

EN
E-002699/2026
Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.9.2026)

The Commission is aware of the spread of yellow nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus*) in several Member States where it did originally not naturally occur. However, as its native range appears to include some Member States of the European Union, the species falls outside the scope of EU Regulation 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive aliens (the IAS regulation). It was not identified as a priority invasive alien species (IAS) by the 2025 Horizon scanning report on IAS¹.

A Horizon Europe² Cluster 6³ topic⁴ on emerging plant pest risks will open early next year for applications.

As regards plant protection products (PPP), the Food and Feed Safety Simplification Package adopted by the Commission on 16 December 2025⁵ aims at creating a regulatory system which is more agile and effective and can ensure a more rapid response to emerging issues while remaining equally protective as the current system. As part of the Package, the Commission proposed enhanced provisions on mutual recognition of PPP authorisations, such as opening the possibility for a wider group of stakeholders to apply, and simplified requirements for minor-use extensions. To ensure that farmers have access to essential PPP for which alternatives are not available, several other specific amendments were also proposed.

These measures include, among others, the approvals of active substances unlimited in time in some cases, enhanced approval for a limited period of certain substances to control serious danger to plant production, simplified data protection.

¹ https://purews.inbo.be/ws/portalfiles/portal/130040050/Horizon_scanning_Final_Report.pdf.

² Cluster 6 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment' https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

³ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-6-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en.

⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-01-two-stage?order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=50&sortBy=relevance&keywords=HORIZON-CL6-2027-02-FARM2FORK-01-two-stage:%20Strengthening%20plant%20health:%20addressing%20emerging%20plant%20pest%20risks&isExactMatch=true&status=31094501&frameworkProgramme=43108390>.

⁵ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/simplification-legislation_en.