



FAIRWAY

EU DECISION MAKERS

It is important for EU decision makers to know which nitrate and pesticide pollution mitigation practices are not only of experimentally proven effectiveness but are also acceptable to farmers for adoption.

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FURTHER DETAILS

[Rudolf, J. et al. \(2021\) Actor's feedback on practices for improvement of water quality in FAIRWAY case studies and interim project results. FAIRWAY Project Deliverable 7.2R 74 pp](#)

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KEY MESSAGE

There are potential synergies for evidence-based practices for reducing nitrate and pesticide pollution of drinking water resources, regarding their applicability, adoptability, and costs across EU.

EXPLANATION

Despite policy measures implemented in the EU from the early 1990s onwards to decrease pollution of drinking water resources by nitrates and pesticides, contamination remains a significant problem in some areas. The current view is that, although many practices have been shown to be effective in field trials, many are not used because they are not appropriate to the local situation, too expensive, or farmers are unwilling to adopt them for some other reason.

EVIDENCE

FAIRWAY made an inventory of all management practices used to reduce nitrate and pesticide losses in the [FAIRWAY case studies](#), combining it with a review of the scientific literature. A group of land managers from across the EU (mostly from COPA-COGECA and EUFRAS associations) were asked to choose from a short-list of those practices for which there was the best evidence, the 5 most promising management practices considering their applicability, cost and adoptability. The results show that there are some potential win-win solutions for all stakeholders involved if the following practices are used:

- for pesticides regulation - bio beds/filters and/or constructed wetland;
- for nitrate regulation - changes in the application method, grassed waterways and/or changes in cropping system and crop rotation.



Grassed buffer strip near a ditch, one of the potential win-win practices for both drinking water suppliers and farmers.