

Food is the theme of much of Pesticides News this December. In PAN UK's fifth Rachel Carson Memorial Lecture, **Tim Lang**, Professor of Food Policy at City University sets out the need for single issue NGOs like PAN to look at the wider context of food policy to break down barriers in thinking between nutrition and environment, safety and plentiful supply, quantity and quality of food (p12).

At PAN, we are often asked *Can organic agriculture feed the world?*. **Ivette Perfecto** and **Catherine Badgley** seek to answer this question (p17). They document growing evidence of the potential productivity of organic production challenging the idea that industrial agriculture is the only way the worlds' expanding population can be fed. They argue that investment in organic practices should be increased to match investment in conventional farming practice.

In Africa, the issue of safer foods in export chains has received far more attention than the supply of safe foods to local markets. **Stephanie Williamson** reports on a multi-stakeholder workshop which addressed this neglected issue (p10). The workshop highlighted a need for greater consumer awareness, perhaps through campaigns, and by engaging consumers' associations. It also presented success stories on training on organic and low input farming.

Such successes are the focus of several other articles. **Elliott Cannell** of PAN Europe highlights successful initiatives in six European countries which show that low pesticide input farming can be competitive within the free market economy (p3). In seeking a common thread to these successes, the article points to the importance of impartial advice for farmers to support informed decision making on pest management.

Farmer Field Schools are a long-term programme of training and support which have made an important contribution to the increase in farmer knowledge and the reduction in pesticide use. **Henk van den Berg** and **Janice Jiggins** analyse studies of Farmer Field Schools and find that their impacts go way beyond insect control, to better crop husbandry, organization of farmers and marketing of produce, all in the context of greater community empowerment (p6).

In Hungary, Farmer Field Schools have enabled maize growers to cope with infestations of western corn rootworm through the use of IPM techniques. Students Field Schools train students between the ages of 14-18 on monitoring and managing this pest – a programme which influences the behaviour of both the future farmers and their parents. **Judit Papp Komáromi** reports (p8)

The hazards of endocrine disrupting pesticides have been long known, although research cannot disprove or prove a direct link. **Rebecca McKinlay** argues, as PAN has for some time, that greater precaution in the use of these chemical is needed, and also more independent research into the effects of endocrine disrupting chemical and their routes into the body and the environment (p20).

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Initials at the end of articles refer to staff contributions to Pesticides News.

Abbreviations and acronyms used

ACP	Advisory Committee on Pesticides
CRA	Comparative Risk Assessment
EA	Environment Agency (UK)
EC	European Commission
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (US)
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FSA	Food Standards Agency
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPM	Integrated pest management
LD ₅₀	lethal dose for 50% of population
µg/kg	parts per billion
MRLs	Maximum Residue Limits
mg/l	parts per million
NGO	Non government organisation
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Organophosphate (pesticide)
PAN	Pesticide Action Network
PIC	Prior Informed Consent
PN	Pesticides News
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

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