Maximum residue levels for alpha-cypermethrin

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EU proposes to set MRLs for alpha-cypermethrin

Draft Commission Regulation (EU) amending Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for alpha-cypermethrin and cypermethrin in or on certain products

Draft Annex II

Update

The European Union (EU) maximum residue levels (MRLs) for cypermethrin cover the group of isomers: cypermethrin, alpha-cypermethrin, beta-cypermethrin, and zeta-cypermethrin. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has identified potential risks related to the current cypermethrin MRLs for certain products, with particular concerns regarding alpha-cypermethrin, which is more toxic.

The EU has notified the World Trade Organization Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO SPS) Committee of a revised draft proposal setting specific MRLs for alpha-cypermethrin, in addition to the general MRL covering all forms of cypermethrin (G/SPS/N/EU/702/Add.1). In parallel, the EU is also reviewing the cypermethrin MRLs (see Maximum residue levels for cypermethrins).

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Impacted products

Grapefruits, oranges, lemons, limes, mandarins, almonds, Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnuts, coconuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nut kernels, pistachios, walnuts, apples, pears, quinces, medlars, loquats/Japanese medlars, apricots, cherries (sweet), peaches, plums, table grapes, wine grapes, strawberries, blackberries, dewberries, raspberries (red and yellow), blueberries, cranberries, currants (black, red, white), gooseberries (green, red, yellow), rose hips, mulberries (black and white), azaroles/Mediterranean medlars, elderberries, dates, figs, kaki/Japanese persimmons, jambolans, kiwi fruits, litchis, passionfruits/maracujas, prickly pears, star apples/cainitos, American persimmons/Virginia kaki, avocados, bananas, mangoes, papayas, granate apples/pomegranates, cherimoyas, guavas, pineapples, breadfruits, soursops, table olives, kumquats, carambolas, durians, potatoes, cassava roots, yams, arrowroots, sweet potatoes, beetroots, carrots, celeriac, horseradishes, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips, Hamburg root parsley, radishes, salsifies, swedes/rutabagas, turnips, garlic, onions, shallots, spring onions/green onions, Welsh onions, tomatoes, sweet peppers/bell peppers, aubergines/eggplants, okra/lady's fingers, gherkins, courgettes, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, watermelons, sweet corn, broccoli, cauliflowers, Brussels sprouts, head cabbages, Chinese cabbages/pe-tsai, kales, kohlrabies, lettuces, escaroles/broad-leaved endives, spinaches, purslanes, chards/beet leaves, witloofs/Belgian endives, lamb's lettuces/corn salads, Roman rocket/rucola, red mustards, cresses and other sprouts and shoots, land cresses, watercresses, baby leaf crops (including Brassica species), chervil, celery leaves, parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil and edible flowers, laurel/bay leaves, tarragon, grape leaves, beans and peas (with and without pods), lentils, asparagus, cardoons, celeries, Florence fennels, leeks, rhubarbs, bamboo shoots, palm hearts, globe artichokes, cultivated/wild fungi, mosses and lichens, algae and prokaryotes, beans, lentils, lupini beans, linseeds, peanuts/groundnuts, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, rapeseeds/canola seeds, mustard seeds, cotton seeds, safflower seeds, soyabeans, pumpkin seeds, castor beans, borage seeds, gold of pleasure seeds, hemp seeds, olives for oil production, oil palm kernels and fruits, kapok, barley, oats, buckwheat, maize/corn, millet, rice, rye, sorghum, wheat, chamomile, hibiscus, rose, jasmine, lime, strawberry, rooibos, maté, valerian, ginseng, aniseed, black cumin, celery, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, fenugreek, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, capers, saffron, mace, allspice/pimento, Sichuan pepper, caraway, juniper berry, peppercorn (black, green, white), vanilla, tamarind, cardamom, liquorice, turmeric, sugar beet roots, sugar canes, chicory roots, muscle/fat/liver, kidney/edible offals (swine, cattle, sheep, goats, horse, poultry), bird eggs (chicken, duck, geese, quail)

What is changing?

The EU proposes to set separate MRLs for alpha-cypermethrin, as summarised in Table 1.

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Why?

While cypermethrin is a pesticide authorised for use in the EU, alpha-, beta-, and zeta-cypermethrin are not. The MRL for cypermethrin refers to the group of all these isomers.

EFSA has identified potential risks related to the current cypermethrin MRLs for certain products (EFSA 2023). Because these risks are often associated with the more toxic alpha-cypermethrin, rather than reducing cypermethrin MRLs to the limit of determination (LOD, the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods), the European Commission proposes two sets of MRLs, one for cypermethrin (sum of isomers) and a separate one for alpha-cypermethrin. This approach will allow the EU to maintain cypermethrin MRLs for many products where alpha-cypermethrin is identified as a risk, and also to maintain alignment with Codex Alimentarius MRLs (CXLs) (European Commission 2024).

EFSA has provided further guidance on setting MRLs for alpha-cypermethrin (EFSA 2025).

Timeline

The Regulation is expected to be published in October 2026, and will apply 6 months after publication.

Recommended Actions

The opportunity to submit comments on this proposal closed on 1 May 2026.

Suppliers to the EU market of affected products should seek alternative chemical and non-chemical alternatives to the use of alpha-cypermethrin.

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 (2023) Review of the existing maximum residue levels for cypermethrins according to Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. EFSA Journal, 21(3): e07800.

EFSA (2025) Statement on MRLs for alpha-cypermethrin and screening of the existing EU MRLs for cypermethrin. EFSA Journal, 23: e9386.

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European Commission (2024) Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed Section Phytopharmaceuticals – Pesticide Residues 23 - 24 September 2024

Sources

Draft Commission Regulation as regards maximum residue levels for alpha-cypermethrin and cypermethrin in or on certain products

Draft Annex II

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Tables & Figures

Table 1
Maximum residue levels under discussion for alpha-cypermethrin

Food category	Products	Alpha-cypermethrin: new MRL (mg/kg)
Citrus fruits	Grapefruits, oranges, lemons, limes, mandarins	0.08
Tree nuts	Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnuts, coconuts, hazelnuts/ cobnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nut kernels, pistachios, walnuts	0.015
Pome fruits	Apples	0.01*
	Pears	0.007*
	Quinces, medlars, loquats/Japanese medlars	0.03*
Stone fruits	Apricots, cherries (sweet), peaches, plums	0.01*
Berries and small fruits	Table grapes, wine grapes	0.03
	Strawberries	0.07
	Blackberries, dewberries, raspberries (red and yellow), blueberries, cranberries, currants (black, red, white), gooseberries (green, red, yellow), rose hips, mulberries (black and white), azaroles/ Mediterranean medlars, elderberries	0.01*
Miscellaneous fruits	Dates, figs, kaki/Japanese persimmons, jambuls/jambolans, kiwi fruits, litchis/lychees, passionfruits/maracujas, prickly pears/cactus fruits, star apples/cainitos, American persimmons/Virginia kaki, avocados, bananas, mangoes, papayas, granate apples/pomegranates, cherimoyas, guavas, pineapples, breadfruits, soursops/guanabanas	0.01*
	Table olives	0.09
	Kumquats	0.07
	Carambolas	0.04
	Durians	0.2
Root and tuber vegetables	Potatoes	0.015
	Cassava roots/manioc, yams, arrowroots	0.01*
	Sweet potatoes	0.01
	Beetroots, carrots, celeriac/turnip-rooted celeries, horseradishes, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips, parsley roots/Hamburg root parsley, radishes, salsifies, swedes/rutabagas, turnips	0.03
Bulb vegetables	Garlic, onions, shallots	0.02
	Spring onions/green onions, Welsh onions	0.01*
Fruiting vegetables	Tomatoes	0.015
	Sweet peppers/bell peppers	0.01*
	Aubergines/eggplants	0.03
	Okra/lady's fingers	0.15
	Gherkins	0.07
	Courgettes, cucumbers	0.01*
	Melons	0.01
	Pumpkins, watermelons	0.07
	Sweet corn	0.015
Brassica vegetables	Broccoli	0.03
	Cauliflowers	0.01
	Brussels sprouts, head cabbages	0.03
	Chinese cabbages/pe-tsai, kales, kohlrabies	0.01*

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Table 1
Continued

Food category	Products	Alpha-cypermethrin: new MRL (mg/kg)
Leaf vegetables, herbs, and edible flowers	Lettuces, escaroles/broad-leaved endives, spinaches, purslanes, chards/beet leaves, witloofs/Belgian endives	0.01*
	Lamb's lettuces/corn salads, Roman rocket/rucola, red mustards	0.3
	Cresses and other sprouts and shoots, land cresses, watercresses	0.9
	Baby leaf crops (including *Brassica* spp.), chervil, celery leaves, parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil and edible flowers, laurel/bay leaves, tarragon	1
	Grape leaves and similar species	0.015
Legume vegetables	Beans and peas (with pods)	0.04
	Beans and peas (without pods), lentils	0.01*
Stem vegetables	Asparagus	0.09
	Cardoons, celeries, Florence fennels, leeks, rhubarbs, bamboo shoots, palm hearts	0.01*
	Globe artichokes	0.1
Fungi, mosses, lichens	Cultivated fungi, wild fungi, mosses and lichens	0.01*
Algae and prokaryotes		0.01*
Pulses	Beans, lentils, lupins/lupini beans	0.015
Oilseeds	Linseeds, peanuts/groundnuts, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, rapeseeds/canola seeds, mustard seeds, cotton seeds, safflower seeds	0.1
	Soyabeans	0.015
	Pumpkin seeds, castor beans	0.01*
	Borage seeds, gold of pleasure seeds, hemp seeds	0.01
Oil fruits	Olives for oil production	0.09
	Oil palm kernels, oil palm fruits, kapok	0.01*
Cereals	Barley, oats	0.09
	Buckwheat and other pseudocereals, maize/corn, common millet/ proso millet	0.3
	Rice	0.05
	Rye	0.02
	Sorghum	0.3
	Wheat	0.04
Teas		0.05*
Coffee beans		0.03
Herbal infusions	Camomile, hibiscus/roselle, rose, jasmine, lime/linden, strawberry, rooibos, maté	0.1*
	Valerian	0.05*
	Ginseng	0.03
Cocoa beans, carobs/St John's breads		0.05*
Hops		0.05*
Spices	Anise/aniseed, black caraway/black cumin, celery, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, fenugreek, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, capers, saffron, mace	0.05*
	Allspice/pimento, Sichuan pepper, caraway, juniper berry, peppercorn (black, green, white), vanilla, tamarind	0.5
	Cardamom	3
	Liquorice, turmeric/curcuma	0.2

Continued …

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Table 1
Continued

Food category	Products	Alpha-cypermethrin: new MRL (mg/kg)
Sugar plants	Sugar beet roots	0.1
	Sugar canes	0.07
	Chicory roots	0.01
Products of animal origin	Muscle (swine, cattle)	0.03
	Muscle (sheep, goats, horse, poultry)	0.05
	Fat (swine)	0.07
	Fat (cattle)	0.2
	Fat (sheep, goats, horse)	2
	Fat (poultry)	0.1
	Liver, kidney, edible offals (other than liver and kidney) (swine, cattle, sheep, goats, horse, poultry)	0.05
	Milk (cattle)	0.015
	Milk (sheep, goats, horse)	0.05
	Bird eggs (chicken, duck, geese, quail)	0.01*
Honey and other apiculture products		0.01*

* Limit of determination.

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