Maximum residue levels for carbofuran

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EU to lower MRL for carbofuran in cotton seeds to limit of determination

Draft Commission Regulation 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 carbofuran, imazalil, mandipropamid, propaquizafop, quizalofop-P-ethyl and quizalofop-P-tefuryl in or on certain products

Draft Annex (PLAN/2025/2832)

Update

The European Union (EU) has notified the World Trade Organization Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO SPS) Committee of a draft proposal to reduce the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for carbofuran on cotton seeds to the limit of determination (LOD) (G/SPS/N/EU/943). (The LOD is the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods.)

Impacted products

Cotton seeds

What is changing?

The EU proposes to lower the MRL for carbofuran on cotton seeds from 0.1 mg/kg to the LOD (0.02 mg/kg).

Why?

Where pesticides are no longer approved in the EU, MRLs are reduced to the LOD unless there are MRLs set by Codex Alimentarius (CXLs) or requests for import tolerances that have been evaluated to be safe by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA 2025). Carbofuran is not approved in the EU and the existing CXL for cotton seeds was revoked in 2024.

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Timeline

The new MRL is expected to apply from **September 2027**.

Recommended Actions

Suppliers to the EU market of cotton seeds should look for alternative chemical and non-chemical solutions to the use of carbofuran.

The WTO consultation on this proposal closed on 30 June 2026.

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.

The EU takes into account Codex MRLs (CXLs) established by Codex Alimentarius. In November 2024, the Codex Alimentarius Commission revoked some CXLs for the active substance carbofuran (EFSA 2025).

Resources

EFSA (2025) Assessment of fall-back MRLs for revoked CXLs previously implemented in the EU legislation. EFSA Journal, 23(3): e9299.

Sources

Draft Commission Regulation as regards maximum residue levels for carbofuran, imazalil, mandipropamid, propaquizafop, quizalofop-P-ethyl and quizalofop-P-tefuryl in or on certain products

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