Promoting drift-reducing precision farming techniques

CAP-funded precision spraying for Dutch fruit farm reduces pollution risks by 90%, creates cost savings, and enhances environmental performance.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Maurik, Netherlands
Programming period: 2014-2020
Priority: P4 - Ecosystems management
Focus Area: Biodiversity restoration, preservation & enhancement
Measures: M04 - Investments in physical assets

Funding:		
	Total budget	78 765 (EUR)
	EAFRD	10 000 (EUR)
	National/Regional	10 000 (EUR)
	Private/own	58 765 (EUR)

Timeframe: 17/02/2020 - 30/06/2023
Project promoter: Oostveenfruit BV
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Summary

Oostveenfruit BV is a Dutch family company that has been producing and processing apples, pears, and cherries since 1957. The business is committed to high-quality production, and the fruit is grown in an environmentally conscious manner. To reduce the environmental impact of their activities, the company used CAP investment support to acquire a drift-reducing sprayer that reduces emissions in pesticide use and makes it easier to control plant diseases.

Project results

- The sprayer has enabled a reduction in pesticide emissions by 90%, thus making a significant contribution to the protection of air and water quality.

Key lessons and recommendations

- Precision farming can help improve farm competitiveness and environmental resilience.
- CAP funding for farmers can help family businesses operate sustainable food production systems.
- The project holder used an intermediary to prepare the application for CAP investment support and believes that, thanks to this, it was a straightforward process.

Context

Oostveenfruit is a Dutch family business founded in 1957. The company produces apples, pears, and cherries in its orchards in Maurik, Werkendam, Nieuwendijk and Nieuwegein. The head office is in Maurik in the De Betuwe region, where, in addition to cultivation, the fruit are cooled, sorted and packaged, to be sold directly to trade and retail. The company's fruit is grown in an environmentally conscious manner, and is of high quality. The company has received the 'GLOBALG.A.P.', 'On the way to PlanetProof', and 'Grasp' certifications, and is also a member of SEDEX. These certifications stand for sustainability, food safety, and good working conditions.

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Knowing that water and air quality are under pressure in the Netherlands, the company applied for support from the Rural Development Programme (RDP) to modernise their production using agricultural machinery and equipment that helps reduce water and air pollution.

Objectives

The aim of this farm investment project was to help reduce the negative impact of agriculture on the environment by acquiring a more efficient spaying machine.

Activities

CAP support helped the company to purchase a new drift-reducing sprayer for apples and pears. The Munckhof Air System makes use of precision techniques to reduce pesticide emissions. The device sprays 'venturi drops', very small droplets made up of water and pesticide, instead of a haze. This directs pesticides to the right place and reduces the influence of wind. The sprayer can generate a draft of air in the desired direction so that the pesticide is targeted to the affected plants with greater precision.

Main results

- The new drift-reducing sprayer reduced pesticide emissions by 90%, which helps improve water and air quality.
- The use of precision farming techniques, such as this drift-reducing sprayer, allows farmers to use a wider variety of pesticides with minimum emission limits, making it more effective overall in disease control.

Key lessons and recommendations

- Precision farming practices can boost competitiveness while reducing pollution risks.
- The process of applying for CAP investment support was a straightforward and positive experience for the farmer. The request for subsidy was carried out by an intermediary on the farmer's behalf, which made the whole process very smooth.

"We now make use of more advanced techniques. That reduces our impact on the environment and makes spraying more effective".

Wouter Oostveen

Additional information:

Website:
www.oostveenfruit.nl

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