

Inspections of accredited workshops: Some Italian experiences

M. Biocca¹, Gallo P.¹, G. Imperi¹, S. Petrillo², P. Spigno³

¹ Consiglio per la Ricerca e la sperimentazione in Agricoltura – Agricultural Engineering Research Unit (CRA-ING) – Via della Pascolare, 16 – 00015 Monterotondo (Roma), ITALY.

² Regione Umbria, Direzione Regionale Risorsa Umbria. Federalismo, risorse finanziarie. Servizio Politiche faunistiche e servizi alle imprese agricole - Via Mario Angeloni, 61 - 06124 Perugia, ITALY.

³ Regione Campania, UOD Fitosanitario Regionale, Via Porzio - 80143 Napoli, ITALY.

DOI 10.5073/jka.2015.449.0016

Abstract

Among the activities established by the Directive 128/09 and by NAP (National Action Plan), a periodical inspection by authorities is addressed to official workshops in charge of sprayer inspections.

In this paper we describe activities carried out by two Italian regions (Umbria and Campania) that have recently started a regular activity for the inspection of workshops. An inspection procedure according to technical national guidelines (ENAMA documents) was prepared in collaboration with regional authorities and CRA-ING, that is in charge of technical aspects of inspections. The approach, the key elements and some results of inspections are reported in the paper.

Introduction

In Italy, according to the legislative decree n°150 of 2012, the National Action Plan (NAP) establishes the procedures and the methods of the Directive 128/09 fulfillment. The section of the NAP related to the periodical inspections of the sprayers (according to the article 8 of the Directive 128/09) is largely based on the ENAMA documents, that are national technical guidelines drawn up in recent years by a technical working group. The working group, coordinated by the University of Turin, is composed by experts coming from each Italian region, from universities, from research institutions and from ministry of agriculture. This group, thanks to the coordinator work, is in permanent contact with the analogous technical working groups operating in the ambit of Spise.

The point A.3.9. of the NAP states that the regional Administration (that are responsible for the actuation of the Directive in Italy) shall realize an inspection each 24 months in the workshops that make less than 200 inspections a year and each 12 months for those that make more than 200 inspections a year.

The regions Campania and Umbria have started an official activity in the last years. In 2009 was recognized the first official workshop in Campania, while the first official workshop in Umbria has started two years later. In the meantime, these two regions have gone with CRA-ING a collaborative project about the implementation of common procedures, according to the national guidelines. CRA-ING supports the regions mainly in the training of technicians, in the authorizations of new workshops and in the inspection of operating workshops.

Regarding the last point, a procedure of inspection was established in cooperation between the responsible regional offices and CRA-ING. This paper focuses on this point of the work.

Inspection points

In the inspection procedure, the following five areas of activity were identified:

- 1) Equipment and instruments;
- 2) Maintenance, conservation and transmission of inspection documents;
- 3) Inspection procedure (in progress);
- 4) Inspection procedure (follow up)
- 5) Technician legal requirements.

1) Equipment and instruments.

The control is addressed to verify the presence, the working condition and the maintenance state of each instruments employed in the inspection procedure. For some instruments, namely the pressure gauges employed to check the sprayer's pressure gauge and the gauges for measuring pressure drop, a function test was also carried out. This test has no validity as a calibration test, but it can be just considered as a second level check of the instrument's precision made with a second certified pressure gauge; for this check, no threshold levels of required precision are requested.



Fig. 1. The function test of a pressure gauge.

The other equipment to check, in terms of existence and state of maintenance, include: test bench for control of nozzle flow rate; test bench for pressure control; any other equipment owned by the workshop. The presence of instruments or equipment purchased by the workshop after the date of the initial authorization is also recorded during the control visit.

2) Maintenance, conservation and transmission of inspection documents.

The accredited workshop has to maintain in a proper way the inspection documents. The documents include: the certificate of inspection, the test report and the register of stickers. For each archive, the timing and the mode of document transmission to the authorities is checked.

Both a digital archive and a paper archive are requested. The number of inspection made by the workshop is recorded.

3) Inspection procedure (in progress).

The technician is supervised during an inspection of a sprayer. This control is addressed to verify that the inspection protocol is correctly applied. At the end of the inspection, the release of the inspection documents to the sprayer's owner is also verified.

4) Inspection procedure (follow up).

A sprayer already inspected is verified at the owner place. This sprayer has to be chosen randomly in the archive of the workshop. The inspection shall verify: coherence between the information contained in the inspection documents and the verified elements (i.e. presence of sticker; identification number of inspection; serial number of the machinery; sprayer manufacturer and model; tank dimension; number of nozzles). Then the owner is also identified.

5) Technician legal requirements.

The certificate of attendance of training and refresher courses are verified.

Way of procedure

The inspection is carried out at least by two officers by CRA-ING. A regional officer can possibly participate to the inspection.

They are supported during their work by two preprinted forms to fill during the inspection. The first form concerns the inspection of equipment and instruments (point 1) and the second form the examination of already inspected sprayers (point 4). Each inspection takes about half a day.

At the end of inspection a report is prepared and sent to regional offices in charge. At that point the regional office forwards the report to the workshop. The report contains a table with the synthesis of observations made. Three options are possible: no observation, minor fault or severe fault. The severe faults can include not remediable faults and/or repeated mistakes reported after several checks.

Conclusions

After the first controls of the workshops, no severe faults have been reported. The most part of observations were recorded in the area of maintenance and transmission of the official documents, including delays in transmission time, no proper storage of digital copies of documents. In few cases, mistakes were recorded on the assigned numeration (identification control number) of the inspection.

Some weak points still remain regarding the inspection of a sprayer already inspected at the owner place. In fact, in this case it is very difficult to assign the responsibility of a detected fault, since time is passed between the inspection and, in the meantime, the owner could have changed or replaced (or damaged) parts and component of the equipment. For this reason the second level inspection of a sprayer is limited to some simple points, with the main scope to demonstrate that the inspected sprayer was exactly the same.

Also in the case of function tests of pressure gauges some doubts still remain. In fact the inspection is not allowed to release a calibration certificate and this control could be a controversial point.

In conclusion, the adopted system seems to be suitable to provide a complete inspection to the authorized workshops. However, a higher level of common procedure is still requested in order to achieve a homogenous level of control in all Italian regions.