

VERA – Verification of Environmental Technologies for Agricultural Production

Open workshop on 29th of June 2016 at 10.30 – 12.00

VERA is a multinational cooperation between Denmark, The Netherlands and Germany for testing and verification of environmental technologies in the agricultural sector which was founded in 2009. Additional EU countries have already raised their interest to join the cooperation.

== TARGET ==

The creation of a cross-border, standardized test and verification program for technologies in the European agricultural industry as well as the promotion of a well-functioning market for emission reducing technologies in the European agriculture is VERA's target.

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The content wise framework for testing and verification of environmental technologies is based on test protocols which were developed by technical experts of the participating countries or which are currently under development. The scientific knowledge on emission and emission impacts as well on reliable measurement methods are continuously developing. Therefore, the test protocols are regularly revised according to the current status of the art.

Currently VERA test protocols for the following technologies are available:

- Air cleaning technologies
- Livestock housing and management systems
- Land applied manure applications
- Covers for manure storage
- Slurry separation
- Biogas plants (in preparation)

All VERA test protocols are available online under: <http://vera-verification.eu/en/technology-manufacturers/test-protocols/>

Technologies which are tested according to these test protocols can be awarded with a VERA Verification Statement. It documents the environmental efficiency and operational stability of a technology. A VERA Verification Statement is product-specific and is only valid for the tested product. Upon amendments it must be proved that this has no negative impacts. With regards to the environmental efficiency the focus is currently set on the reduction of ammonia, odour and dust.

== BENEFIT ==

FOR FARMERS

VERA tested products offer a range of technologies which have proved their environmental effects and operational stability to the farmer. The testing of a technology according to VERA is confirmed by a VERA verification statement. All successfully internationally tested products are published on the official VERA website <http://www.vera-verification.eu/en/vera-statements/> presenting the VERA statement and the respective VERA test report.

FOR MANUFACTURERS

Currently manufacturers of emission reducing technologies obtain the unique possibility to gain recognition for the VERA tested product in various EU countries and to herewith save test costs

for the proof of function in the individual countries. This leads to more uniform competitive conditions and makes them more calculable.

FOR AUTHORITIES

In the participating countries VERA is implemented differently. As this process has only been started for some time now, it is not implemented completely everywhere.

In Denmark VERA has already been implemented completely. Products must be listed in the “technology list” which they can gain access to by performing a VERA test.

In the Netherlands such a test enables the technology to be added to the Dutch „TacRav list“.

In Germany the evaluation of measured emission reductions and related decisions are matter of the district administration authorities.

== STRUCTURE ==

MANAGEMENT

The International VERA Board (IVB) consists of representatives from the participating national ministries of agriculture and environment. The IVB is the steering committee which determines rules, general criteria and agrees on common targets of the VERA cooperation.

INTERNATIONAL VERA SECRETARIAT

The secretariat organizes, coordinates and adopts the activities agreed by the IVB. It is also responsible for the organizational support and coordination of the expert groups` activities.

Furthermore, it advises the manufacturers of environmental technologies, test laboratories and authorities and evaluates the formal requirements of the submitted applications for verification statements. Finally, it issues the VERA verification statements and observes their use.

The management of the secretariat rotates every 4 years to another participating country. Until 2018 these activities are executed in Germany on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture.

TECHNICAL EXPERTS

For each application area independent technical experts from the three member countries are appointed. They constitute the relevant „International VERA Committees, short: IVCs“. They revise existing test protocols and develop new test protocols for additional topics. The experts evaluate the documents and measurement results submitted for verification.

TEST INSTITUTES

The test institute is responsible for planning, execution and documentation of the test activities. The institutes are independent organizations and can freely be chosen by the manufacturer, provided that they can show evidence of the required qualification according to the general VERA guidelines and the VERA test protocol.

== WEBLINKS ==

www.vera-verification.eu