

Mineral oil hydrocarbons in food

Published by AGRINFO on 30 Nov 2022; Revised 03 Jun 2026

[Draft](#) Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2023/915 as regards maximum levels of mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons in food

[Draft Annex](#) [PLAN/2023/2345 ANNEX CIS]

What is changing and why?

As mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (MOAH) are dangerous to humans, the European Union (EU) is proposing to set maximum permitted levels of MOAH in certain foods, as set out in Table 1.

The EU proposal is a significant change compared to the situation today. Currently, EU Member States can withdraw products or recall them from the market where MOAH levels are higher than the following limits of quantification (LOQ):

- 0.5 mg/kg for dry foods with a low fat/oil content ($\leq 4\%$ fat/oil)
- 1 mg/kg for foods with a higher fat/oil content ($> 4\%$ fat/oil, $\leq 50\%$ fat/oil)
- 2 mg/kg for fats/oils or foods with $> 50\%$ fat/oil.

But these limits are not set in EU law. The EU now intends to reinforce these limits by establishing maximum levels in law.

Actions

Suppliers of food sectors included in Table 1 in particular should increase monitoring of MOAH to identify any presence of these substances in their products. When MOAH are identified in food, suppliers should check all steps of the supply process, identify the sources of contamination, and develop measures to avoid further contamination of their production.

Also see these AGRINFO resources:

- Guide with further information on mineral oil hydrocarbons (MOH), their origins and effects, the EU's regulatory intentions, the sectors most affected, and actions needed to prepare for compliance with new rules (available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese)
- Video recordings of MOH webinars (in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese)
- Questions and answers arising from the webinars (in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese).

Please note that these resources were produced before the latest update of this proposal, and should be read together with the details in Table 1 and the full AGRINFO report.

Timeline

The maximum levels for MOAH were approved on 13 May 2026 by EU Member States; formal adoption is targeted for October 2026.

The new maximum levels will apply from **1 January 2027**, except in the specific cases listed in Table 1 where a later application date applies.

For more information see the [full record](#) on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest [AGRINFO Update](#) newsletters and [search](#) the database.

Tables & Figures

Table 1 Proposed maximum levels for mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons ^[1,2]		
Product	Maximum levels (MLs) (mg/kg)	Notes
Oilseeds and oil fruits	2.0	
Animal and vegetable fats and oils	This category does not include essential oils, lampante and crude olive pomace oil	
Maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soyabean, linseed oils; dairy butter and fat	2.0	For products placed on the market for the final consumer or used an ingredient in food
	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	Where these are sold for further refining and labelled as such
Groundnut, sesame, coconut, cereal germ oils	6.0 from 1 Jan 2027 4.0 from 1 Jan 2028 2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	For products placed on the market for the final consumer or used an ingredient in food
	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	Where these are sold for further refining and labelled as such
Grape seed, cotton seed, blackcurrant seed, argan oils	10.0 from 1 Jan 2027 5.0 from 1 Jan 2028 2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	For products placed on the market for the final consumer or used an ingredient in food
	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	Where these are sold for further refining and labelled as such
Olive pomace oil; refined olive pomace oil	10.0 from 1 Jan 2028 5.0 from 1 Jan 2029 2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
Fish oils; oils from other marine organisms and algae	10.0 from 1 Jan 2027 5.0 from 1 Jan 2030	For products placed on the market for the final consumer or used an ingredient in food
	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	Where these are sold for further refining and labelled as such
Other oils and fats	4.0 from 1 Jan 2027 2.0 from 1 Jan 2028	For products placed on the market for the final consumer or used an ingredient in food (includes cocoa butter)
	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	Where these are sold for further refining and labelled as such
Products derived from maize, rapeseed, sunflower, soyabean, and linseed oils; and dairy butter and fat or "other oils and fats" containing >50% fat/oil content (and only containing these fats and oils)	2.0 from 1 Jan 2028	Products "derived from fats and oils" are defined as products containing >80% of fats and oils
Tree nuts	2.0	
Pulses	0.50	
Cereal grains	0.50	
<i>Continued...</i>		

Table 1 Continued		
Product	Maximum levels (MLs) (mg/kg)	Notes
Products (except oils, see MLs above) containing >80% cereals with fat/oil content: ^[3,4]		
<4%	0.50	
≥4% and ≤50%	1.0	
Milk	0.50	
Dairy products with fat/oil content: ^[3]		
<4%	0.50	
≥4% and ≤50%	1.0	
>50%	2.0	
Cocoa beans	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
Cocoa mass	2.0	
Cocoa powder and fat-reduced cocoa powder	1.0	
Spices, dried herbs, dry tea and dry herbal infusions that are used as an ingredient in food, dry instant tea, and dry instant herbal infusions	10.0 from 1 Jan 2027 5.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
Foods for infants and young children ^[5] with fat/oil content: ^[3]		
<4%	0.50	
≥4% and ≤50%	1.0	
>50%	2.0	
Food supplements	10.0 from 1 Jan 2027 5.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
Food additives	Where food additives are produced from oils or fats, the raw material must comply with the MLs for oils and fats “placed on the market to the final consumer or used as an ingredient in food”. Other raw materials from which food additives are derived must comply with the MLs in this Regulation.	
Processed and compound foods ^[6] containing ingredients for which there are MLs in this Regulation with fat/oil content ^[3] :		
<4%	0.50 from 1 Jan 2030	For tea and herbal infusions, these MLs apply only to instant tea, instant herbal infusions, and tea and herbal infusions that are used as an ingredient in food
≥4% and ≤50%	1.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
>50%	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
Compound foods containing ≥15% spices, and/or dried herbs, and/or dry tea, where content of these ingredients is:		
≥75%	5.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
≥50% and <75%	3.5 from 1 Jan 2030	
≥15% and <50%	2.0 from 1 Jan 2030	
1. Mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (≥C10 to ≤C50). 2. To be added to Annex of Regulation 2023/915. 3. “Fat/oil content”: declared fat/oil content or, if not present, content determined by the competent authority. 4. ML does not apply to cereals used for the production of beer or distillates, provided the remaining cereal residue is not placed on the market as food. 5. Includes infant formulas, follow-on formulas, young-child formulas, food for special medical purposes intended for infants and young children, baby food, processed cereal-based food for infants and young children, and drinks for infants and young children. 6. This does not include the categories foods for infants and young children, food supplements, or food additives.		
 www.agrinfo.eu		

Source: based on [Draft Annex](#)

Disclaimer: *Under no circumstances shall COLEAD be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of information available on this website or any link to external sites. The use of the website is at the user's sole risk and responsibility. This information platform was created and maintained with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents do not, however, reflect the views of the European Union.*