

Nationwide survey on the use of Pesticides in area of home and allotments gardens

Abstract

Under the Sustainable Use Directive and the NAP, a nationwide survey on the use of plant protection products in the area of home gardens and allotments was conducted. The survey results reflect the growing ecological awareness in society and the increasing focus on leisure and recreation in otherwise stressful daily life. It shows a shift from the use of pure kitchen garden for the cultivation of healthy, unpolluted foods towards the ornamental garden as an extended living and recreation room. While in kitchen gardens the cultivation of fruits and vegetable dominates, plant diversity in the home garden is increasingly giving way to low maintenance sealed surfaces.

In addition to a growing rejection of pesticides (particularly among allotment holders) the demand for biological alternatives and more robust, resilient crops increases. Nevertheless, the chemical crop protection application amounts to half of all measures in the context of plant protection. They are mainly undertaken against snails and weeds. For the main motive having beautiful, healthy plants, about every 2nd amateur gardener applies pesticides. However, only a few confess to having enough knowledge concerning the handling of pesticides. Besides this hobby gardeners using seemingly biologically sounding agents as potash, canola oil or home-made liquids in an often careless way, not being aware of their effects on the environment are watched critically by experts. Suggestions for this measurement are mainly from the internet.

The internet gained importance as a source of information significantly, in addition to the mainly preferred used garden books and gardening magazines. Official advice centers and phytosanitary services are rarely used, but most credible information sources. Also, the delivery of pesticide residues at designated collection points is used quite seldom. Most pesticide residues are stored until consumption, often without paying much attention to weathering effects.

As a consequence the task has to be, to provide lost and new knowledge, in the right form and the right media to the target group, to ensure the sustainable protection of man, animals, and the natural environment.