

## **Biostimulants: an effective complement for sustainable agriculture**

In contrast to fertilisers and crop protection products, biostimulants lack EU wide rules for market access and product approval.

However, the wide range of ingredients and effects of biostimulants make it impossible to measure their effectiveness without analyzing what they actually do.

### **Measuring Biostimulant Claims**

To analyze what biostimulants do, and therefore review their effectiveness, let us first look at the three principal categories in which biostimulant claims fall.

Biostimulants:

1. help plants **assimilate nutrients**
2. reinforce plants' tolerance to **abiotic stress**
3. enhance crop **quality**

Biostimulants in the second category may be considered as biological insurance policies. For example, to help a plant withstand drought, biostimulants need to be applied early to promote root development. However, if there is plentiful rain, clearly the effect of the vigorous root development will probably not be noticeable.

However, the above categories need to be translated into more specific claims in order to develop precise measurable indicators. This can be achieved by creating guidelines and harmonized standards.

### **The Principal Role of Harmonized Standards**

Using harmonized standards will enable manufacturers to assess that their products conform to the future regulation. A specific standard will be developed for biostimulants to outline how companies can demonstrate that their products provide the benefits claimed on the label.

### **How are European Standards Created?**

Standards developed by the European Standards Committee (CEN) involve a wide range of experts and stakeholders, including industry and national authorities as well as consumer and environmental representatives. CEN standards take between 2 to 3 years to be negotiated and published. The process of creating standards to implement the future regulation has already begun. This includes the creation of a new technical committee on biostimulants.

Creating EU wide standards will help producers and farmers alike.

### **Code of Conduct**

[Take a look at the EBIC Code of Conduct for Placing Biostimulants on the Market](#)