IPM adoption in my hub

Facilitation approach and progress made in IPM adoption

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fundación empresa universidad gallega

My group

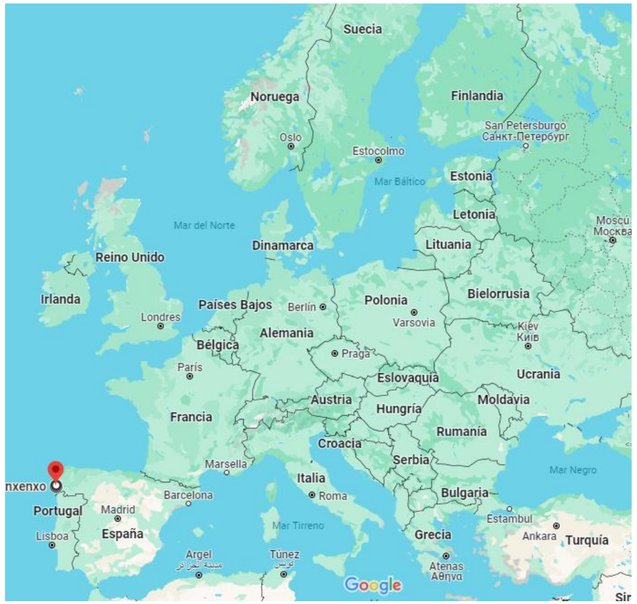
PRESENTATION OF THE HUB COACH ORGANISATION

The Galician Enterprise-University Foundation (FEUGA) is a non-profit, private-law entity, founded in 1982 and specialised in transferring knowledge, innovation and technology from the Galician university system to the business world and society in general.

The European Projects department of FEUGA assumes responsibility for overseeing the operations and management of the HUB.

THE HUB

The HUB consists of 12 winegrowers situated in the region spanning from Cambados to Rivadavia. Specializing in viticulture, these farmers cultivate varieties such as Albariño, Godello, and Treixadura, contributing to the production of distinctive wines.



OBJECTIVES AND MOTIVATIONS OF THE FARMERS

Farmers are actively seeking to diminish the frequency of phytosanitary applications and are eager to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. Their interest spans a wide range of aspects, encompassing preventive measures like specific pruning techniques, exploring mechanical solutions, engaging in landscape and biodiversity management, and incorporating alternative natural products. This comprehensive approach reflects their commitment to sustainable and environmentally conscious farming practices.

DRIVERS

Farmers are deeply committed to sustainable and environmentally conscious farming practices. They recognize that heavy reliance on phytosanitary treatments not only has environmental repercussions but also poses risks with the emergence of resistance and the potential for treatments to be restricted or prohibited. This awareness underscores their dedication to finding alternative, ecologically sound approaches to ensure the long-term health and viability of their agricultural practices.

BARRIERS

The farmers express reluctance to experiment with less-tested approaches due to concerns about potential losses. The challenging climate, characterized by frequent rainfall in the region, exacerbates their apprehension. Given that the predominant issues revolve around fungal diseases, this cautious approach reflects their need for reliable and proven strategies to navigate the complex environmental conditions while minimizing risks to their agricultural endeavors.

IPM challenges and results

IPM Challenges

What were the main IPM challenges?

The primary hurdle inhibiting winegrowers from adopting Integrated Pest Management is the absence of viable solutions to combat diseases such as mildew.
Galicia's abundant rainfall and humid climate create favorable conditions for this fungal disease. Controlling mildew involves strategic management practices and often necessitates chemical interventions. The region's farmers grapple with finding effective solutions to mitigate mildew's impact on crop yields while considering the environmental implications of their pest management strategies.

The hub's results

What progress has the hub made on these challenges ?

Farmers have embraced more innovative approaches by incorporating natural substances, like soy lecithin or orange oil, into their practices, marking a shift towards environmentally friendly and sustainable solutions. They also use drift reduction nozzles.

What issues still need to be addressed ?

The development of better Decision Support Systems is essential for empowering farmers to use pesticides only when absolutely necessary. Further exploration and refinement of these tools are crucial for the continued progress of IPM practices.

How are the hub farmers going to proceed ?

Farmers are persistently seeking solutions to minimize the necessity for phytosanitary applications, aiming to strike a balance between reducing chemical interventions and safeguarding crop health. The ongoing debate around resistant varieties is being closely monitored, presenting a potential alternative that farmers are considering for adoption if widely accepted.

Key conclusions

Various demonstration events have been organized to support farmers in their endeavor to reduce phytosanitary applications. While phytosanitary recovery machines were showcased, their adaptability to the prevalent conduction system in the region remains a challenge, limiting their widespread use.
Moreover, discussions and demonstrations focused on decision support systems (DSS) aimed to ensure that applications occur only when necessary rather than following a fixed calendar. However, farmers express hesitancy in fully trusting these models, emphasizing the difficulty of not adopting preventive measures when mildew, with irreversible effects on plants, poses a constant threat.

Facilitation approaches

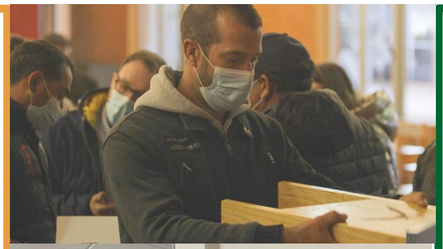
What is the issue the hub work on more precisely?

Coordinating group activities, aside from demo events, proves challenging due to their demanding schedules. Peak seasons, like harvest periods, involve long labor hours, and the need for quick responses to weather and pest challenges further intensifies their schedules. Finding suitable times for collective activities requires careful planning, considering the intermittent availability of farmers.

Busy schedules of farmers

How did you proceed? What did you do?

Established a WhatsApp group for reporting various activities, ensuring that members missing meetings or demo events don't feel left out. This platform allows them to catch up on updates, ask questions, and share opinions, fostering continuous engagement and collaboration among the group.



What conclusions can you draw?

Effective planning is essential, recognizing that sometimes it becomes necessary to reschedule due to weather conditions demanding immediate responses from farmers. Flexibility in scheduling allows for timely adjustments, ensuring that activities align with the practical needs and challenges posed by the dynamic nature of agriculture.

My tips for making it work

Maintaining constant communication is crucial, and actively seeking farmers' input on their interests and preferences is key. By understanding what topics resonate with them, we can tailor events to their preferences, increasing their motivation to attend and participate. This approach ensures that the activities align with their needs and foster a more engaged and collaborative community.

Individual facilitation

Individual facilitation has been implemented through diverse channels, including farm visits, data collection through surveys, and demo-events. Furthermore, communication through emails and telephone conversations provided a continuous means for addressing specific concerns, answering queries, and tailoring assistance to the unique needs of each member.

Collective facilitation

Collective facilitation has been achieved through demo-events and self-assessment. These activities encourage collaborative learning and knowledge-sharing among members. Additionally, a WhatsApp group has been established to foster continuous discussions, serving as a platform for ongoing communication and the development of a cohesive group dynamic. This digital space enables members to share insights, address challenges collectively, and strengthen the sense of community within the hub.

During the project duration, more farmers adopted the matting reduction method to combat the European Grapevine Moth, resulting in a significant reduction in phytosanitary treatments. In parc

IPM adoption & pesticide use

Matting disruption against *Lobesia botrana*

> Installing pheromones in our vineyard for the first time this year has been a game-changer. It is an effective method that cuts down on the need for chemical treatments. Plus, the process was surprisingly straightforward and cost-effective.

Silvia Rey Fariña
Winegrower

During the project duration, more farmers adopted the matting reduction method to combat the European Grapevine Moth, resulting in a significant reduction in phytosanitary treatments. In parcels treated with sexual confusion, 2 to 3 insecticide applications were avoided, leading to a 10% decrease in pesticide usage. Pheromones, strategically placed at a rate of 200 to 300 diffusers per hectare on vineyard wires, initiated at the beginning of the growing season, lasting from late March to early April, and remaining effective until the grape harvest conclusion. The removal or replacement of these diffusers, costing approximately €115 per hectare, is done by farmers themselves, requiring no more than an hour per hectare. This approach demonstrates both cost-effectiveness and environmentally friendly pest management.

> Seeing farmers adopt eco-friendly methods brings a sense of fulfillment, knowing that each positive change is a step towards a more sustainable farming.

Ángela Muñiz Varela
HUB coach

A European network of demonstration farms promoting low pesticide use and economically efficient management strategies

THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE **EUROPEAN UNION' HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME** UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT N. 101000339