

Request for Proposals

Study on the impact of discontinuing HHPs on cotton crops in Greece

RFI n#: 2023-12-PR-HHPGREECE
Location: Greece
Start date: 15 January 2024
End date: 01 March 2024

Better Cotton key contact:

Álvaro Moreira, Senior Manager Large Farm Programmes & Partnerships, Programmes

All questions and applications must be sent via email to alvaro.moreira@bettercotton.org with the subject "RFP n# 2023-12-PR-HHPGREECE".

Questions and applications sent after the deadline (31 December 2023) will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

1. Background

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In challenging times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we have trained over 2.5 million farmers in 23 countries in more sustainable farming practices. A quarter of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard. We have united the industry's stakeholders behind our efforts, and by 2030 our aim is to have trained 5 million farmers and doubled global production of Better Cotton.

To mainstream the production of Better Cotton around the world, to avoid duplication of standard programmes, and to encourage ownership, Better Cotton uses a process called 'benchmarking' to confer one-way recognition of other credible cotton sustainability standard systems. In 2020, Better Cotton, ELGO-DEMETER, and the Inter-branch Organization of Greek Cotton (DOV), entered into a Partnership Agreement that recognised ELGO's Agro-2 standard as equivalent to the BCSS.

Following the revision of Better Cotton's Principles & Criteria (P&C), ELGO-DOV and Better Cotton launched the re-alignment process to reach equivalence recognition between the standards. One of the main points relates to Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs), which use has become stricter under the revised P&C with the active ingredients that were due to phase-out in the previous version of the P&C being added to the Better Cotton HHP list.



Aware that the discontinuation of HHP use requires available and affordable alternatives that will not result in an increase of volume and toxicity, ELGO-DOV and Better Cotton are commissioning this research to inform the parties on the risks and opportunities related to discontinuing HHP use in cotton crops in Greece.

2. Objectives

The objective of this research is to contribute to the process of recognising the Agro 2 certification scheme as equivalent to the BCSS by providing an assessment of the opportunities and risks of discontinuing identified active ingredients being used on cotton in Greece.

3. Expected outputs

The expected result will be a review of the following active ingredients (Abamectin, Lambda Cyhalothrin, Beta-Cyfluthrin, Bifenthrin, Cyfluthrin, Fenpyroximate, Methomyl, Tefluthrin, Chlorothalonil, Chlorpyrifos, Quinalofop-P-Tefuryl, Tefluthrin, and Thiacloprid) identified as HHPs and provide Better Cotton and ELGO-DOV with a comprehensive understanding of the risk levels, alternatives and barriers to phasing out HHPs.

For each AI, provide:

- Overview of current use by Greek cotton producers (for which pests, general levels of use and frequency of application, etc.).
- List AI substitutes for each molecule to be discontinued and the respective volume to achieve an effective level of control for each related target.
- List AI substitutes for each molecule to be discontinued that are under evaluation by Greek/EU regulatory institutions.
- Description of alternative pest management techniques, including comments on the overall effectiveness of each and any important trade-offs from an IPM perspective.
- Risk management associated with application techniques for molecules to be discontinued and substitutes.
- Specific risks to environmental and/or human health and strategies to mitigate them.
- Barriers to phase out and recommendations for addressing these barriers, including barriers related to governance and decision making.
- Assessment of risks and benefits of discontinuing AI.
- Evaluate the financial impact of replacing each AI.
- Recommended reduction plan for HHPs with milestones and actionable recommendations.

4. High level timeline

The assignment is expected to start in January 2024. The final Case Study is expected by end February 2024. Progress will be monitored electronically (by video-calls, emails) throughout the timeframe until completion.

The expected deliverables with tentative timelines are:

31 December 2023	All applications must be submitted by email to Alvaro Moreira at alvaro.moreira@bettercotton.org .
04 to 08 January 2024	Applications review & shortlisting

By 10 January 2024	The successful applicant will be notified. Unsuccessful shortlisted applicants will also be notified.
By 15 January 2024	Start of the consultancy
By 30 January 2024	Submission of a progress update and a short summary of preliminary findings.
By 15 February 2024	A draft report for review and comment by Better Cotton and ELGO-DOV.
By 29 February 2024	Submission of final version of the study with a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the key conclusions.

These deliverables are to be prepared in English and submitted to Better Cotton electronically via email to the Large Farm Programmes and Partnerships Senior Manager.

5. Application requirements

The Consultant must have hold following experience, skills & competencies:

- A firm understanding of integrated pest management practices and pesticides used in cotton production in Greece;
- Familiarity with existing materials, programs, and resources that support farmers' decision-making on pesticide use and alternatives;
- Understanding of root causes of successful phase-out strategies in Greece and reasons why some strategies have failed;
- [Desirable] familiarity with the Agro-2 certification scheme

6. How to apply

Please send your resume (max. 2 pages, with relevant experience only) along with a proposal (1 page maximum) including the approach, a brief explanation of the methodology to be used, and a detailed financial offer up to €2.000, to Alvaro Moreira, Senior Manager Large Farm Programmes and Partnerships at alvaro.moreira@bettercotton.org, before 31 December 2023.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Better Cotton is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources. All applications will be reviewed under the principles and subject to Better Cotton's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.