

Agricultural workers need protection against the use of harmful pesticides and fertilisers

One of the F2F Strategy's declared ambitions is to reduce significantly the use and risks of chemical pesticides, as well as fertilizers and antibiotics. EFFAT recalls that the use of these products is not only dangerous for the environment and consumers, but also for workers having to work with these chemicals. The protection of the health and safety of workers is one of EFFAT's top priorities.

EFFAT calls on the Commission to develop concrete measures in the framework of the F2F Strategy to enhance the protection of agricultural workers exposed to fertilizers, pesticides and other dangerous chemical products.

In this respect, EFFAT urges the Commission to implement the following initiatives:

- Workers must receive comprehensive information about the use and the associated dangers related to the use of pesticides.
- Workers who actively apply pesticides should receive training to handle the pesticides most carefully.
- Protective equipment and training must always be provided to workers for free.
- Each agricultural worker must be able to get official documentation reporting the type of pesticide used during their work activity.
- The use of dangerous pesticides (based on WHO and PAN Europe lists) should be prohibited as they continue to pose a major risk to workers, consumers and the environment. Food products treated with such pesticides should not be imported.
- The use of glyphosate is currently approved in the EU, with its licence having been extended until 15 December 2022. This herbicide is still suspected to be carcinogenic. EFFAT continues to call for its immediate ban.
- Not using pesticides is the best way to protect workers, consumers and the environment. Organic farming and other environmentally-friendly farming methods should therefore be promoted and integrated into vocational training systems.