

Newsletter

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This Newsletter summarizes the major achievements, news and activities of ECAF and its National Associations in the field of Conservation Agriculture.

EDITION

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LATEST EVENTS

Launch report on Conservation Agriculture and Climate Change Mitigation



Gottlieb Basch presenting the report at the European Parliament in July 2017.

ECAF General Assembly



7th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture



ECAF ACHIEVEMENTS

Book release

ECAF has recently released an ambitious report on Climate Change and Conservation Agriculture, entitled **'Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe'**

UPCOMING EVENTS

ECAF General Assembly will take place on **March, 7th-8th, 2018, in Konya, Turkey.**

Each association also shares the Conservation Agriculture situation in their countries, from adoption rates until legal issues, as well as their concerns.

latest events

1

ECAF participated in the European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly 2017 within the scientific session entitled "Land Degradation and Development", last April 2017. An open session where the societal, economic and biophysical aspects of the Land Degradation were discussed, from methods and approaches to results.



ECAF President giving an oral presentation about sustainable soil management in the EGU General Assembly 2017, Vienna (Austria), April 25th 2017.

The launch of the report **Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe** has resulted in organising high level meetings at the European Parliament and also at the European Commission, where the main results of the report have been tabled.

2



Gottlieb Basch presenting the report 'Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe' within a plenary session of the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development at the European Parliament in July 2017.



Meeting participants in Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, September 2017.



Work-meeting with participants of Directorate General for the Environment and of Directorate General for Climate Action, October 2017.

ECAF organised a workshop in Brussels to make the most of synergies between the national associations promoting conservation agriculture. In this workshop a position paper concerning the public consultation on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) launched by Commissioner Phil Hogan was written. ECAF submitted its position paper and the reply to the consultation, highlighting the opportunity that CA represents for the modernisation and simplification of the CAP.

3

In this context, ECAF participated in the European Workshop that the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) hosted to present the results of the consultation on the future CAP last July 7th in Brussels.



Workshop 'Have your say!' organised by DG AGRI, Brussels, July 7th 2017.

4



Last October the 2nd, ECAF participated in the Lunch discussion about the renewal of glyphosate “#WithOrWithout Glyphosate” hosted by MEP Richard Ashworth at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. In the event, ECAF explained the three principles of CA, and the results of these two reports: “Benefits of Conservation Agriculture in

a Climate Change Environment” and “Socio-economic impact of Conservation Agriculture and the non-renewal of the glyphosate authorization in Spain”.

The presentation about the consequences that a ban of glyphosate would have from the economic, social and environmental points of view were showed to several MEPs and to their assistants.

ECAF representatives exchanged insights with Pekka Pesonen, Secretary-General of COPA-COGECA, in relation to a sustainable agriculture and the importance of counting on a great innovative sector that increase competitiveness and productivity in agriculture. There is a general mutual understanding between both organizations.

5



ECAF and COPA-COGECA meeting participants. Brussels, March 27th 2017.

ECAF and some of its National Associations participated in the 7th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture held in Rosario (Argentina) last August. Manifold oral presentations, posters, panels, debates and workshops were held in this framework to come up with practical solutions based on Conservation Agriculture to be able to produce crops / food, feed and fibers with the lower possible greenhouse gas emissions.

6



7 ECAF held its last General Assembly in Albacete (Spain) on the 8th of March, 2017. Issues such as the state-of-the-art of the different National Associations (almost all of them were represented), or the manifold advocacy actions that are being carried out on behalf of the European Conservation Agriculture community were tackled. Likewise, and as it was scheduled in the agenda of the meeting, a new board was appointed to the European Federation. Additionally, on March 9th 2017, General Assembly attendees enjoyed a field day tour at Dehesa de los Llanos and Munibañez Farm.



Field day tour at 'Dehesa de los Llanos'. Albacete (Spain), March 9th 2017.



Field day tour. Visit to "Munibañez farm". Albacete (Spain), March 9th 2017.



Field day tour at 'Dehesa de los Llanos'. Albacete (Spain), March 9th 2017.



Field day tour at 'Dehesa de los Llanos'. Albacete (Spain), March 9th 2017.



Members of ECAF and other stakeholders at the ASALBAC presentation. Albacete, March 9th 2017.



Participants at ECAF General Assembly. Albacete (Spain), March 8th and 9th 2017.

Upcoming events

ECAF General Assembly will take place on March, 7th-8th, 2018, in Konya, Turkey.

The ECAF General Assembly is an annual event that brings together representatives from the National Associations for Conservation Agriculture into one meeting covering all topics in the field.

It is the aim of ECAF to provide a forum where works can be presented. Each association also shares the Conservation Agriculture situation in their countries, from adoption rates until legal issues, as well as their concerns.



In the second semester of 2018, in the framework of the LIFE + Climagri project an European Workshop will be hosted in Brussels to present the project results. Please visit <http://www.climagri.eu/index.php/en/> for further details.

ECAF achievements

☞ ECAF has recently released an ambitious report on Climate Change and Conservation Agriculture, entitled '**Conservation Agriculture: Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Real in Europe**'. This report explains why Conservation Agriculture (CA) practices can help to meet the climate change challenge in the EU, having shown to be the most resource-efficient and effective practices to achieve sustainability in agriculture, while fighting climate change at the same time. Conservation Agriculture is a holistic and widely applicable production system that increases the soil's capacity to sequester carbon, thus reduces carbon in the atmosphere.

It is estimated that the adoption of these soil-conserving farming practices on the total of the EU farm land (103,7 million hectares), taking into account the annual cropland and the land under permanent crops, **could reduce CO₂ in the atmosphere by nearly 190 million tonnes**. This reduction represents the 20% of the goals agreed on the "Framework 2030", the 2030 framework for Climate and Energy of the EU. Thus, the widespread adoption of Conservation Agriculture would represent an enormous contribution to the overall sustainability of agriculture and to its environmental performance and climate action.

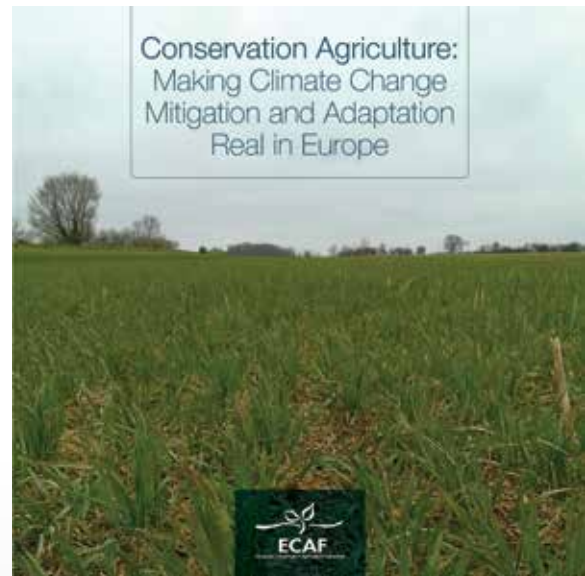
☞ Gottlieb Basch, President of ECAF, has been recently selected to participate in the EIP-AGRI Focus Group on 'Moving from source to sink arable farming'.

☞ Pedro Maestre de León. October 2017 Zerosion Award – Bioingeniería del Paisaje – BPS group.

The farm belongs to the INSPIA European Farms Network. INSPIA promotes sustainable agriculture through the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs).

In the farm, rainfed wheat, sunflower and pulses are cultivated utilizing no tillage under the principles of Conservation Agriculture.

Being a AEAC.SV member since its establishment, he is currently testing multifunctional areas to increase biodiversity of the farm and also to act as a buffer in the event of any product leak.



Facts and figures

- Just 4 hectares under CA would negate the average annual emissions of a European citizen. (1)
- One hectare under CA would compensate emissions equivalent to 14 car journeys from Paris to Berlin. (2)
- Adoption of CA across Europe would sequester the CO₂ emitted by 18 million households. Or the emissions from electricity generation for 25 million households. (3)
- The carbon sequestration due to the adoption of CA across Europe would be equivalent to the emissions saving obtained by the installation of over 43,000 wind turbines. (3)
- Implementation of CA in Europe would reduce as much emissions as the closure of 50 coal-fired power plants. (3)
- If all European farmland was converted to CA, it would reduce atmospheric carbon by as much as planting 65 million hectares of forest. (3)
- For every hectare converted to CA in Europe the emissions of a return flight from London to Athens are removed from the atmosphere. (2)

According to: (1) Eurostat; (2) Naturefund CO₂ Calculator; (3) EPA Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

ECAF achievements



Fabienne Bauer at WCCA7, Argentina, during the presentation of ECAF bid for hosting the next WCCA8.

Fabienne Bauer, as representative of Swiss No-Till, the Swiss National Association for Conservation Agriculture, presented a joint proposal from ECAF and Swiss no-till to host the next World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (WCCA8) in Berne (Switzerland) next 2020. This proposal was selected among all the candidacies.

Conservation Agriculture is practiced in Switzerland since the 80s. Since 2009 CA is also fostered by the Swiss government. According to the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, today around 18% of the arable land in Switzerland is under CA, with 5% no-tillage and 13% reduced tillage. The tendency towards the adoption of CA is increasing due to a higher awareness of soil fertility issues and governmental measures to enhance soil protection by CA practices. In this context, Berne is the canton with the highest adoption of CA and is therefore ideally suited to host the WCCA8.

ECAF was the first CA association organizing the WCCA1 and will be the official organizer of WCCA8 jointly with Swiss No-Till. ECAF, apart from its long-standing experience, offers an extensive network of CA scientists, policy makers, practitioners, entrepreneurs and agribusinesses throughout all Europe which will be important to attract a broad variety of influential speakers and a wide audience.

National As



APAD - France

- ✎ The French Association for Conservation Agriculture (APAD), organised in May 30th -31st the 4th Field day of Conservation Agriculture in Nouan-le-Fuzelier (France). There were 5 workshops tackled at the event: Soil, water, winter crops, spring crops and the testimony of the farmers.
- ✎ APAD displayed a stand in the *Salon de l'Agriculture*, in Paris last March, where many professionals from the agriculture and agrifood sectors gathered.



APAD team with Francois Hollande, President of France in the 'Salon de l'Agriculture'. Paris (France), March 2017.



FRDK - Denmark

The Danish Association for Conservation Agriculture (FRDK) held last March its annual meeting. It counted on 100 enthusiastic farmers and many speakers that showed a high interest and awareness in implementing the CA techniques. Studies and trials on a number of different species such as beetles and spiders under CA management were presented.



Members of FRDK at their annual meeting. March 2017.

sociations Activities



AEAC.SV - Spain

✧ The Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture-Living Soils presented its last recent study entitled “The Benefits of Conservation Agriculture in a Climate Change context” in Madrid last May 18th. The event was introduced by Carlos Cabanas, General Secretary of Agriculture and Food in the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment. It also counted with the presence of Fernando Miranda-Sotillos, General Director for Agricultural Productions and Markets, in the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment and also with Jesús Gil Ribes, and Rafael Espejo, President and Vice-President of AEAC.SV respectively.

✧ In the last few months, the Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture - Living Soils has taken part in different meetings with political stakeholders, as member of the platform “Sustainable Agriculture Alliance (ALAS)”, to convey its concern about the renewal or not of the marketing authorisation of glyphosate. In this sense, several personalities have known the Platform’s position, in particular the Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, Mr. Miguel Arias Cañete, who is aware of the problem that the non-renewal would suppose for a model of agriculture based on no tillage.

✧ Last October 26th, the AEAC.SV organised jointly with Asaja Sevilla a field day on Conservation Agriculture within the framework of the LIFE+ Climagri project.



Debate among Fernando Miranda (General Director for Agricultural Productions and Markets- Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment), Miguel Barnuevo-Rocko (AEAC.SV representative) and Jose Carlos Caballero-Rubiato (Representative of the farmers’ union ASAJA).



INSPIA BMPs displayed by the Spanish technician Manuel Gómez. Las Cabezas de San Juan (Seville).



CA-UK

The Member of the British Parliament, Thérèse Coffey, visited the farm of the President of CA-UK, Tony Reynolds, a CA farm in south Lincolnshire.

Tony Reynolds and other local members of CA-UK, the British Association for Conservation Agriculture, took the opportunity to highlight the benefits of Conservation Agriculture (CA). They also presented the MP with a copy of ECAF’s (European Conservation Agriculture Federation) recent ‘Making Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption Real in Europe’ report, which looks at how the agricultural sector can respond to climate change through CA.



“Thérèse Coffey, member of the British Parliament, in field with Tony Reynolds and other local members of CA-UK, March 2017.

VALORFITO PRIZES 2016

The awards ceremony took place in Evora on May 5th with 16 prizes for the categories tendered: Quantity and Growth, (regional category); and Excellence, Investment, Cooperative and “Mission Impossible” (national categories).

APOSOLO had the honor of delivering one of the prizes, and it welcomed the success of this program which has already taken over 50% of the packaging of phytopharmaceuticals sold in the country. Alentejo is the region that presents the best results and the recovery of packages of almost 100%.

National Agricultural Fair

APOSOLO participated in the 54th National Agriculture Fair, which took place from June 10th to the 18th in Santarem, promoting the work developed by APOSOLO.



APOSOLO stand in the 54th National Agricultural Fair, Santarém (Portugal).

Last October 20th, the German Association for Conservation Agriculture (Gesellschaft für konservierende Bodenbearbeitung e.V.-GKB) jointly with ECAF hosted a working lunch during the Intercontinental Frankfurt Hotel on which the report on CA and Climate Change Mitigation was presented.



Field Day “Nova Agricoltura in Campo”, Foggia (Puglia, Southern Italy) July 20th 2017



“Nova Agricoltura in Campo” in Foggia (Puglia, Southern Italy) July 20th 2017

AIGACoS, the Italian Association for Conservation Agriculture, has contributed to the organization of “Nova Agricoltura in Campo” a Field Day for transferring of research results and technologies available, to over 1200 farmers and professional technicians. Is this Day innovations for farming without tillage / ploughing that are now available for all operating conditions. In Puglia and other 15 regions of Southern Italy, the renewed focus on CA is related to CAP support measures that have allocated up to 320 €/ha to farmers who adopt conservation agriculture for some annual crops (durum wheat and legumes). During the tour dedicated to CA, technicians of the present companies have demonstrated the wide range of solutions offered within “Nova Agricoltura in Campo”: direct drilling machinery with disc and anchors, and machines for minimum tillage adaptable to the most diverse types of soils. Besides, Low Pressure Tires, and Technologies of Precision Agriculture. Rippers and decompactors have completed the range of field demonstrations for those who have decided not to plough any longer the cereal croplands. A lively and interactive tour took place, with attentive and prepared visitors who have addressed to exhibitors a number of qualified technical questions.



Entrance of the field day event, “Nova Agricoltura in Campo” in Foggia (Puglia, Southern Italy) July 20th 2017.

ECAF projects in the pipeline

INSPIA



From the different advocacy activities, we emphasize in this newsletter the meeting with members of the Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate General and Joint Research Centre. In this meeting, the INSPIA Indicators were presented and a very enriching discussion took place. Commission members were quite intrigued about INSPIA Indicators due to the fact that in the Communication “Future of Food and Farming”, Indicators have a special place.

Meanwhile, the INSPIA platform, in which the INSPIA Indicators can be estimated is set to be used. INSPIA aims to provide for farmers a European index about sustainable productive agriculture based on monitoring different types of indicators – basically economic, social and environmental indicators – since this is what needs to be balanced to achieve sustainability. The indicators are tools to assess the status of sustainability, especially to highlight what needs to be changed to enhance sustainability. In this regard, society can help through enabling legislation, since the outcomes farmers need to achieve are also needed by society as a whole.

During the COP23 at Bonn, and through APAD representative, INSPIA was presented in the side-event of the Conference “A global farmer network mobilized for climate”.

LIFE + Climagri



The LIFE+ Climagri project aims to contribute to the adaptation of field irrigation crops to climate change at the same time as mitigating the effects of this phenomenon. This is achieved through the design and implementation of agronomic management systems based on the combined use of Best Management Practices. Their effectiveness in the mitigation of climate change and the adaptation of crops to the effects thereof has been verified on an experimental level. The consortium of this project is composed by ECAF, AEAC.SV, Asaja Sevilla, the Institute of Agricultural and Fishery Research and Training (IFAPA) and the University of Cordoba.

The LIFE+ Climagri project, is developed in the Mediterranean basin. This is one of the most vulnerable areas in Europe to climate change effects. It also deals exclusively with irrigation crops that are highly demanding in energy.

The management system is implemented on a pilot scale on a demonstration farm and on small demonstration plots in the South of Spain, and on a global scale in a European Network of Demonstration Farms located in Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy.

Last October 26th, a field day on Conservation Agriculture within the framework of the LIFE+ Climagri project was organized. During the day, more than 100 farmers gained firsthand knowledge on Conservation Agriculture as well as on better water management, fertility improvement, erosion reduction and fuel saving techniques.

Solace Project

ECAF is involved in advocacy activities of SolACE project, that has 25 partners in 14 countries and is funded under the European Union’s research and innovation programme Horizon 2020.

On account of this, ECAF participated in the Kick-off meeting of SolACE project ‘Solutions for improving Agroecosystem and Crop Efficiency for water and nutrient use’ that took place in Montpellier, June 26th to 28th 2017.



Comment on the Commission Communication on future of the next CAP

Action on Climate Change seems not-well bolstered on the Commission Communication adopted by the Commission on “The Future of Food and Farming”

After its examination, ECAF still detects some drawbacks on the environmental aspects of the future Common Agricultural Policy, especially those that have to do with climate change.

The urgency of climate action is not tackled. There are some references to climate in the document, mainly insisting in the constant need to reduce agricultural GHG emissions. It is pointed out that agricultural emissions have fallen since 1990, but not enough to meet Paris agreement targets. In addition, the CAP does not reflect the veracity of these emissions reductions, because these GHG emissions reductions were mainly due to reductions in livestock population, and also to reductions in fertiliser use mainly driven by the Nitrates and Water Framework Directives. ECAF’s view on this topic is that there is a great deal to be done as regards agricultural emissions. As it is shown in the ECAF last report on Conservation Agriculture and Climate Change, the adoption of CA in Europe would remove nearly 200 million tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere - enough to meet 20% of EU Paris Agreement emissions reductions targets. This major role of Conservation Agriculture on GHG emissions reductions is not considered and it should be included in the Communication.

Members of ECAF



ECAF Honorary Member
Dr Amir Kassam

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