Safeners and synergists in pesticides: substances for review

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European Commission adopts list of safeners and synergists in pesticides for review

Commission Regulation (EU) 2025/2274 of 12 November 2025 amending Regulation (EU) 2024/1487 as regards the adoption of the work programme for the gradual review of safeners and synergists.

Update

The European Commission has adopted a work programme for the gradual review of safeners and synergists. These are substances used in pesticides:

- safeners – to eliminate or reduce phytotoxic effects
- synergists – to enhance the activity of active substances.

The review of these substances is due to be completed within 5 years (by 2030).

The work programme reflects information received by manufacturers and competent authorities of European Union Member States on the safeners and synergists used in pesticides currently on the EU market.

What is changing?

The European Commission has included the substances in Table 1 in its work programme to review the consumer and environmental safety of safeners and synergists used in pesticides currently on the EU market.

Why?

The European Commission has drawn up a list of all the safeners and synergists known to be used in pesticides in at least one EU Member State as of June 2024, and has generated the list in Table 1 based on stakeholder feedback.

Active substances, safeners, and synergists can only be approved for use in plant protection products if they fulfil the approval criteria in Regulation 1107/2009. It must be demonstrated that

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their use is safe for the health of people and animals (including residues in food), and must not have any unacceptable effects on the environment.

Plant protection products containing safeners or synergists that are included in the work programme can continue to be authorised for 5 years following adoption of the programme.

Timeline

The work programme will be adopted on **3 December 2025**.

Background

In addition to the active substance that works against plant pests or diseases, plant protection products may also contain other components – safeners or synergists.

- Safeners are substances that aim to "eliminate or reduce phytotoxic effects of the plant protection product on certain plants".
- Synergists are substances that "can give enhanced activity to the active substance(s) in a plant protection product".

(Regulation 1107/2009, Art. 3.)

A relatively small number of safeners (21) and synergists (13) are reported to be used in plant protection products in the EU (PAN Europe 2024). There is currently no legal basis for establishing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for safeners and synergists. Regulation 396/2005, which sets MRLs for pesticides, does not include safeners and synergists.

Safeners and synergists under review will be approved where submitted data demonstrates that they do not have an unacceptable effect on consumer safety or the environment (Regulation 1107/2009, Art. 4). Additional data requirements for the review of these substances are set out in Regulation 2024/1487, Annex II.

Resources

European Commission: Approval of active substances, safeners and synergists.

European Commission (2018) Study supporting the REFIT evaluation of the EU legislation on plant protection products and pesticide residues (Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 and Regulation (EC) No 396/2005) – Executive summary.

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PAN Europe (2024) Addressing the 9-years gap: The long-awaited proposal on safeners and synergists. Pesticides Action Network Europe, 18 January.

Regulation 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market.

Regulation 2024/1487 defining data requirements for the approval of safeners and synergists and establishing a work programme for the gradual review of safeners and synergists on the market.

Sources

Regulation (EU) 2025/2274 as regards the adoption of the work programme for the gradual review of safeners and synergists

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Tables & Figures

Table 1
Safeners and synergists included in the work programme for gradual review

Safeners	Synergists
Cloquintocet	Disodium EDTA dihydrate
Cloquintocet mexyl	Edetic acid (EDTA)
Cyprosulfamide	Piperonyl butoxide
Isoxadifen-ethyl	Rapeseed oil
Mefenpyr-diethyl	
Metcamifen	

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Source: Regulation (EU) 2025/2274

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