

Sales of pesticides decreasing

In 2015, ten million kilograms of pesticides were sold in the Netherlands. During the previous four years, sales fluctuated round 11 million kilograms. Three per cent of the annual amount marketed by the EU is sold in The Netherlands. The largest sales take place in Spain, France and Italy, according to the CBS in the new statistics for sales of pesticides.

Sales fluctuate every year, depending on the pressure of pests and diseases, and the weather circumstances during the growing stage of the crops. Permits for marketing the substances are also being continually adjusted. For example, in 2014 soil decontamination using metam sodium became more strictly regulated. The sales of 'miscellaneous substances' decreased by more than one million kilograms in that year.

Largest sales of pesticides in Spain, France and Italy

The annual sales of pesticides in the European Union was 381 million kilograms on average in the 2011/15 period. More than half is sold in Spain, France and Italy. Almost a quarter is sold in Germany, Poland and the UK. The Dutch share is three per cent. France is the leader in the fight against weeds and desiccation. Fighting insects and mites mostly takes place in Spain and Italy. These countries are also the leaders, along with France, in the fight against moulds and bacteria.

Sales in relation to surface agricultural land

The relation between the amount of sold pesticides and the size of the surface of agricultural land varies per country. For example, it is remarkable that more pesticides are sold in Italy than in Romania, Poland and the UK combined. The surface of the agricultural land in each of these countries is larger than in Italy. Two reasons might explain the higher sales in Italy. It's possible that Italy applies relatively many substances on non-agricultural land. Not just the agrarian sector, but also the government, the households and the industrial companies buy

pesticides, after all. It could also be the case that Italy uses more kilograms of pesticides per hectare than in other countries.

Most are used in the fight against moulds and bacteria

Just as in the rest of Europe, 42 per cent of bought pesticides are used to fight moulds and bacteria in the Netherlands. Fighting weeds and desiccation has a share of 35 per cent in Europe, in the Netherlands, that share is 28 per cent. On the other hand, relatively many substances, such as mineral oils, are sold in the Netherlands. These substances are used in virus control in cultivations such as seed potatoes and lily bulbs. In Europe, this share of miscellaneous substances is ten per cent lower.

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