

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING / JOINT DECLARATION OF INTENT

BETWEEN THE PARTNERS OF THE

EUROPEAN RESEARCH ALLIANCE “TOWARDS A CHEMICAL PESTICIDE-FREE
AGRICULTURE”

Dated **20 February 2020**, the Partners are:

1. Aarhus University (DK)
2. Agricultural Academy (BG)
3. Agricultural University of Athens (GR)
4. Agroscope (CH)
5. Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (IT)
6. Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (FR)
7. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IT)
8. Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (HU)
9. Institut national de recherche pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation et l'environnement - INRAE (FR)
10. Instytut Biotechnologii Przemysłu Rolno-Spożywczego - IBPRS (PL)
11. Julius Kühn-Institut - JKI (DE)
12. Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LV)
13. Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research - ZALF (DE)
14. National Agriculture Research and Innovation Centre - NAIK (HU)
15. Natural Resources Institute Finland - Luke (FI)
16. Rzeszow University of Technology (PL)
17. Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (IT)
18. Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences - SLU (SE)
19. Szent István University (HU)
20. Teagasc - Agriculture and Food Development Authority (IE)
21. Universitatea de Științe Agricole și Medicină Veterinară - USAMV - Bucurest (RO)
22. University of Life Sciences in Lublin (PL)
23. Vytautas Magnus University Agriculture Academy (LI)
24. Zagreb University, Faculty of Agriculture (HR)

ARTICLE I – Aim of the Memorandum of Understanding / Joint Declaration of Intent

This Memorandum of Understanding / Joint Declaration of Intent (MoU) establishes a collaborative relationship between the Partners, which shall be conducted in a coordinated manner as the European Research Alliance “Towards a Chemical Pesticide-Free Agriculture”. It establishes the responsibilities of the Partners and adherence to the general principles for their cooperation.

ARTICLE II – Objectives of the European Research Alliance “Towards a Chemical Pesticide-Free Agriculture”

The purpose of the Research Alliance is to help develop a sustainable European agri-food system free of chemical pesticides.

To achieve this, the Partners will work together and with other relevant actors to develop a transdisciplinary research and innovation agenda that is aligned with the ‘European Green Deal’ priorities to deliver an environment-friendly, sustainable, fair, just and competitive agri-food sector across the whole value chain.

At the forefront of agricultural, technological, natural, socio-economic and regulatory sciences, we will establish and promote the prioritization of research needs and knowledge exchange, from basic to applied research. This research and innovation agenda will serve as a basis to facilitate discussions within the European Union and global agricultural community to establish high impact, tangible research and innovation projects on this topic.

Partners will also foster collaborations within their countries and at EU level to develop plans and proposals for future research programmes and for policy support, so that they will improve the sustainability and competitiveness of the sector, especially in regards to integrated management systems. Partners will thus raise awareness of the importance of the issue and the need for a strong research and innovation paradigm shift supported by dedicated funding.

ARTICLE III – Activities of the European Research Alliance “Towards a Chemical Pesticide-Free Agriculture”

The Partners of the European Research Alliance “Towards a Chemical Pesticide-Free Agriculture” will conduct various collaborative activities on the related topics, which may include one or more of the following:

I. Mobility

- Actively support the exchange of researchers, engineers and specialists.

II. Research

- Enhance research co-operation through establishment of multi-lateral research projects, and by reinforcing cooperation at institutional level;
- Coordinate and share information related to funding opportunities and proposal calls from the European Commission;

- Jointly participate in international research or training programmes;
- Organize joint seminars, workshops and conferences with complementary themes and goals;
- Implement actions to promote the topic and to foster its relevance in national, trans-national or EU calls;
- Promote the alignment between national and European agenda.

III. Others

- Write position papers related to the topics of the Alliance;
- Conduct any other type of cooperation as agreed upon between the Parties.

ARTICLE IV – **Specific Arrangements**

Activities (joint scientific project, sharing of infrastructures, etc.) will require, when necessary, a separate agreement to this MoU, which will include all relevant information, such as responsibilities and resource commitment of each Partner, implementation plan, confidentiality and Intellectual property rights, etc.

Each project must be approved by authorised representatives of involved Partners before it is undertaken.

ARTICLE V - **Financial Responsibilities**

The co-operation described above will in every case be dependent upon the availability of funds. For each activity, the Partners will define financial responsibilities based on the following principle: the Partners will assume the costs for their staff and their participation in cooperative activities, except when the Partners decide otherwise.

ARTICLE VI - **The Nature of the MoU**

This MoU represents each Partner's willingness to cooperate and to explore possible avenues of collaboration but does not constitute a legal obligation with legal, limiting or binding effect. Any obligation or liability to be undertaken by any Partner will require and must be set forth in the separate agreement foreseen in article IV.

Nothing in this MoU modifies existing bilateral agreements between the Partners or any other bilateral or reciprocal arrangement that the Partners may have with other countries.

ARTICLE VII - **Management of the MoU**

The executive officers responsible for coordinating and carrying out this MoU will be respectively designated by the signatories. These executive officers will also make up the MoU management committee. This committee will meet regularly to determine the activities to be carried out in the following period.

ARTICLE VIII - Intellectual Property and Confidentiality

The Partners will discuss intellectual property rights and confidentiality for each initiative carried out under this MoU in compliance with the laws of each country. Provisions related to intellectual property rights and confidentiality will be detailed in separate agreements as outlined in Article IV.

ARTICLE IX – Governing law and settlement of disputes

The terms of this MoU and any dispute arising there from shall be governed by the law of defendant.

Any dispute between two or more Partners concerning the interpretation and the execution of this MoU, shall be settled by negotiation between the involved Partners or by another agreed mode of settlement.

ARTICLE X - Duration and Amendment

This MoU takes effect on 23 February 2020.

This MoU takes effect for a period of 8 years from this date. After a joint assessment by the Partners, it may be renewed.

This MoU may be amended with the mutual written consent of all Partners.

Any Partner can revoke its membership of the European Research Alliance “Towards a Chemical Pesticide-Free Agriculture” with 3 calendar months notice. The revocation does not have any effect on possible on-going separate agreements that will be brought to end, unless differently specified in the separate agreements themselves.