



Brussels, 17 September 2015

Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis
Health and Food Safety
European Commission

Dear Commissioner,

A few days ago Dr. Marco Scortichini, Director of the Fruit Tree Research Unit of Caserta, has presented the results of the experimental research that he has conducted in Apulia on the olive oil trees dried out by *Xylella fastidiosa*.

During that meeting, Dr. Scortichini has highlighted the first encouraging results on trees, based on an aerosol of zinc hydracids and copper contained in a treatment patented in Israel and already used in the past to cure the bacteriological disease of nuts, kiwis and for another disease related to olive trees.

It appears that the medicine is also effective on olive oil trees in Salento, where the research has been carried on.

Olive trees have been exposed initially to “intravenous” therapy, to verify the capacity of the medicine to be absorbed and distributed all over the plant. After the first phase, the experimentation has been effectuated vaporizing the product on the leaves. The best effects have been observed on trees that have been pruned, where the inoculation of the bacteria of *Xylella fastidiosa* has been abated through the operation of pruning.

After a very hot summer, where 40 degrees have been reached in the interested area, it is extremely encouraging to verify that trees treated are more vigorous, green and that they do not present symptoms of the drying out that still touches those plants that have not been cured.

A full report and data of the research results have been presented to the Regional Authorities, which will not miss to inform the Commission as soon as possible.

Peacelink, together with Spazi Popolari and the Associations of Salento that are engaged in saving the trees, has always invited all interested parties to a more rigorous and open scientific approach.

The issue of *Xylella fastidiosa* is complex and dangerous, not only for Italy but also for the other European Countries that today seem to be touched by it: France and Greece.

We continue to believe that it is in the sense of research and experimentation that the efforts of the European Commission with its agencies and services should concentrate, and that the massive cutting of trees is not the only solution available to prevent further spreading of the bacteria.

This is a major development and we think it should be fully taken into account when deciding what the best policy is to address *Xylella fastidiosa* in our Region.

If there is a reasonable doubt that the decision taken goes far beyond what is necessary to deal with the problem, we believe it is the duty of all authorities concerned to put its execution on hold and study the alternatives that are available, as we do have, now, alternatives.

Peacelink therefore asks that the European Commission reviews with urgency its latest Decision in light of the new scientific evidence produced.

It is high time that the Commission abandons the uncertainty in which it has taken its decisions and steps into the issue with a new methodological strategy.

Best regards,

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