

Newsletter

01/2017



This Newsletter is the summary of the last ECAAF activities. By reading it you can see the most important achievements made throughout ECAAF and its National Associations related to Conservation Agriculture communication in Europe.

EDITION

ECAAF

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LATEST EVENTS

Written Declaration at the European Parliament



Clara Aguilera and Nicola Caputo appealing for the written Declaration on CA at European Parliament.

Marrakech November 7th, COP 22



UP-COMING EVENTS

In Albacete (Spain)



Next ECAAF General Assembly 2017

ECAAF ACHIEVEMENTS

SolACE project

“Solutions for improving Agroecosystem and Crop Efficiency for water and nutrient use”.

New member of ECAAF 2017

We welcome the Turkish Conservation Agriculture Association.

PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

LIFE + Climagri

ECAAF is about to start the compilation of a new set of indicators data within this second season, that will allow farmers to have comparatives for decision making purposes.



1

Marrakech

November 7th, COP 22. Some members of ECAF jointly with FAO took part in the COP 22 side event named “Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Food Security with Conservation Agriculture in Africa and the Mediterranean Region”. Mitigating the impact of Climate Change and Ecosystem Services were the subjects tackled on behalf of ECAF. Likewise, in **November 17th, COP 22.** Some other members of ECAF had the chance jointly with the Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture (AEAC.SV) to exchange insights with the Spanish Minister on Agriculture, Ms García-Tejerina, on the manifold benefits to mitigate climate change CA could offer within the 4 per 1000 initiative in Spain. Agriculture and climate change are closely linked, since agricultural activity can positively or negatively affect global warming.



ECAF Vice-president at the European Parliament in Brussels for advocating the Written Declaration on CA.



syngenta

4



ECAF organised a **training course on cultivating Productive Soil and Clean Water** for Syngenta in May 10th-12th in Cordoba (Spain). Best management practices for Conservation Agriculture were approached in a useful forum composed up by technicians from the agrochemical sector. It was an excellent opportunity to get in touch with key professional from the agrochemical sector who are willing to share their knowledge and experience towards a more sustainable soil management approach.

ECAF participated in the panel on “Innovation in practices – adding value and better use of resources”, which jointly with other panels about financing innovation and how to respond to farmers’ needs for innovation over the session named “Farmers leading Innovation” took place in **October 5th in Athens (Greece)** in the framework on the last **Congress of European Farmers 2016 – COPA COGECA**.



latest events

2

Following the motion on Conservation Agriculture posed by MEP Nicola Caputo last 2015 at the European Parliament, a Written Declaration was tabled at the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (COMAGRI) on February 4th 2016 after having gathered the signatures of 13 MEPs from several political parties. Within ECAF, an effort on compiling the needed signatures to push further with Conservation Agriculture towards the European Commission, but

unfortunately just 139 signatures out of 751 were achieved in due time.

Nevertheless all these efforts were not in vain. This was an excellent opportunity to briefly explain MEPs and their assistances the concept of Conservation Agriculture and the relevant environmental benefits this type of agriculture provides.

3

ECAF actively contributed in **public hearing on the role of Conservation Agriculture in enhancing agricultural productivity and ecosystem services** last **November 7th at the European Parliament**, Brussels. Over this event, Conservation Agriculture was seen as a response to soil degradation which is caused by tillage, in particular. Its methods aim at supporting productive agricultural systems capable of delivering maximum yields and ecosystem services while being resource efficient and resilient.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/events-hearings.html?id=20161027CHE00141>



6

ECAF presented the possibilities and constraints for No-till practices in Bulgaria within the framework of the theme "Future of our Agriculture" at the **sixth national Agro Seminar held in Plodiv (Bulgaria)** last December 1st.2nd.

ECAF achievements

On January 13th 2016, an important seminar named **“Making Sustainable Agriculture Real”** was held in the **European Parliament**, which can be defined as historic for professionals who have spent more than two decades dedicating to implement and disseminate the conservation agriculture techniques. Two members of the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Parliament hosted the event and supported these sustainable techniques, in which farmers across Europe had the opportunity to talk about its multiple benefits. In this sense, Clara Aguilera, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (COMAGRI), asked for the full integration of these practices in the future CAP. Whereas Nicola Caputo, member of the COMAGRI and co-chair of the LIFE working group of the European Parliament reminded everyone of the need to facilitate the implementation of these conservation agriculture principles in practice.



Participants in the seminar “Making sustainable agriculture real” organized in the European Parliament.

ECAF is participating in the **SolACE project** “Solutions for improving Agroecosystem and Crop Efficiency for water and nutrient use” that has been recently selected in the framework of H2020-SFS-2016 jointly with other 23 partners from European Research organisations; Industrial companies and Small-medium enterprises. ECAF will share its long-lasting expertise as European stakeholder on sustainable agriculture in general, and on the promotion of conservation agriculture.

ECAF is committed with

ECAF is supporting the **4pour1000 initiative** as contribution to COP21 in Paris. Conservation Agriculture can contribute most to enhance carbon sequestration, and to reduce fossil fuel and agro-chemical use, in line with the goal of 4pour1000.



ECAF was required to make some inputs on the **“Effort Sharing Decision”** (ESD) from the European Commission. The ESD sets binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for Member States for the period 2021–2030 of the economy sectors which are not regulated under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), such as agriculture, in order to ensure the achievement of the commitments established by the European Union and its Member States under the Paris Agreement on climate change. ECAF contributed providing some tools for Member States to meet their national targets in agriculture sector.

The Committee responsible of this issue at the European Parliament is the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (COMENVI). Although some other Committees are also appointed for opinion. In this case ECAF is working with the rapporteur of the COMAGRI, trying to better positioning of conservation agriculture as a great tool to mitigate climate change.

ECAF is a partner of the **Global Conservation Agriculture Network (GCAN)** recently composed by 17 members including farming organisations, researchers and policymakers from all the world. GCAN aims to provide solutions which help meet the current farming challenge and which ensures that agriculture is more resilient, while still guaranteeing greater food security and sustainability in all climatic conditions.



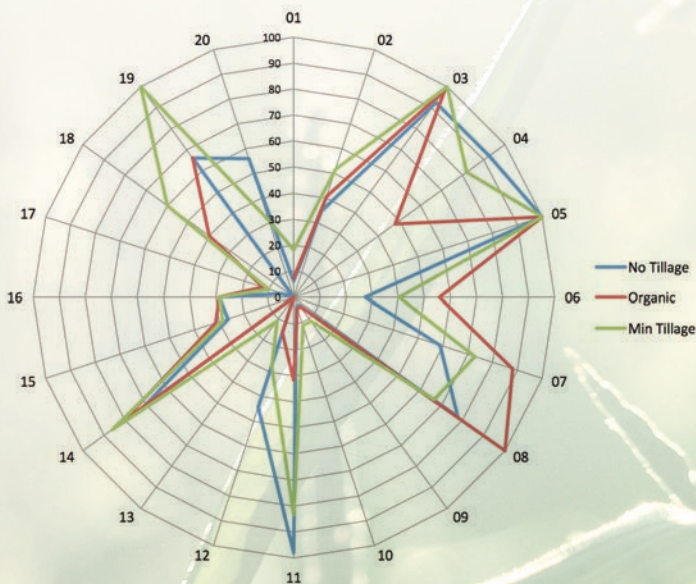
GCAN members attending the COP 22 in Marrakech, November 17th.

ECAF projects in the pipeline

INSPIA



INSPIA project 2017-2019 seems to continue along three more years! The purpose of this project “*European Index for Sustainable Productive Agriculture*” is more and more at the hand not only farmers but also European decision makers who are verifying the real existence of a sustainable and productive agricultural model.



Sustainability outcome graph (INSPIA).



15 INSPIA Best Management Practices.

LIFE + Climagri

climagri



“*Best agricultural practices for Climate Change: integrating strategies for mitigation and adaptation*”. In the framework of this project, ECAF is coordinating the monitoring of the European Network of Demo Farms. ECAF has also developed a GIS platform through which farmers can calculate the value of the indicators of Climagri for their farms and get recommendations to improve the management of the farm.



Geographical Information System LIFE + Climagri project.

Up-coming events

Next ECAF General Assembly 2017



Next ECAF General Assembly will take place in Albacete (Spain) in March 8th and 9th, 2017.

On the second day (March 9th), members of ECAF National Associations, farmers and other stakeholders will be able to discuss and exchange insights and knowledge about the Conservation Agriculture techniques that Miguel Barnuevo (Spanish Landowner) has been implementing in his farm over the last 20 years.

National Associations Activities

AEAC.SV - Spain

- ✧ The Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture-Living Soils (AEAC.SV) participated in the **International Agriculture Machinery Fair (FIMA) 2016**, held in Zaragoza (Spain), in February 16th-20th, in which different fertilizations strategies were shown.
- ✧ With the participation of more than 1,800 farmers, the AEAC.SV held the **international field day on Conservation Agriculture in Barruelo del Valle (Valladolid-Spain)** last September 22nd. This event has been a success not only because of the large number of participants, and the impact on the media (TV, radio and press), but also because of the effective advocacy for the Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Food and Environment and other key administrations. Policy makers openly supported conservation agriculture as the basis for the new reform of the CAP 2020.
- ✧ The AEAC.SV has prepared a study for the Spanish Office of Climate Change, which will serve as a support for the future drafting of the Climate Change Law, where it is expected that the techniques of Conservation Agriculture have a relevant role in the future.



Manuel Gómez-Ariza, technician of the Spanish Association for Conservation Agriculture. Living Soils in the FIMA 2016. Zaragoza (Spain).



Bird's eye view of the International Field Day of Conservation Agriculture. Barruelo del Valle, Valladolid, (Spain).



Opening session and view of the attendees at the International Field day on CA. Barruelo del Valle, Valladolid, (Spain).

CA IRELAND - Ireland

The ECAF National representative for Ireland, John Geraghty, was one of the keynote speakers in a session entitled 'Soil Saviours' at the recent **Oxford Farmers Conference in the UK**. You can see his contribution here:

<https://www.ofc.org.uk/video/john-geraghty>



John Geraghty, during the panel session "Soil Saviour" held at Oxford University, UK.

PROCORE-Republic of Moldova

Long term field experiments on Conservation Agriculture with different crop rotations have been undertaken in **Balti, Republic of Moldova** jointly with some researches at Selectia Research Institute of Field Crops.



Participants at the seminar for farmers organised in Republic of Moldova (PROCORE).

APAD - France

- APAD was invited by the Minister of Agriculture to participate in **the Night of Agroecology in the gardens of Ministry of Agriculture**, June 23rd, in the presence of President of the Republic, François Hollande.



The objective of this Night of Agroecology was to open dialogue with civil society on the benefits of agro-ecology, including the Soil Conservation Agriculture. APAD's farmers are mobilized to animate a stand but also through a panel with recognized scientists.

- The French National Association for Conservation Agriculture (APAD) held a round table named *"Agrofourniture and agro-ecology: what partnerships to develop Soil Conservation Agriculture?"* within the framework of the **Festival "Innov-agri" in Outarville -Loiret (France)** in September 6th-8th. Some members of APAD Perche and APAD Sud Bassin Parisien also contributed to this event setting a stand on Soil Conservation Agriculture, Agro-ecological space.



Rain simulator to demonstrate the negative effects (soil erosion and water runoff) of a rainstorm under different cropping systems. Loiret (France).

- First University in the fields of Soil Conservation Agriculture organised by APAD last November 10th** in Xanton-Chassenon (France). More than 300 farmers and other regional and national policy makers attended the conferences on "Soil Conservation Agriculture, an agro-ecological practice, for a dynamics of territory". Click here to see video and press release:

http://www.apad.asso.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=235&Itemid=942

APOSOLO - Portugal

Some farmers from the Portuguese Association for Conservation Agriculture (APOSOLO) participate actively in the International Field day organised in Spain. A specific thematic station for demonstrating and showing the experiences and expertise of No-Till farmers drew the attention of other stakeholders in soil management techniques.



AIGACoS - Italy

Last January 20th 2017, the Italian Association for soil conservation AIGACoS, held a seminar named **"La Nuova Via Italiana dell'Agricoltura Conservativa"** in Osimo (Italy).

Speakers such as Giuseppe Elias; AIGACoS President, and Michele Pisante, University of Teramo and ECAF Italian representative reached to explain the set of environmental benefits, Conservation Agriculture provide to society. They highlighted Conservation Agriculture helps achieving the environmental objectives of the new CAP, especially in terms of reduction in soil erosion and mitigating climate change.



Participants in the seminar "La Nuova Via Italiana dell'Agricoltura Conservativa". Osimo (Italy).

FICA - Finland

More than 50 farmers showed interest in direct seeding machines over the last general assembly of the Finnish Conservation Agriculture Association held in 9th April 2016.



Members of ECAF



Coming soon the
"Turkish Conservation
Agriculture Association"

ECAF Honorary Member
Dr Amir Kassam

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SLOVAK NO TILL CLUB (SNTC) Slovak Republic

On 27th of May 2016 SNTC organized the excursion of its field experiment which is focused on various conservation technologies. There was a discussion with the students regarding the pros and cons of conventional vs. conservation technologies.

SNTC was invited to participate in education activities during the **Slovak Field Day** on 7th and 8th June 2016. It is one of the biggest exhibitions of field of agriculture in Slovakia with many visitors from the country and also from abroad.



Bird's eye view of the Slovak Field Day, (Slovakia).

At the end of year SNTC helped to organize the **international scientific conference** "Growing technologies and its contribution to the practise". The conference took a place in National Agricultural and Food Centre – Research Institute of Plant Production in Piešťany on 1st December 2016. Members of SNTC presented the results from field experiments.