



**COMMENTS FROM THE COLLEGE OF AGRONOMERS OF QUEBEC  
ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE  
AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES COMMISSION,  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Montreal, February 27, 2020**

The Ordre des agronomes du Québec (the Order) welcomes the report by the Commission of Agriculture, Fisheries, Energy and Natural Resources (CAPERN). Several of recommendations repeat those presented by the Order during Commission hearings in September 2019. The recommendations made by the Commission are beneficial for agriculture and the Quebec population and join the public protection mandate of the Order of Agronomists.

The Order also wishes to reiterate its desire to get involved and support the various partners of the agricultural sector in the implementation of these recommendations, but also in the application and development of diversified practices to reduce the use of pesticides and the risks public health and the environment associated with it.

To make comments on the report's recommendations, the Order uses various sections:

### **1. IMPACT OF PESTICIDES ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

The Order of Agronomists supports the recommendations of CAPERN and wishes to participate in the accomplishment of certain objectives. For example, we would like to be consulted by the Ministry of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change (MELCC) when it reviews the *Pesticides Management Code and the Regulation* respecting permits and certificates for the sale and the use of pesticides. Moreover, as mentioned in its mandate, the Order always suggests a better supervision of the sale and use of pesticides.

In the prevention of health risks related to the use of pesticides, the Order currently collaborates with the MELCC in order to paint a more reliable portrait of the Quebec situation relative to pesticides. In addition, the Order will continue its preventive measures with producers and different stakeholders in order to encourage them to comply with the standards relating to riparian zones such as mentioned in the mandate.

That said, the Order wishes the Quebec government to make available the resources necessary to carrying out the environmental measures proposed by CAPERN.

### **2. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR**

The Order supports the recommendations of CAPERN aimed at developing expertise on new technologies available to optimize the application of pesticides and the use of methods alternatives. However, the College considers that in addition to development and research, the democratization of these innovative technologies and methods is as much if not more important.

According to the Order, the implementation of public policies promoting local and organic purchasing by the government will only produce real results if measures are put in place for the identification of local products and for those that are imported.

11 Submission from the Ordre des agronomes du Québec on "examining the impacts of pesticides on public health and the environment as well as innovative replacement practices available now, and in the future, for the agriculture and food sectors, and in recognition of the competitiveness of the Quebec agrifood sector", p. 8.

The Order will continue to accompany, inform and support agricultural producers, whether in their approach to reducing the use of pesticides, in implementing sustainable practices or in their transition to organic farming.

### **3. TRACEABILITY OF PESTICIDES**

The Order subscribes to the recommendations proposed by CAPERN and ensures that its members will support producers in keeping the register of pesticides with producers as provided by *the Pesticides Management Code* and its regulations.

### **4. PRESCRIPTION OF PESTICIDES BY AGRONOMERS**

CAPERN recommends that the government revise the Code of Ethics of agronomists. On this subject, as mentioned in our report on professional independence, the College, as an organization empowered to review the code of ethics of its members, undertakes to provide an interpretation guide in order to improve and standardize the understanding of the Code of Ethics of agronomists and its application by all members. It is also committed to strengthening the training of agronomists in matters of independence professional and conflict of interest.

On the other hand, the Order still wants the Government to prioritize the revision of the Law on agronomists so in order to clarify and modernize the definition of agronomic acts.

### **5. RESEARCH INDEPENDENCE**

The Order encourages all forms of research and the synergy between all centres of research. This approach would be beneficial and would optimize investments and spinoffs from research and development in phytoprotection (plant technologies).

In closing, the Ordre des agronomes du Québec wishes the collaboration of all organizations and individuals who took part in CAPERN as interdisciplinary studies are fundamental element ensuring the success of a change of direction necessary for the rational and safe use of pesticides. The Order believes that work of this community will allow significant progress in controlling the use of pesticides and the protection of human health and the environment.