

Spain: New system to reduce use of phytosanitary products in fruit trees

DOSA3D, a system developed by the Research Group in AgrotIC and Precision Agriculture of the University of Lleida (UdL), working in partnership with the Plant Health Service of the Generalitat of Catalonia, is making it possible to reduce the use of phytosanitary products without any losses in the treatment's effectiveness.

As explained by the UdL, DOSA3D has been developed within the framework of the AgVance project of the National R+D Plan and is the result of the expansion of the DOSAFRUT system (which was for fruit trees alone). The current project also applies to vineyards, olive trees, almonds and citrus fruits.

These crops currently account for 306,000 hectares in Catalonia, 4.5 million hectares in Spain and 9.5 million hectares in the European Union.

The tests carried out in the initial stage by Fruits de Ponent, Sanui Fruits, Nufri, Codorniu, Soldebre, Cooperativa d'Exportadors Citrics d'Alcanar, Cítrics Terres de l'Ebre and Vivers Alcanar have shown that phytosanitary costs can be reduced by up to 40% "without compromising the treatments' effectiveness."

The UdL has warned that in Catalonia alone, phytosanitary treatments cost some 50 million Euro per year.

The DOSA3D system makes it possible to adjust the dose based on the plantation's structural characteristics and the efficiency of the phytosanitary treatment equipment. It takes into account the crop, the pest to be controlled, the product to be applied and the treatment equipment.

Moreover, DOSA3D can be used with all types of air-assisted hydraulic sprayers.

The system is available to users in Catalan, Spanish and English in Android applications and, soon, in iOS.

This year, the validation and dissemination works will be intensified by the plant defence groups of Catalonia and the Catalan Government's Plant Health Service.

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