



OFFICE INTERNATIONAL

du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

association sans but lucratif

Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux
Membre d'Europa Nostra
Statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

International Year of the soils

Campaign without pesticides

A call to all allotment and home gardeners at the occasion of the
Week without Pesticides

The EU directive 2009/128/CE stipulates that all EU member states must take before 1st January 2014 the necessary measures to try to encourage plant protection by using the least amount of plant protection products possible.

The practical application seems to have been delayed in many countries.

Therefore the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux and all its affiliated federations invite all their members at the occasion of the pesticide action week to renounce on a voluntary basis as much as possible to use plant protection products and to use on the contrary all the measures offered by an integrated pest management.

As appendix you find explanations and a call with guidelines for a natural gardening



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Integrated Plant Protection: a global approach

1)EU requirements

As part of protecting human health and the environment, Directive 2009/128/CE stipulates that all EU member states must take the necessary measures to try to encourage plant protection **by using the least amount of plant protection products possible.**

Therefore, member states are asked to adopt national plans of action. These should describe the manner in which the member states will make sure that all professional and private users apply the **general rules regarding pest control to protect plants** by 1st January 2014 at the latest.

Integrated pest management is part of the **best practice** that must be followed according to the law to protect plants, and therefore it is obligatory. Best practice should not be seen as fixed, but rather as a dynamic system that constantly evolves in line with new information and viable practice. There are different possibilities that allow new pest control methods to be put in place to protect plants, and these vary greatly according to the state of development of the practice in different cultures. On this topic, Directive 2009/128/CE comments that the application by all farmers of **specific guidelines around different cultures or sectors** that are involved in pest control to protect plants should result in better usage of all types of measures against parasites and especially pesticides. It must also further limit risks to human health and the environment, as well as the dependence on using pesticides.

The directive also imposes an obligation to offer appropriate incentives to **encourage users to choose to apply on a voluntary basis the specific guidelines on an integrated pest management in the different cultures or sectors.** The specific guidelines to different cultures or sectors must serve firstly to encourage the introduction of pest control to protect plants in theory and in practice. Furthermore, the guidelines constitute the basis for the further development of an integrated pest management. These also allow us to see where the appropriate methods and procedures are lacking, or where they are at an experimental stage.

The public authorities and/or organisations representing professional users can devise these guidelines. The guidelines on an integrated plant protection must also be devised for allotment gardens and private gardens. This is why for example the *Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde* (German allotment garden association) and 15 other associations have joined together to prepare **guidelines** including recommendations to introduce measures aimed at the **allotment and private garden sector.** These are based on the general principles of an integrated pest management, which appear in Annex III of Directive 2009/128/CE.

2) The role of gardens in society

Gardens are part of our culture: they are essential today and tomorrow. Gardening is one of Germany's most popular pastimes, and the trend is at a high. 70% prefer to relax at home in their free time, whilst 38% name "gardening and DIY" as their favourite activities. With changing values and the shift from a leisure society to a community formed around a vision, the idea of the garden as a "green place to live" has also changed. The garden is therefore increasingly appreciated as a place to rest, whether alone or with family and friends. There are around 17 million private gardens in Germany, of which 1 million are allotment gardens. Our society must now face up to big changes, represented especially by a fragile economic and social system, falling incomes and a worry over unemployment. So, all of this encourages a change in individual values and mentality. The consumption of experiences is now over. In fact, we are seeing a clear trend in people retreating to the private sphere. Gardens influence our impression of a people-friendly environment in both a conscious and unconscious way. In these uncertain times, they provide stability, respond to the wish for a controlled nature, and are synonymous with a creative workshop, a space for communication, feelings and experience. Gardens allow you to grow food in a natural way whilst experiencing the pleasure of being self-sustainable. They constitute a place for life-long learning, as well as an oasis of wellbeing and health. For many people, the garden is not just about keeping yourself busy and relaxing, but also represents a place of self-supply of vegetables, aromatic herbs and fresh fruit. As a hobby, gardening is a perfect fit for a number of requirements and criteria (currently under debate) for a sustainable way of life and consumption.

Besides their social and integration purposes, gardens have a positive effect on the urban climate (improving air quality, reducing noise levels, cooling effects and unsealed land use). With regards to their role in the total usable agricultural land in Germany, gardens present a potential stronghold of diversity of species and variety in arable farming, and therefore are an important contributor to

biodiversity. Gardens represent a refuge for local rarities. By creating small and micro biotopes, as well as by using objects and methods that encourage the presence of useful organisms, amateur gardeners also contribute to the protection of biodiversity. They actively participate in the protection of nature and species. This also allows different insects, and therefore natural predators of pests, to find a home and a food source. This is particularly the case with a numerous fruit trees and ornamental plants which, due to their flowers, attract a number of useful insect groups, such as bees, bumblebees, syrphid flies and ichneumon wasps, and therefore help to guarantee a harvest whilst representing a living classroom.

People without access to a garden can opt for planters and pots on a balcony and terrace. Nonetheless, no matter the size and actual use of the garden, healthy and strong plants play an important role. A property's value will notably increase thanks to a well maintained garden. Gardening culture is therefore a central pillar of society. Today, and also tomorrow, gardens are vital: they are not a luxury, but part of our culture.

3)The specific function of allotment and home gardeners

Not only professional gardeners are confronted with diseases and pollution that lower the quality and harvests, but also the private gardeners. Vegetables, fruits and ornamental plants must all be protected from pests. The intensity of pest control against parasites, as well as the issue of knowing if the use of plant protection products is necessary, is relative to the objectives and the size of the economic operation, however. In fact, contrary to professional horticulture, there are three principals that apply to gardens that need to provide sufficient harvests for the kitchen and home:

- **Amateur gardeners voluntarily accept a certain degree of manual work to enjoy the garden and nature.**
- **In allotment gardens, cultivation is independent of market requirements. The lack of external quality is more willingly accepted.**
- **Large returns are not absolutely necessary.**

Private gardens cope better with living with pollution and diseases than in professional horticulture. However, having healthy plants remains the goal of all amateur gardeners. To achieve this goal, the principals of pest control to protect plants must be respected. Primarily this means combining different practices in order to limit the use of plant protection products as much as possible, with the aim of **completely stopping using them**. In fact, today there are biological and biotechnical and selection solutions to choose from, as well as farming and cultivation techniques that solve a lot of problems.

Before using plant protection products in the garden, a series of other measures should be respected. However, even if they are a "last resort", **plant protection products are also part of the global approach to pest control against the enemies of crops in the allotment and kitchen garden sector.**

4) Summary

The fight against pests of all kinds represents a more or less essential intervention that in the natural lifecycle of organisms and in nature's balance. It is important to understand that the infestations and diseases caused by parasites are completely natural in the vegetable kingdom, and that a gardener's job is only to reduce the consequences of this type of host-parasite relationship to an acceptable level

You will find more information on this topic for example:

for Germany at www.nap-pflanzenschutz.de as well as in the *Naturgemäß gärtnern – Gute fachliche Praxis im Kleingarten* brochure (Environmentally-friendly gardening: good ways of working in the vegetable garden) published by the *Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde e.V.* (central allotment garden federation) in Berlin, as well as on the website www.kleingarten-bund.de

for Luxembourg in the March issues of the allotment magazine "Gaard an Heem"

for Switzerland on the website: www.familiengaertner.ch and in the brochure: The leisure garden –that is cultivated in a respectful way of nature . In Switzerland there is a consultation on the

action plan Biodiversity 2020. Its aim is among others that there will be no pesticide on display in the shops. Pesticides can only be bought after having received advice and selling by specialized people. Aim and purpose of the use must be indicated.

For the International Office

Thomas Wagner

scientific employee of the Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde (Central allotment garden federation)



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**Call by the Office International du Coin de Terre et
des Jardins Familiaux:
five steps to environmentally-friendly gardening**

What must be respected in order to evolve into a natural way of gardening?

Environmentally-friendly gardening: almost everybody has already heard that phrase said, but very few people know what it means in practice. The checklist below explains, in five steps, how to cultivate in your garden in a natural way and the rules to follow in order to do that. Not only will you be helping to protect the environment, but you will also get delicious fruit and vegetables from your own land, free from the residue of plant protection chemicals.

1. Preparation of the soil

In order for seeds to germinate and plants to grow well, gardening work starts each year by the preparation of the soil. Loosen the soil so that the water, heat and light can penetrate it. Then cover up the soil with a layer of organic material (mulch) such as straw, healthy vegetable waste, grass cuttings or well-decomposed compost. This will have an effect on the temperature of the soil, stimulate life in the soil and reduce the leaching of fertilizers.

2. Fertilizing

The use of fertilizer often plays too big a role. In fact, not all plants have the same appetite. Although ornamental plants generally have few nutritional requirements as opposed to vegetable gardens, where hunger reigns. Carry out a soil analysis to determine the need for nutrients and limestone. Very often, the less you do the better. Two to three litres of compost per square metre is usually enough to guarantee the healthy growth of plants. It is even possible to avoid non-organic fertilizer. Not only will that save money, but it will also stop the soil and ground water from becoming needlessly loaded with fertilizer.

3. Plant selection

Failing to rotate the types of plants you grow can cause problems over time. Always having the same species in the same place absorbs all of the same nutrients from the soil, and also causes what is called soil depletion. That is why your choice of plants must be planned, especially if you are growing vegetables. A sensible crop rotation offers better growing conditions to be successful with fruits and vegetables, and it consists of varying the types of plants over several years with a planned approach. This guarantees the soil's fertility, repels pathogens and harmful substances in the soil, and reduces the accumulation of pollutants in the soil.

4. Plant protection

An integrated pest management is the key to success. In an ideal scenario, by combining different natural methods, you can succeed in completely avoiding the use of plant protection products. It takes a bit of effort, but collecting pests like caterpillars, snails or beetles has shown to still be very useful today. The following also helps: fertilizers including minerals, bacteria or beneficial fungi, as well as bait and traps, for example pheromone traps against codling moths, whose presence means unappetizing larvae.

5. Stimulating auxiliary organisms

Finally, you can also largely avoid using chemical plant protection products by creating spaces, refuges and hibernation places for auxiliary organisms such as certain insects, spiders, birds and mammals. These natural protectors of gardens also need small biotopes and nesting areas, as well as a suitable food source.

You will find more information on this topic for example:

for Austria in the course documents on a nature friendly gardening

for Germany in the *Naturgemäß gärtnern – Gute fachliche Praxis im Kleingarten* brochure (Environmentally-friendly gardening: good ways of working in the vegetable garden) published by the *Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde e.V.* (central allotment garden federation) in Berlin, as well as on the website www.kleingarten-bund.de

For **the Netherlands** on the website: <http://www.avvn.nl/natuurlijk-tuinieren/> where you will find information related to the program: Natuurlijk Tuinieren, where the Dutch organisation promotes environmental gardening and helps their members going to the ideal track on the allotments; much of the information is interesting for private gardeners as well.

for Switzerland on the website: www.familiengaertner.ch and for example in the brochures:-The leisure garden –cultivated in a way that is respectful of nature

- The garden as pastureland for bees
- Friendly gardens for butterflies

As well as on the positive list by Mr.Hörler

For the International Office

ThomasWagner

scientific employee of the Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde (Central allotment garden federation)