



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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Use of pesticides down substantially

In 2000 agriculture and horticulture cut the use of chemical pesticides by over 12% compared to 1998. There was a 20% cut in insecticides, according to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands. Compared to 1995 the use of insecticides was halved. The use of weed killer and fungicides was also far below the 1998 level during the year 2000. A remarkable cut in the use of pesticides occurred in growing corn, apples and pears. By far the highest pesticide use rate per hectare was for growing lilies.

Substantial cut in pesticide use for most crops

The use of insecticides was lower in 70% of all crops under observation than in 1998. In agriculture there were fewer aphids, and furthermore new products were used that require fewer kilograms per hectare. There was also less need to take action against fungous diseases which occurred considerably less often in 2000 than in the very wet year 1998. The cut in fungicides was most noticeable in fungi-sensitive crops such as winter wheat, potatoes, onions, apples, pears and flower bulbs.

Use of pesticides halved in corn

According to Statistics Netherlands only 0.8 kilograms of pesticides per hectare was used in growing corn, as opposed to 2 kilograms in 1998. Corn fell from a 3rd to the 8th place in top ranking pesticide-requiring crops. Since early 2000 the compensation for growers is cut when they don't meet the required usage limit of less than 1 kilogram of active matter per hectare. The compensation is for lower subsidies and prices. In 2000 about 75% of crop growers met the standard.

Pesticide use for growing apples and pears down by a third

Fighting fungi in apples and pears required a third less chemicals in 2000 than in 1998. After corn these two crops had the greatest cut in pesticide use. Fungous disease did not occur as much in 2000 and the use of captan was cut out of environmental considerations. Captan is the most frequently used fungicide for apples and pears.

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Lily bulbs still top pesticide users

With 104 kilograms of pesticides per hectare, lilies have been by far the top pesticide users per hectare ever since the start of the Survey conducted by Statistics Netherlands in 1992. The use per hectare is 10% lower than in 1998, but the total area used for growing lilies increased by almost a third. This led to a 20% increase in the total use for this crop, bringing lilies to the second place in the top total pesticide use, after potatoes.

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