

SoildiverAgro project

Adoption of new management practices to increase crop production and quality



THE WHAT AND WHY

Trap crops: a sustainable option for pest control

A trap crop is a type of plant used to control a pest and divert it away from the main crop. It is a traditional method that has been used in the past and is now being revived as a substitute for insecticides because, among other things, it does not pollute. The operation of trap crops is diverse and offers multiple possibilities. For example, there are trap crops that secrete substances that attract certain insects, distracting them away from a main crop. There are other trap crops that manage to keep insects away by secreting odors that function as pest repellents. These two types can be combined, for example, by using plants between the main crop that keep the pest in

question away, while using other species in the borders that attract the pest. There are also trap crops that are able to reduce pest populations through various mechanisms including attracting predators of the pests to be controlled. This includes, for example, the control of nematode pests in potato crops by *Solanum sisymbriifolium* species. This hatches nematode cysts, but does not provide them with support or a place to lay eggs, preventing them from reproducing. Finally, there are also traps capable of reducing the incidence of certain viruses that use insects to spread: cucumber mosaic virus can be controlled by using sorghum crops as a barrier.



1. *Solanum sisymbriifolium*.

KEYWORDS

Trap crops, pest, insects, plants, *Solanum sisymbriifolium*.

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 817819

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