the environment and human health.