Maximum residue levels for methomyl

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EU reduces MRLs for methomyl to 0.01–0.05 mg/kg on all products except kumquats and gherkins, with impacts on certain vegetables, pulses, oilseeds, and cereals

Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/1783 of 15 September 2023 amending Annexes II and V to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for denatonium benzoate, diuron, etoxazole, methomyl and teflubenzuron in or on certain products

Update

The European Commission is reducing the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for methomyl to the limit of determination (LOD) on all products except kumquats and gherkins. (The LOD is the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods.) Where the detection level of 0.01 mg/kg cannot be met due to technical limitations, the MRL will be 0.02 or 0.05 mg/kg. There are implications for exporters of vegetables, pulses, oilseeds, and cereals.

Impacted products

sweet peppers, bell peppers, melons, watermelons, pumpkins, lettuces, beans, peas, soya beans, cotton seeds, maize, corn, oats

What is changing?

The EU has amended the MRLs for methomyl as summarised in Table 1.

Why?

Methomyl is no longer permitted for use in the EU. The existing MRLs set for methomyl have therefore been deleted and set to the LOD, except on kumquats and gherkins. Where the detection level of 0.01 mg/kg cannot be met because analytical methods cannot detect such low levels, the MRL is 0.02 or 0.05 mg/kg.

The MRLs for methomyl on kumquats and gherkins are based on Codex MRLs that are considered safe by EFSA (2015) and are therefore not changed. Codex MRLs have been set for

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methomyl on other products, but EFSA concluded that there was not enough data available to support those MRLs, in particular due to missing data on the metabolism of methomyl in leafy crops, pulses, and oilseeds.

Timeline

The new MRLs will apply from 8 April 2024. Products exported before that date, that comply with the old MRLs, will not be removed from the EU market after 8 April, even if they are not compliant with the new MRLs.

Recommended Actions

Suppliers to the EU market of sweet peppers/ bell peppers, melons, watermelons, pumpkins, lettuces, beans (with pods), peas (with pods), dry beans, soya beans, cotton seeds, maize/ corn, and oats must find alternative solutions to existing use of methomyl on these products by April 2024.

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 (2015) Review of the existing maximum residue levels for methomyl according to Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. EFSA Journal, 13(10): 4277.

Sources

Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/1783

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Tables & Figures

Table 1
Maximum residue levels for methomyl

Food category	Products	Methomyl (mg/kg)	
		Old MRL	New MRL
Fruiting vegetables	Sweet peppers/ bell peppers	0.04	0.01*
	Melons, watermelons	0.015	0.01*
	Pumpkins	0.05	0.01*
Leaf vegetables, herbs and edible flowers	Lettuces	0.2	0.01*
Legume vegetables	Beans (with pods), peas (with pods)	0.1	0.01*
Pulses	Beans	0.05	0.01*
Oilseeds	Soya beans, cotton seeds	0.2	0.01*
Cereals	Maize/corn, oats	0.02*	0.01*

* Limit of determination.

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Source: based on Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/1783

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