French national MRL measures on carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, glufosinate, and mancozeb

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France bans imports of certain foods containing residues of carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, glufosinate, and mancozeb

Arrêté du 5 janvier 2026 portant suspension d'importation, d'introduction et de mise sur le marché à titre gratuit ou onéreux, en France, de denrées alimentaires provenant de pays tiers à l'Union européenne contenant des résidus de certaines substances actives phytopharmaceutiques interdites d'utilisation dans l'Union européenne

Update

On 7 January 2025, the French Government issued an Order suspending the import and sale of certain raw or processed foodstuffs, including some fruits, vegetables, soyabeans, cereals, and honey, that originate from outside the European Union (EU) if they contain carbendazim (sum of carbendazim and benomyl), thiophanate-methyl, glufosinate, or mancozeb. These pesticides are not approved for use in the EU.

The Order was notified to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on 9 January 2026, and has applied since **8 February 2026**. It applies only to foods put on the French market, and **not** to foods put on other EU Member State markets.

The French Ministry of Agriculture has issued an FAQ document to help operators implement the new measures.

Impacted products

Apples, apricots, aubergines/eggplants, avocados, barley, beans (with pods), blackcurrants, Brussels sprouts, cherries (sweet), clementines/mandarins, grapefruit, grapes (wine and table), Japanese medlars, lemons, lettuce, limes, mangoes, medlars, melons, mushrooms (cultivated), oats, okra/lady's fingers, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, peas (with pods), sweet peppers/bell peppers, plums, pome fruits (other), potatoes, pumpkins, quinces, rye, seaweed and prokaryotic organisms, soyabeans, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelons, wheat

What is changing?

On 7 January 2025, the French Government issued an Order suspending the import and sale of some foodstuffs that originate from outside the EU if they contain certain pesticides that are not approved for use in the EU. The full decree in French is available at https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000053313910.

This measure by the French authorities addresses the pesticides carbendazim (includes the sum of carbendazim and benomyl), thiophanate-methyl, glufosinate, and mancozeb, and their permitted MRLs on selected foods (raw or processed). The foods affected are listed in Table 1. In France, importing these foods and placing them on the market is now prohibited if they contain residues of any of these pesticides. This measure only applies to the French market; the newly established French MRLs are therefore not aligned with the EU MRLs currently in force across other EU Member States.

This Order entered into force on 8 January 2026, with a grace period of 1 month until it was applied, and was notified to the WTO on 9 January 2026. This very short transition period allowed little time for producers and traders to adapt to these new requirements.

On 20 January 2026, the European Commission and EU Member States discussed whether similar measures are required by the EU. The EU Member States did not support an EU-wide emergency measure, and will continue pursuing the following actions that are already planned:

- carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, and benomyl: publication of a draft Regulation lowering maximum residue levels (MRLs) on all products (see AGRINFO records on carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, and benomyl)
- glufosinate: update of risk assessment at EU level
- dithiocarbamates (including mancozeb): development of specific analytical methods.

Only one EU Member States supported repealing the French Order, and it was agreed that France may maintain its own emergency measure (European Commission 2026).

Why?

Under EU law, where an EU Member State informs the European Commission of an evident serious risk to human health, animal health, or the environment, and the Commission does not take measures to address that risk, a Member State may adopt interim protective measures (Regulation 178/2002, Arts. 53 and 54). This is the legal basis for the Order presented by France.

Timeline

This Order entered into force on 8 January 2026 and has been applied since **8 February 2026**.

Background

Carbendazim (carbendazim + benomyl) and thiophanate-methyl

Carbendazim (carbendazim + benomyl) and thiophanate-methyl are no longer authorised for use in the EU as no application was made by the manufacturers for their reapproval. When substances are not reapproved, MRLs are set to the limit of quantification (LOQ), except on products for which an import tolerance is set based on uses outside the EU, and where these MRLs are considered safe by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). For carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl, EU import tolerances are currently in place on citrus fruits, mangoes, papayas, and okra/lady's fingers.

In February 2026, the European Commission published adraft Regulation lowering maximum residue levels (MRLs) on all products (see AGRINFO records on carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, and benomyl).

Glufosinate

Glufosinate has not been approved for use in the EU since July 2018 as no application was made by the manufacturer for its reapproval. It can still be used, but it should be substituted by safer alternatives where they exist.

Import tolerance MRLs currently remain in place for several products, of which only potatoes are included in the French Order: the MRL on potatoes was reduced to the LOQ, while for other foods the EU import tolerance MRL remains at 0.3 mg/kg (see the EU Pesticides Database).

Mancozeb

Mancozeb belongs to the dithiocarbamates group, which also includes maneb, metiram, propineb, thiram, and ziram. While these substances are not approved for use in the EU, several import tolerance MRLs remain in place.

In 2024, the European Commission informed the WTO that it intends to amend the MRLs for dithiocarbamates in a range of products (G/SPS/N/EU/788). For products where Codex MRLs (CXLs) or import tolerances exist and are considered safe, the Commission proposed adjusting the MRLs accordingly. For details on the proposed changes and products affected, see Maximum residue levels for dithiocarbamates.

As limited data is currently available for certain products, further evaluations and potential adjustments are still ongoing. Adoption of this proposal was originally planned for 2025 but is on

hold pending further discussions within the Commission.

Resources

EFSA (2021) Reasoned opinion on the toxicological properties and maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the benzimidazole substances carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl. EFSA Journal, 19(7): e06773.

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.

European Commission (2026) Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed, Section Phytopharmaceuticals – Residues. Summary Report, 20 January.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agro-alimentaire et de la Souveraineté alimentaire (2026) Foire aux questions : suspension de la mise sur le marché en France de denrées alimentaires provenant de pays tiers contenant des résidus de substances actives phytopharmaceutiques interdites dans l'Union européenne

Sources

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Table & Figures

Table 1
Food–pesticide combinations subject to the French prohibition

Active substances	Food products (raw or processed)
Carbendazim and benomyl	Grapefruit Oranges Lemons Limes Clementines/tangerines Apples Pears Quinces Loquats Other pome fruits Apricots Cherries (sweet) Peaches Plums Table grapes Wine grapes Mangoes Papayas Tomatoes Eggplant Okra Brussels sprouts Beans (with pods) Peas (with pods) Cultivated mushrooms Soybeans Barley Oats Rye Wheat Honey and other apiculture products
Glufosinate	Potatoes
Mancozeb	Avocados Table grapes Mangoes Papayas Blackcurrants Strawberries Potatoes Peppers Melons Lettuce
Thiophanate-methyl	Grapefruit Oranges Lemons Limes Clementines/tangerines Apples Pears Quinces Loquats Other pome fruits Apricots Cherries (sweet) Peaches Plums Wine grapes Mangoes Papayas Tomatoes Eggplant Okra Melons Pumpkins Watermelons Brussels sprouts Seaweed and prokaryotic organisms Soybeans Barley Oats Rye Wheat Honey and other apiculture products

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Source: based on Art. 1 of the French Order

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