

The international marketing magazine for fresh produce buyers in Europe



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Friday 3rd January 2014, 11:15 GMT

Organic grower faces jail and fine

A Burgandy organic wine producer has been charged for refusing to use pesticides required under French law



An organic grape grower has been charged for refusing to use pesticide Pyrevert

An organic wine producer in Burgandy, France, faces six months in prison after being charged with breaking the law for refusing to use pesticides.

The producer refused to use Pyrevert, a pyrethrin pesticide, and could be fined the equivalent of around £25,000 in addition to the jail sentence, reported *The New York Times*.

The producer reportedly said there is no evidence that his vines are infected, and argued that Pyrevert can also kill beneficial insects.

In a bizarre twist, the news outlet also reported that another French organic wine producer was fined one euro after he agreed to use pesticides.

French vines are vulnerable to a bacterial disease called flavescence dorée, carried by a leafhopper.

Vine growers in several regions, including Burgandy, are required by French law to use pesticides to control this disease.

A study in February 2013 found pesticide residues in 90 percent of French wines tested, including residues found in some organic wines. The study said that this may indicate contamination from neighbouring vineyards.

France's minister of agriculture, Stéphane Le Foll, recently announced a new sustainable agriculture bill that is due for assessment by the French Assembly in January.

The editorial in *The New York Times* said that the law requiring pesticide use in Burgandy is "terrible" publicity for French wine.

The article said that considering organic producers who refuse to use pesticides as criminals will not help France's transition to sustainable agriculture.

France is the third-highest user of pesticides in the world after the United States and Japan, and the highest user in Europe. The country has pledged to reduce its pesticide consumption by 50 percent by 2018.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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