

PRESS RELEASE



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Sustainable Agriculture through Dedication, Skill and Modern Technology

26/06/2013, Brussels: EISA's annual Farm Visits, held on 25 June 2013 in Belgium, allowed participants to experience modern sustainable agriculture in practice. On the Peeters family farm and research station of Bayer CropScience in Huldenberg on Hof ten Bosch, and on the Van Der Velpen's fruit farm in Bierbeek, productive, efficient and environmentally-sound practices were demonstrated and discussed.

Precision agriculture is at the forefront of innovation in agriculture, and participants learned about the accuracy of modern farming technologies, including techniques that allow for a deviation of only 2.5 cm between repeated passes on a field. This precision enables farmers to save fuel, fertilisers, and crop protection products and to target the applications with ever increasing accuracy.

Strategies and practical measures to enhance biodiversity on farms were among other key topics discussed on the farm visits. Hedges as source of food and habitats for beneficials, establishment of flowering strips as source of food for pollinators and their integration in the cropping sequence as well as seed dressing and drilling technologies were addressed.

The visits also included presentations on Integrated Pest Management in orchards and comparisons between Integrated and Organic Farming, revealing the markedly increased risk of infestation with pests and pathogens and the resulting variability of yields in the Organic system.

Concluding this year's farm visit, EISA President Patrick Wrixon stated: "The examples demonstrated today have shown vividly how innovation in farming technologies – including crop protection – and in wildlife habitat management are decisive elements of sustainable agriculture."

EISA, the European Initiative for Sustainable Development in Agriculture, was founded in 2001 with the common aim to further develop and promote Integrated Farming as resource-efficient, productive and environmentally-friendly agriculture. EISA's Farm Visits are open to the media, politicians and administrators and offer insights and hands-on experiences, hence contributing to societal understanding of modern farming systems.

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