



European Mobile Seed Association

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## **EMSA statement on farm spraying techniques and seed treatments**

The European Mobile Seed Association – EMSA - represents Mobile seed processors in Europe. Mobile seed processors are the professionals who, with an adequate technical equipment and the necessary knowhow, allow farmers to replant their own seed. They are therefore promoting the benefits of farm saved seed for the competitiveness of the European agriculture, the biodiversity and the rural economy.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has repercussions for agriculture throughout the EU and the world, including the alteration of the supply of plant protection products, such as fertilizers. The European Union is already taking emergency measures on agriculture to combat this situation. However, the EU Farm to Fork Strategy may be challenged in the near future, due to possible consequences of the conflict on food security in Europe.

By using bespoke seed treatments, mobile seed processors are implementing the circular economy principles on a daily basis. They are already directly contributing to reach the 50% reduction target in the use of pesticide and the 20 % reduction target in the use of fertilizers by 2030, as planned in the Farm to Fork Strategy. Regardless of the possible revision of the reduction targets, because of the war in Ukraine, EMSA members are convinced that the Farm to Fork Strategy should still promote a more sustainable use of plant protection products by promoting soil spraying together with seed treatments and farm-saved seeds.

EMSA believes that the revision process of the various legislations on plant protection products (such as the Regulation EC 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market) must encompass the new spraying techniques.

EMSA is in favour of seed treatments and farm-saved seeds, as compared to crop spraying, for the following reasons:

- By focusing on targeted treatments, active ingredients to the soil are not lost on air application. Fifty percent less chemicals are need for soil spraying, in comparison with air spraying;
- Less highly pathogen specific products are used, as evidence show that sprays have many more side effects to the crop or the environment;
- Active ingredients used on a very targeted way means very low doses per hectare and more environmentally friendly treatments.
- It is also well known that some seed and soil borne diseases can only be controlled by a seed treatment A typical example is bunt in wheat (*Tilletia caries*). In these cases, spraying is useless;
- Seed treatments support biodiversity, by helping farmers maintain local cultivars, which are not economic enough for big plant breeders and seed merchants to get involved with;

- Finally, seed treatments mean fewer miles browsed, less CO2 emissions per tons treated with mobile seed processors and fewer vehicles on the roads, with less pollution.

These reduction efforts go together with EMSA's recommendations to farmers, to use 50 % of certified seeds, 50 % of farm safe, 30 % of which being prepared with mixed varieties. Through a wider application of innovative and precision farming techniques, economic operators, which are involved in the distribution and use of pesticides and fertilizers, generate additional and more sustainable business opportunities for the entire agriculture value chain.

Against this background, EMSA members are joining the machinery industry, machinery dealers, pesticides companies and the entire agriculture value chain in their effort to launch alternative products and machinery on the market, based on increased research programmes and tailor-made regulation.

### **About EMSA:**

Founded in 2010, the European Mobile Seed Association represents professional seed processors in Europe, which provide farmers with a specially tailored mobile seed preparation service.

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