United States Pesticide MRLs Market Information Page

Date Last Updated: August 2015

Pesticide MRL Regulation Status and Summary:

**Deferral Policy:** The US maintains a national MRL list and does not defer to any other markets’ regulations.

**Default MRL Policy:** The US does not have a default MRL.

The US maintains a national MRL regulation for both pesticides and veterinary drugs. US pesticide tolerances can be found in the US Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 40, Part 180. US veterinary drug tolerances are found in Title 21, Part 556.

Additional Types of US Tolerances

**US Section 18 Tolerances:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may establish Section 18 tolerances to allow for the use of an unregistered pesticide for a limited time while an emergency condition exists. In the Global MRL Database report results, these are labelled “US Section 18.”

**Regional Tolerances:** Regional tolerances are established for pesticide residues that result from the use of a pesticide within a registered geographical area of the US. These tolerances are supported by data from specific growing regions. In the Global MRL Database report results, these are labelled “US Regional.”

**US “CFR Prescribed Use” Tolerances:** In the Global MRL Database, some US tolerances are labelled “CFR Prescribed Use.” These are US tolerances for which registered use and application information are prescribed in the US Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for pesticide tolerances (40 CFR 180), in addition to the residue level. These types of tolerances are typically established for uses such as food or feed handling and processing facility treatments; mosquito adulticide applications; preharvest treatment of pest burrows; area fly and mosquito control; and other special situations.

When use and application information is included in the US pesticide tolerance regulations, the US Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) may assume that
these tolerances apply only to those specific uses stated in US 40 CFR 180. Thus, the US FDA may not apply these tolerances except for the specific uses described in the US regulations. US producers and those exporting to the US should use caution when interpreting the applicability of these tolerances to their products. For this reason, these US CFR prescribed tolerances are by default excluded from the Global MRL Database report results.

In the Database Advanced Report Filters, you may select to include these tolerances in your report, and they will be specifically labeled “CFR Prescribed Use” in the report results.

Frequency of MRL Updates:

The US publishes MRL updates on a frequent basis, typically every week. Legislative updates can be found in the US Federal Register.

Government Agencies Responsible for Pesticide MRL Regulation:

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for establishing MRLs.

Government Agencies Responsible for MRL Monitoring and Enforcement:

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for monitoring and enforcement for all plant products.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), under the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), is responsible for the testing and enforcement of animal products.

Monitoring, Testing, and Enforcement Program:

FDA samples individual lots of domestically produced and imported foods and analyzes them for pesticide residues to enforce the tolerances established by EPA. Domestic samples are typically collected close to the point of production in the distribution system, i.e., growers, packers, and distributors. Import samples are collected at the point of entry into US commerce. Emphasis is on the raw agricultural product, which is typically analyzed as the unwashed, whole (unpeeled), raw commodity. Processed foods are also included.

If illegal residues are found at a level above an EPA tolerance or FDA enforcement level, or measurable levels of residues for which EPA has established no tolerance for a given food are found in domestic foods, the food will be removed from commerce. FDA can also issue Warning Letters to the responsible growers and invoke other sanctions, such as a seizure or injunction, to correct the cause of the violation.
For imports, shipments with illegal residues are refused entry into US commerce. "Detention without Physical Examination” or DWPE may be invoked for future imported lots of the commodity based on the finding of a single shipment in violation. DWPE can be applied to product from specific growers, manufacturers, or shippers, or to a geographic area or country if the problem is demonstrated to be sufficiently broad-based.

For animal products, FSIS has a test and hold policy that requires establishments to hold product that is awaiting test results from entering commerce. FSIS operates under a 3-6 day turnaround time to report sample results to lessen the impact on industry.

Points of Contact:

Environmental Protection Agency:

EPA online inquiry form for the pesticides program:

Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Pesticide Programs, Mail Code 7506C
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington DC 20460

Food and Drug Administration:

FDA online inquiry form: https://cfsan.secure.force.com/Inquirypage

Phone: 888-INFO-FDA / 888-463-6332

Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993