Maximum residue levels for carbendazim

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EU to reduce carbendazim MRLs to limit of determination on all products

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

Draft Annex V [PLAN/2024/2763 v6]

Update

The European Union (EU) has notified the World Trade Organization Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO SPS) Committee of a new draft proposal to reduce the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for carbendazim to the limit of determination (LOD) on all products (G/SPS/N/EU/916/Corr.1). (The LOD is the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods.)

This proposal follows the rejection by the European Parliament in September 2024 of a previous proposal by the European Commission to maintain the MRLs on lemons, limes, mandarins, and okra. See Maximum residue levels for benomyl, carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, cyproconazole, and spirodiclofen.

Impacted products

All products

What is changing?

The EU proposes to lower the MRLs for carbendazim to 0.01 mg/kg on all products. The changes are summarised in Table 1. The current EU definition of carbendazim includes benomyl, but this proposal sets separate MRLs for the two substances. See Maximum residue levels for benomyl.

Why?

Carbendazim is no longer authorised in the EU as there has been no application for reapproval.

The European Food Standards Authority (EFSA 2021) suggested reducing the MRLs for carbendazim to the LOD, except on certain products where levels are considered to be safe. It proposed increased MRLs on lemons, limes, and mandarins, aligning with good agricultural practices (GAPs) observed in South Africa; and a lower MRL considered to be safe for carbendazim on okra/lady's fingers, also derived from GAPs in non-EU countries. However, the GAPs previously submitted are no longer authorised in South Africa. In addition, there are concerns about the risks of combined residues from carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl.

Timeline

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

Recommended Actions

Suppliers of all products to the EU market should seek alternative chemical and non-chemical alternatives to the use of carbendazim.

The WTO consultation on this proposal is now closed.

Background

In September 2024, the European Parliament rejected a European Commission Regulation that proposed to reduce the MRLs for carbendazim to the LOD on all products except lemons, limes, mandarins, and okra (see Maximum residue levels for benomyl, carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, cyproconazole, and spirodiclofen). The European Parliament requested the Commission to withdraw its draft Regulation and present a new one, setting the MRLs for carbendazim on all products to the LOD.

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 (2021) Reasoned opinion on the toxicological properties and maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the benzimidazole substances carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl. EFSA Journal, 19(8): e06773.

European Commission (2025a) Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed: Section Phytopharmaceuticals – Pesticide Residues, 17–18 February 2025. Summary Report.

European Commission (2025b) Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed: Section Phytopharmaceuticals – Pesticide Residues, 23–24 June 2025. Agenda.

Sources

Draft Commission Regulation as regards maximum residue levels for benomyl, carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl in or on certain products

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Table & Figures

Table 1
Changes under discussion for carbendazim maximum residue levels

Food category	Products	Current MRL that includes benomyl[1]	Proposed MRL
Citrus fruits	Grapefruits, oranges	0.2	0.01*
	Lemons, limes, mandarins	0.7	0.01*
	Other citrus fruits	0.1*	0.01*
Tree nuts	Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnuts, coconuts, hazelnuts/cobnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nut kernels, pistachios, walnuts, other tree nuts	0.1*	0.01*
Pome fruits	Apples, pears, quinces, medlars, other pome fruits	0.2	0.01*
	Loquats/Japanese medlars	2	0.01*
Stone fruits	Apricots, peaches	0.2	0.01*
	Cherries (sweet), plums	0.5	0.01*
	Other stone fruits	0.1*	0.01*
Berries and small fruits	Table grapes	0.3	0.01*
	Wine grapes	0.5	0.01*
	Strawberries, blackberries, dewberries, raspberries (red and yellow), other cane fruits, blueberries, cranberries, currants (black, red, white), gooseberries (green, red, yellow), rose hips, mulberries (black and white), azaroles/Mediterranean medlars, elderberries, other berries	0.1*	0.01*
Miscellaneous fruit	Dates, figs, table olives, kumquats, carambolas, kaki/Japanese persimmons, jambuls/jambolans, other fruits (edible peel), kiwi fruits, litchis/lychees, passionfruits/maracujas, prickly pears/cactus fruits, star apples/cainitos, American persimmons/Virginia kaki, other small fruits (inedible peel), avocados, bananas	0.1*	0.01*
	Mangoes	0.5	0.01*
	Papayas	0.2	0.01*
	Granate apples/pomegranates, cherimoyas, guavas, pineapples, breadfruits, durians, soursops/guanabanas, other large fruits (inedible peel)	0.1*	0.01*
Root and tuber vegetables	Potatoes, cassava roots/manioc, sweet potatoes, yams, arrowroots, other tropical roots/tubers, beetroots, carrots, celeriac/turnip rooted celeries, horseradishes, Jerusalem artichokes, parsnips, parsley roots/Hamburg root parsley, radishes, salsifies, swedes/rutabagas, turnips, other roots/tubers	0.1*	0.01*
Bulb vegetables	Garlic, onions, shallots, spring onions/green onions and Welsh onions, other bulb vegetables	0.1*	0.01*
Fruiting vegetables	Tomatoes	0.3	0.01*
	Sweet peppers/bell peppers, other *Solanaceae*, cucumbers, gherkins, courgettes, other curcurbits (edible peel), melons, pumpkins, watermelons, other curcurbits (inedible peel), sweetcorn, other fruiting vegetables	0.1*	0.01*
	Aubergines/eggplants	0.5	0.01*
	Okra/lady's fingers	2	0.01*
Brassica vegetables	Broccoli, cauliflowers, other flowering brassicas, head cabbages, other head brassicas, Chinese cabbages/pe-tsai, kales, kohlrabis, other leafy brassicas	0.1*	0.01*
	Brussels sprouts	0.5	0.01*

Continued…

Table 1
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Food category	Products	Current MRL that includes benomyl[1]	Proposed MRL
Leaf vegetables	Lamb's lettuces/corn salads, lettuces, escaroles/broad-leaved endives, cresses and other sprouts and shoots, land cresses, Roman rocket/rucola, red mustards, baby leaf crops, other lettuces, spinaches, purslanes, chards/beet leaves, other spinaches, grape leaves, watercresses, witloofs/Belgian endives	0.1*	0.01*
Herbs and edible flowers	Chervil, chives, celery leaves, parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, basil and edible flowers, laurel/bay leaves, tarragon, other herbs and edible flowers	0.1*	0.01*
Legume vegetables	Beans (with pods), peas (with pods)	0.2	0.01*
	Beans (without pods), peas (without pods), lentils, other legume vegetables	0.1*	0.01*
Stem vegetables	Asparagus, cardoons, celeries, Florence fennels, globe artichokes, leeks, rhubarbs, bamboo shoots, palm hearts, other stem vegetables	0.1*	0.01*
Fungi, mosses and lichens	Cultivated fungi	1	0.01*
	Wild fungi, mosses and lichens	0.1*	0.01*
Algae and prokaryotes	Algae and prokaryotes	0.1*	0.01*
Pulses	Beans, lentils, peas, lupins/lupini beans, other pulses	0.1*	0.01*
Oilseeds	Linseeds, peanuts/groundnuts, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, rapeseeds/canola seeds, mustard seeds, cotton seeds, pumpkin seeds, safflower seeds, borage seeds, gold of pleasure seeds, hemp seeds, castor beans, other oilseeds	0.1*	0.01*
	Soyabeans	0.2	0.01*
Oil fruits	Olives for oil production, oil palm kernels, oil palm fruits, kapok, other oil fruits	0.1*	0.01*
Cereals	Barley, oats	2	0.01*
	Rye, wheat	0.1	0.01*
Teas		0.1*	0.05*
Coffee beans		0.1*	0.05*
Herbal infusions	Chamomile, hibiscus/roselle, rose, jasmine, lime/linden, other flower infusions, strawberry, rooibos, mate/maté, other leaves/herb infusions, valerian, ginseng, other root infusions	0.1*	0.05*
Cocoa beans		0.1*	0.05*
Carobs/Saint John's breads		0.1*	0.05*
Hops		0.1*	0.05*

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Table 1 Continued			
Food category	Products	Current MRL that includes benomyl[1]	Proposed MRL
Spices	Anise/aniseed, black caraway/black cumin, celery, coriander, cumin, dill, fennel, fenugreek, nutmeg, other seed spices, allspice/pimento, Sichuan pepper, caraway, juniper berry, peppercorn (black, green, white), vanilla, tamarind, other fruit spices, cinnamon, other bark spices, liquorice, ginger, turmeric/curcuma, horseradish, other root/rhizome spices, cloves, capers, other bud spices, saffron, other flower pistil spices, mace, other aril spices	0.1*	0.05*
Sugar plants	Sugar beet roots, sugar canes, chicory roots, other sugar plants	0.1*	0.01*
Products of animal origin:			
Swine/cattle/ sheep/goat/ horse/poultry/ other farmed terrestrial animals	Muscle, fat, liver, kidney, edible offals (other than liver and kidney)	0.05*	0.01*
Milk	Cattle, sheep, goat, horse, other milks	0.05*	0.01*
Birds' eggs	Chicken, duck, geese, quail, other birds' eggs	0.05*	0.01*
Honey and other apiculture products		1	0.05*
Amphibians and reptiles		0.05*	0.01*
Terrestrial invertebrate animals		0.05*	0.01*
Wild terrestrial vertebrate animals		0.05*	0.01*

1. Sum of benomyl and carbendazim expressed as carbendazim.
* Limit of determination.

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