Maximum residue levels for thiophanate-methyl

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EU to reduce thiophanate-methyl MRLs to limit of determination on all products

Draft Commission Regulation amending Annex 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 thiophanate-methyl to the limit of determination (LOD) for all products (G/SPS/N/EU/916). (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 European Commission proposal to maintain MRLs on limes and okra. See Maximum residue levels for benomyl, carbendazim, thiophanate-methyl, cyproconazole, and spirodiclofen. The new proposal is a response to the Parliament's request to the Commission to reduce the MRLs for thiophanate-methyl on all products to the LOD.

Impacted products

All products

What is changing?

The EU proposes to lower the MRLs for thiophanate-methyl to 0.01 mg/kg on all products. The changes are summarised in Table 1.

For animal products, thiophanate-methyl is currently included in the definition of carbendazim: "carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl, expressed as carbendazim". The proposal is to separate out thiophanate-methyl.

Why?

Thiophanate-methyl is no longer authorised in the EU because the manufacturer withdrew its new application for approval.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA 2021) suggested reducing the MRLs to the LOD, except on certain products for which it is considered safe. It proposed increasing the MRL for thiophanate-methyl on limes, aligning with good agricultural practices (GAPs) observed in certain non-EU countries (especially South Africa), and lowering the current MRL to a level deemed safe on okra/lady's fingers, also derived from GAPs in non-EU countries.

However, the GAPs previously submitted for limes are no longer authorised in South Africa. In addition, there are concerns about the risks of combined residues from carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl. Regarding the lowering of the MRL for okra, there was a lack of information about "how these plant protection products are applied in practice" (recital [introductory paragraph] 10 of the proposed Regulation).

Timeline

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

Recommended Actions

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

The WTO consultation on this proposal closed on 6 April 2026.

Background

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

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Table & Figures

Table 1
Maximum residue levels under discussion for thiophanate-methyl

Food category	Products	Thiophanate-methyl (mg/kg)	
		Current MRL	Proposed MRL
Citrus fruits	Grapefruits, oranges, lemons, limes, mandarins	6	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	0.2*	0.01*
Pome fruits	Apples, pears, quinces	0.5	0.01*
	Medlars, loquats/Japanese medlars	2	0.01*
	Other pome fruits	0.5	0.01*
Stone fruits	Apricots, peaches	2	0.01*
	Cherries (sweet), plums	0.3	0.01*
	Other stone fruits	0.1*	0.01*
Berries and small fruits	Table grapes	0.1*	0.01*
	Wine grapes	3	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, papayas	1	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	1	0.01*
	Sweet peppers/bell peppers, other *Solanaceae*, cucumbers, gherkins, courgettes, other curcurbits (edible peel), sweet corn, other fruiting vegetables	0.1*	0.01*
	Melons, watermelons, other curcurbits (inedible peel)	0.3	0.01*
	Pumpkins	0.5	0.01*
	Aubergines/eggplants	2	0.01*
	Okra/lady's fingers	1	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	1	0.01*

Continued …

Source: based on Draft Commission Regulation

Table 1 Continued			
Food category	Products	Thiophanate-methyl (mg/kg)	
		Current MRL	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)	0.1*	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, 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	0.3	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	0.3	0.01*
	Rye, wheat	0.05	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*

Continued …

Table 1 Continued			
Food category	Products	Thiophanate-methyl (mg/kg)	
		Current MRL	Proposed MRL
Cocoa beans		0.1*	0.05*
Carobs/Saint John's breads		0.1*	0.05*
Hops		0.1*	0.05*
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), other products	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*

* Limit of determination (LOD).

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Source: based on PLAN/2024/2763 v6.

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