Wild oat inspections in Finland

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Crop farming areas

- Total arable land area around 2.25 million ha
- Cereals year 2012 1.1 million ha
- Grasslands 666 000 ha
- Other crops (potato, rape, sugar beet, caraway etc.) 203 000 ha
- Fallows 275 000 ha
The distribution in Finland

-In grasslands there occurs seldom wild oat problems (several mowings during the season, wild oat cannot produce new seeds)

-Areas where main crops are cereals, suffer most of wild oat = that means Kymenlaakso, Uusimaa, Varsinais-Suomi, Satakunta, Häme and Pohjanmaa regions

- So called ”milk Finland” wild oat has not distributed widely (yet) (mainly dairy production and grasslands)
Contaminated area % of arable land regionally (year 2009)
Regulations

- Law of control of wild oat (185/2002)
- Regulation of control wild oat (326/2002)

The purpose of the law is to maintain high-quality plant production by promoting the rejection of the wild oat
Authorities

• The general control and supervision belongs to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

• Evira takes care of the law from execution and from the arranging of the supervision
Authorities

• In the inspections Evira helps ELY-centres (ELY-centre = Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, 13 regional centres. EU’s and national subsidy administration and farm surveillance)

• The authorities of municipalities have the responsibility for the ‘practice control’

• The customs control import
Authorities

• Annual control plan (Evira)

• Right of inspection: authorities can inspect the areas (the farmer cannot forbid an inspection)

• Register of the areas in which wild oats has been found (municipal authorities, a part of nationwide net (IACS) for the administration of supports etc.)
  - IACS system incorporates all farm scale data from every single farm, plot codes, all cultivated crops, varieties, support applications etc.
Duties of the municipality authorities

- To receive the announcement of the wild oat
- To carry out the inspection on new wild oat area
- To draw up farmer instructions (= how to eradicate wild oat)
- To draw up farmer protection plan (= how to prevent wild oats dispersion and eradicate wild oat, 3-4 years plan)
- To make a decision of protection plan
- To carry out inspection for fields which are free of wild oats after eradicate measures (spraying and weeding after several years)
- Register: put new fields/areas in register, keeping of the information of the register on up to date, changes in the register information etc.

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ELY-centers duties

• Inspections which are given in control plan

• If a farmer has plots in several municipalities or if the contamination degree is very high, ELY-centers take care of these inspections

• If the authority of the municipality is disqualified, he can postpone the inspections to the ELY centre

• ELY-centers control always wild oats when carrying out subsidy inspection (on all basic field plots wild oat is checked)
Eviras duties

• annual control plan
• to train the inspectors of the Ely-centres and municipalities and also other inspectors
• makes inspections
• audits inspectors
• informs about the wild oat in the papers and in the media
• advises inspectors and also farmers
• report to the ministry
Duties of the holder of the area

• Duty to control (e.g. weeding, chemical control) wild oats and prevent spreading

Notification:
• If one knows or suspects that there occurs wild oats of which it has not been informed earlier, he has to notify to the municipality authority immediately (location, plot number)
• The inspectors (field inspectors, support inspectors etc.) have to notify the municipality authority
Duty to inform

• the holder and deliverer of the area must give the information about the wild oats before any agreement

• The authority must give information whether the parcel is in the register or not on request (land trade, rental agreement).
"There should not be found so many...."
Inspection that the wild oat does not appear in the area = The basic field can be removed from a register

- The holder/farmer asks inspection in a support application
- Instructions or control plan (given by authority)
- Inspection cannot carry out if wrong crop species (e.g. fallow, oats, rye, oil seed rape, caraway, potato, mustard grassland, heavy lodging or farmer has made chemical control or weeding)
- If the first year inspection is OK., the inspection of second year without a separate request
- On the basic field a wild oat must not appear during two consecutive years -> basic field is free of wild oat
Wild oat register

- Year 2012 there was 16,5 % of total field area in wild oat register (based on farmers own notifications) = 370 000 ha

- 8700 ha was estimated to be seriously contaminated

- What is the serious occurrence? How to define contamination degree (weeding, chemical control)?
Wild oat register

The whole plot (area whatever between 0.3 – 50 ha) belongs automatically to the register

…if one and only single wild oat is observed in a plot, the whole area is registered

…and all landowners/farmers do not report of wild oat
Control plan

- Evira makes annual control plan
- The control plan is based on the risk evaluation
- Basic field on which there is a bad spreading
- We have taken for example the farms which have informed bad spread being on the field
- Farmers who have difficulties to carry out the special protection plan (every year wrong spraying time, too light spray, sowing farm own seed, which is full of wild oats, …)
- Spreading field which are near the seed fields
Inspectors worst ”clients”

• ”I do not have enough time to check all fieds” = rush times during the growing season, big farms, other business

• ”Chemical control is too expensive” (compare to the price level of barley)

• ”Why must just I to to control because the neighbours do not care”

• Other problems: Bankruptcy, divorce….
If orders/control plan not fulfilled?

• In serious cases sanction are possible

• Given by Ely-center after subsidy supervision

• All LFA, environmental subsidies and national subsidies can be cut 1-100 %

• Municipal authorities can give destruction order or even outsourcing (chemical control, mowing etc.)
Administrative coercive measures:

1. Disposal (= to destroy the plant stand at the farmer's expense)

2. Decision to export the product from the country (maastavientimääräys)

3. Serious offence: penalty payment (Evira) (in practise too complicated process)

4. Minor offence: Evira gives a written remark
Inspection in practise

• First observations on every plot

• Then filling inspection protocol
  - deviations = what kind of neglects has been done
  - how wide occurrences are
  - measures (weeding, crushing the growth, mowing it away if needed)
  - is there need to order a protection plan?

+ signatures (farmer and inspector)
Diaposals behind dryers
Marking wild oat in oat plot using red tape… well, go and check what is growing there!