



**Country** Slovenia

## **AGRO-HOMEODYNAMIC - Ancient Knowledge And Wisdom for Sustainable Farming**

**Subtitle / abstract:** First experiences with *Drosophila suzukii* control without PPP

### **Domain of activity**

- Arboriculture
- Agriculture
- Management of environment

**Support of the practice documentation:** interview, notes from meetings, field visits, photos, media release

**Place of experiment:** Slovenian part of Istra peninsula, S Slovenia

**Description of experiment:** A group of small fruits producers from Primorska region were actively searching for alternative strategy to fight Spotted wing drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii*. They contacted Mrs. M. Ortan, who is an owner of company dealing with agrohomeodynamic. After a number of meetings discussing the problem, Mrs. Ortan developed a custom-made agrohomeodynamic preparation. **It was tested in real circumstances on cherry plantations in Slovenian part of Istra (S Slovenia) in season 2015**, where first pests were recorded in 2010. To prevent the damage by Spotted wing drosophila, Mrs. Ortan developed the preparation Cora agrohomeopathie X104 NaturSTOP CONTRA *Drosophila suzukii*. The agrohomeodynamic concentrate was diluted (10 ml in 10 l water) and activated in water by shaking. It was put into a reservoir of a common spraying device and applied according to instructions. Till the mid of June, no damaged fruits could be detected despite the occurrence of spotted wing drosophila in the orchard, as proven by traps. The use of Cora agrohomeopathie X104 NaturSTOP-CONTRA *Drosophila suzukii* preparation showed good results.



**More information:** Spotted wing drosophila, *Drosophila suzukii* Matsumura is one of the most invasive pests of small stone fruit originating from Southeastern Asia. Attacking all kinds of healthy soft- and thin-skinned fruit crops it poses a big economic threat to small fruits growing. There are little possibilities to fight against the pest and only few insecticide active compounds are limited successful but there is growing environmental concern connected to their use. Alternative strategies as traps and cultural management practices have limited success and are time and resource consuming. The possibility of the natural enemies' introduction is problematic since many of them don't survive in northern hemisphere weather conditions. There is also a lack of knowledge and research about them. As all other Cora agrohomeopathie™ products the concentrate was developed by agrohomeodynamic researcher and practitioner Mrs. Majda Ortan. ing, fruit growing professionals and farmers' advisors joined in testing the preparation. **First experiences with Cora agrohomeopathie X104 NaturSTOP CONTRA *Drosophila suzukii* use had shown excellent, very promising results.**

**A method of assessing the presence of *Drosophila Suzukii*** in order to monitor the dynamics of the fruit fly population, the test area was set up food baits, which were made from bottles in which a mixture of apple cider vinegar and red wine was placed ratio 3:1 with the addition of a teaspoon of cane sugar per 1 l. There were bottles of food bait hung on or near trees with ripening fruit. Baits were removed at the end of harvesting. The captured insects were covered with 70% ethanol and examined in the laboratory, where they were examined samples and confirmation of the presence of *Drosophila suzukii* species. After identifying the insects caught, was calculated proportion of fruit fly specimens. The data showed how big the attendance was pest and potential danger to ripening fruit.



Figure 2: Food baits used to monitor presence of *Drosophila Suzukii*



*Source: personal archive of the author*



*Cherries orchard, Photo source: Author's photo archive*

**Results:** The first treatment with an agrohomedynamic preparation was carried out when almost 80% damage was already found on the fruits of the early variety 'Burlat' (Figure 3) and on part of the fruits of the variety 'New Star'. In the 2015 season they are the application dates were May 14, 15 and 29, 2015. After the application of the preparation during the harvest of the later varieties 'Isabelle', 'Celeste', 'Garnet', 'Canada Giant', 'Van', 'Kordia' and 'Regina' on fruits were not damaged at all. The fruits were of good quality and suitable for storage and sale, the same applies to storage and sale, the fruits remained healthy, without damage.



**Success factor: The most important potential success factor is growing farmers awareness about need for more sustainable agricultural practices with lower impact to environment and humans.** The approach is bottom up oriented, where producers explained their troubles, needs and characteristics of the pest to author/ developer of prepare/ develop, make tests, good practice sharing.... The agroecological knowledge is directly transferred from practitioners to the producer of agrohomedynamic preparation. Possibility of use of local resources of raw material and production of custom made preparations. Technology of spray preparing and using is not demanding and is easy to use. It enables production of high quality energy alive food and fodder. Possibility of use of the approach and innovative technology in all sectors of horticulture, crop production and indirectly also on animal breeding is another factor of possible success.

**Met difficulties:**

- Lack of information, low understanding and common perception of agrohomedynamic principles in Slovenia - We have achieved a lot by educational events and educational programs- among farmers and also among agricultural consultants, academics, etc..
- Scepticism about success of the practice between target groups – until the results of the experiment were known and visible, We have achieved a lot by spreading good practices - among farmers and also among agricultural consultants, academics, etc..

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