Maximum residue levels for abamectin

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EU amends abamectin MRLs on certain tree nuts, fruits, vegetables and salads from August 2023

Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/198 of 30 January 2023 amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for abamectin in or on certain products

Update

The EU has amended the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for abamectin. Lower MRLs have been set for certain tree nuts, fruits and fruiting vegetables, and certain salads, but MRLs have increased for other salads, legume vegetables and cotton seeds.

Impacted products

almonds, hazelnuts, cobnuts, walnuts apples, pears, quinces, medlars, loquats, Japanese medlars, strawberries, avocados, papayas, tomatoes, sweet peppers, bell peppers, cucumber, courgettes, lamb's lettuces, corn salads, lettuces, escaroles, broad leaved endives, cresses, sprouts and shoots, land cresses, Roman rocket, rucola, brassicas, purslanes, chervil, celery leaves, parsley, beans, peas, Florence fennels, seeds

What is changing?

The changes to abamectin MRLs are set out in Table 1.

Why?

EFSA's evaluation followed a request to modify existing MRLs for certain products (EFSA 2020a), and a request for import tolerances submitted by the USA for certain products in order to prevent barriers to trade (EFSA 2020b). For many products, EFSA established that there was no risk of exceeding the existing acceptable daily intake (ADI) or acute reference dose (ARfD) for abamectin.

However, when reviewing the approval for use of abamectin in the EU, on the basis of developmental neurotoxicity studies, EFSA proposed a lower ADI and ARfD. The European Commission asked EFSA to review certain MRLs in light of the lower ADI and ARfD. This review (EFSA 2021) identified unacceptable risks for a number of products, including apples, pears, strawberries, tomatoes, various salads and sweet peppers.

Timeline

The new MRLs will apply from 20 August 2023.

Recommended Actions

Suppliers of quinces, medlars, loquats/ Japanese medlars, strawberries, tomatoes, sweet peppers/ bell peppers, cucumbers, courgettes, lamb's lettuces/ corn salads, lettuces, chervil, parsley and celery leaves must review existing use of abamectin to ensure conformity of their products with new reduced abamectin MRLs by August 2023.

Suppliers of almonds, hazelnuts/ cobnuts, walnuts, apples, pears, papayas and escaroles/ broad-leaved endives must ensure that alternative solutions are found to existing use of abamectin on these products by August 2023.

Background

MRLs are set in accordance with the rules set out in Regulation 396/2005. For information on current MRLs for other substances, please consult the EU Pesticide Residues database.

Resources

EFSA (2020a) Evaluation of confirmatory data following the Article 12 MRL review and modification of the existing maximum residue levels for abamectin in various commodities. EFSA Journal, 18(1): 5989.

EFSA (2020b) Setting of import tolerances for abamectin in various crops. EFSA Journal, 18(7): e06173.

EFSA (2021) Focussed assessment of certain existing maximum residues levels of concern for abamectin. EFSA Journal, 19(10): 6842.

Sources

Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/198

Table & Figures

Table 1
Maximum residue levels for abamectin

Food category	Products	Abamectin[1] (mg/kg)	
		Old MRL	New MRL
Tree nuts	Almonds, hazelnuts/ cobnuts, walnuts	0.02	0.01*
Pome fruits	Apples, pears	0.03	0.006*
	Pears	0.03	0.006*
	Quinces, medlars, loquats/ Japanese medlars	0.03	0.02
Berries and small fruits	Strawberries	0.15	0.08
	Avocados	0.01*	0.02
	Papayas	0.03	0.01*
Miscellaneous fruits	Avocados	0.01*	0.02
	Papayas	0.03	0.01*
Fruiting vegetables	Tomatoes	0.09	0.015
	Sweet peppers/ bell peppers	0.07	0.03
	Cucumbers, courgettes	0.04	0.02
Leaf vegetables, herbs and edible flowers	Lamb's lettuces/ corn salads	2	0.08
	Lettuces	0.09	0.03
	Escaroles/ broad-leaved endives	0.1	0.01*
	Cresses and other sprouts and shoots, land cresses	0.01*	0.08
	Roman rocket/ rucola	0.015	0.08
	Baby leaf crops (including brassica species)	2	3
	Lettuces other than the above or red mustard	0.01*	0.08
	Purslanes, spinaches and similar leaves (other than spinaches, purslanes, chards/ beet leaves)	0.01*	0.1
	Chervil, parsley	2	0.03
	Celery leaves	0.09	0.03
Legume vegetables	Beans (with pods), peas (with pods)	0.03	0.08
Stem vegetables	Florence fennels	0.01*	0.03
Oilseeds	Cotton seeds	0.01*	0.02

* Limit of determination.
1 Sum of avermectin B1a, avermectin B1b and delta 8,9 isomer of avermectin B1a, expressed as avermectin B1a.
Shading indicates a decrease in MRL.

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Source: based on Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/198

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