

EN
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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
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Active substances (AS) used in plant protection products (PPPs) can, in principle, only be approved where it is demonstrated that at least one representative use of a PPP containing the AS fulfils the approval criteria set out in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009¹. Alternatives are only considered to determine if AS failing approval criteria need a derogation because they're essential for controlling a serious danger to plant health that no other available method can address².

In the Vision for Agriculture and Food³, the Commission committed to carefully considering any further ban of AS if alternatives are not available, unless the AS in question represents a threat to human health or the environment that agriculture relies upon for its viability.

The Food and Feed Simplification Package⁴ proposed by the Commission in December 2025 aims to accelerate innovation and market access for new biocontrol AS to provide more sustainable PPPs to farmers to protect their crops. To speed up Member States' evaluation of biocontrol AS applications, the Commission proposes replacing systematic time-driven renewals for all AS with a flexible system targeting AS that may harm human or animal health or the environment⁵. The Commission has also proposed to allow derogations from existing approval criteria if an AS is essential to protect plant health or plant production and the possibility for Member States to grant longer grace periods to use existing stocks of non-approved substances when no alternatives exist.

The Commission receives information on alternatives provided by stakeholders. So far alternatives have always been identified where the approval of an AS has not been renewed⁶.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1107/oj>.

² As set out in Article 4(7) of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, such substances may be approved for 5 years

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A Vision for Agriculture and Food Shaping together an attractive farming and agri-food sector for future generations. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0075>.

⁴ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/simplification-legislation_en.

⁵ The majority of Member State resources is currently occupied with the systematic renewal process for all active substances meaning that innovative companies applying for the approval of new biocontrol substances often have to wait for several years before a Member State agrees to take on the role of rapporteur (RMS) for the first risk assessment.

⁶ In addition, various tools to help farmers in finding solutions protecting their crops have been developed for example IPMWORKS project developed based on Horizon 2020 funds or Agrowise supported by the LIFE Program.