

In reply, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides acknowledged that the quantitative targets in the strategy were “aspirational targets, based on ambitious but realistic pathways”. The Commission used available evidence and data to set them, she said. Any proposals to make these targets legally binding will be accompanied by impact assessments. They will also be subject to adoption by the European Parliament and EU Ministers, she added.

An impact assessment “will notably be the case for pesticides”, stressed Ms Kyriakides. She highlighted the consultation process already under way for the forthcoming [review](#) of the EU sustainable use of pesticides Directive (2009/128).

Ms Kyriakides has already had to give assurances on impact assessments to EU Agriculture Ministers after they [called](#) for greater consideration of the need for flexibility and funding. Similar [concerns](#) have been raised by members of the Parliament’s Agriculture Committee on behalf of farmers. More recently, the European farmers and co-operatives group, Copa-Cogeca, warned that the pesticide target “really worries” fruit and vegetable farmers. It will generate additional costs for a sector that is already suffering from higher production costs due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the group says.

## FMC closes purchase of Isagro’s fluindapyr

05 October 2020

FMC has closed the acquisition of Italian agrochemical company Isagro’s assets relevant to the fungicide, fluindapyr. The purchase totalled €55 million (\$64.4 million at the current rate). The deal [was agreed](#) in May and included all intellectual property, know-how, registrations, product formulations and other global assets of the fungicide. But, it excludes liabilities, Isagro sites and workforce.

Isagro comments that the sale of fluindapyr is part of the process of redefining its business model, and refocusing on biosolutions and copper-based products, while keeping selected organic chemicals based on a rationale of integrated crop management in its portfolio. The funds from the sale along with the €50 million (\$58.6 million) cashed-in from the sale of [Isagro Asia](#) last December, led to a consolidated net financial position at credit, which will be employed to finance the growth projects including through acquisitions. The company highlights that the fungicide’s book value as of June 30th was some €25 million (\$29.3 million).

## Syngenta rebuts claims against EPA atrazine label amendments

29 September 2020

Syngenta has launched a rebuttal to claims from environmentalist groups that voluntary use amendments of its atrazine herbicides were due to pressure on the US EPA and that the uses were identified as posing ecological risks. The company asserts that it is correcting the record regarding what it calls “false statements” that have been made regarding the US interim decisions and upcoming US Endangered Species Act (ESA) assessment, on the herbicide.

Earlier this month, the EPA issued [interim decisions](#) that allow the continued use of atrazine as well as two other herbicides, subject to new measures to reduce health and environmental risks. “The voluntary label modifications undertaken by Syngenta and posted with the EPA interim decision on atrazine were the result of careful and comprehensive internal discussions involving business decisions, Section-7 consultation geospatial considerations and broader stewardship initiatives,” Syngenta says.

It notes that Section 7 consultation under the ESA is legally required when a US federal entity such as the EPA executes an “action”, such as a pesticide registration, that could affect listed species. The EPA is then required