Embassy of India
Belgium, Luxembourg & the European Union

Pesticide Monitoring

Newsletter March - April 2024

A. EU Updates on Pesticides

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I. Approval of renewal

Active substances are first approved for up to a maximum period of 15 years (depending on the type of substance). Approval may be renewed for a period not exceeding 15 years upon application. Work programs have been developed to allow for the systematic review of active substances[1a].

Trinexapac[1b] (trinexapac-ethyl): a plant growth regulator used to prevent lodging. Also used on turf and amenity grassland to slow growth. An application for the renewal of the approval of trinexapac, more specifically as the ethyl ester trinexapac-ethyl, was submitted to Lithuania and Latvia. The EFSA[2] concluded that trinexapac-ethyl does not meet the criteria to consider a substance as having endocrine disrupting properties. The Regulation also removed the restriction for use only as a plant growth regulator.

- ◊ **Effective date:** 1 May 2024
- ◊ **Expiration of approval:** 30 April 2039

Urea[3]: a nitrogen fertiliser, however, it is also used to control certain insect and wood rotting pests. An application for the renewal of the approval of the active substance urea was submitted to Greece. The Regulation granted the approval of urea as a low-risk active substance.

- ◊ **Effective date:** 1 May 2024
- ◊ **Expiration of approval:** 30 April 2039

Hydrolysed proteins[4]: an application for the renewal of the approval of the active substance hydrolysed proteins was submitted to Spain and Greece.

The Regulation granted the approval of hydrolysed proteins as a low-risk active substance.

- ◊ **Effective date:** 1 May 2024
- ◊ **Expiration of approval:** 30 April 2039

II. Change in MRL

The European Commission fixes MRLs for all food and animal feed. The amounts of residues found in food must be safe for consumers and must be as low as possible. A maximum residue level (MRL) is the highest level of a pesticide residue that is legally tolerated in or on food or feed[5a].

Azoxystrobin[5b]**:** a broad-spectrum fungicide used mainly for cereals. Syngenta Crop Protection AG submitted a request to the competent national authority in Germany to modify the existing maximum residue level (MRL) for the active substance azoxystrobin in hops. The EFSA[6] concluded such modifications were acceptable with regard to consumer safety and therefore, the Regulation increased the existing MRL from 30 to 40 mg/kg.

1a https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/approval-active-substances-safeners-and-synergists/renewal-approval_en
1b https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/835/oj
2 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8082
3 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/839/oj
4 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/821/oj
5a https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/maximum-residue-levels/eu-legislation-mrls_en
5b https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
6 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8124

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Flonicamid[7]**:** An insecticide used to control aphids, thrips and whitefly in a range of situations including glasshouses. DLR-Rheinpfalz submitted a request to the competent national authority in Germany to modify the existing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the active substance flonicamid in Chinese cabbages, kales and kohlrabies. The EU agreed that data from residue trials on kales could be extrapolated to set MRLs on other leafy brassicas. No safety evaluation by EFSA was required. Therefore, the Regulation set the MRLs for leafy brassicas (Chinese cabbages and kales) at 0.5 mg/kg and for kohlrabies at 0.15 mg/kg.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Isofetamid[8]**:** fungicide for the control of various fungal diseases on a variety of crops including salads and turf. ISK Biosciences Europe N.V. submitted a request to the competent national authority in Belgium to modify the existing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the active substance isofetamid in certain salad plants. The EFSA[9] concluded such modifications were acceptable with regard to consumer safety and therefore, the Regulation set the MRL limits for all salad plants at 20 mg/kg. (previously 0.01 mg/kg).

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Mefentrifluconazole[10]: a conazole cereal fungicide. BASF Agro B.V. Arnhem (NL) Freienbach Branch submitted a request to the competent national authority in Austria to modify the existing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the active substance mefentrifluconazole in various crops and swine liver and other swine products. The EFSA[11] concluded that the proposed amendments are unlikely to be a risk to consumer health. This does not include hazelnuts, beans, and soybeans, where insufficient data was submitted. Therefore, the Regulation increased MRLs for a variety of products. The new MRLs and the full list of products can be consulted here: https://agrinfo.eu/book-of-reports/maximum-residue-levels-for-mefentrifluconazole/.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Metazachlor[12]**:** A residual herbicide used to control a wide range of weeds in crops, ornamental trees and shrubs. BASF SE submitted a request to the competent national authority in the Netherlands to modify the existing maximum residue levels (MRLs) for the active substance metazachlor in leeks and honey. The ESFA[13] concluded that the proposed amendments were acceptable for consumer safety. Therefore, the Regulation increased MRLs on leeks from 0.06 to 0.3 mg/kg and on honey from 0.05 to 0.08 mg/kg.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Pyrimethanil[14]**:** a fungicide used to control fungal pathogens on fruit, vegetables and ornamentals. Ascenza Agro S.A. submitted a request to the competent national authority in Greece to modify the existing maximum residue levels (MRL) for the active substance pyrimethanil in table grapes, garlic and honey. The ESFA[15] concluded that the proposed amendments were acceptable for consumer safety. Therefore, the Regulation increased MRLs on table grapes from 5 to 6 mg/kg, on garlic from 0.01 to 0.03 mg/kg, on honey from 0.05 to 0.3 mg/kg.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Quartz sand[16]**:** Effective and relatively harmless substance with a variety of uses including as a game repellent especially for deer. The ESFA issued a conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of quartz sand[17]. Based on that conclusion, no MRLs are required for quartz sand.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

Bispyribac18 is a post-emergence herbicide, usually used as the sodium salt, for the control of grasses, sedges and broad-leaved weeds in paddy rice and other crops/situations. **Metosulam** is a post-emergence, broad-spectrum foliar herbicide used to control broad-leaved weeds in cereals and other crops. **Oryzalin** is a pre-emergence surface-applied herbicide used for control of annual grasses and broad-leaved weeds in fruit trees and around ornamentals. **Oxasulfuron** is a post-emergence herbicide for grass and broad-leaved weed control. **Triazoxide** is a highly selective fungicide used as a seed treatment for control of barley seed-borne diseases. The approvals for all these active substances have expired and therefore the MRLs for these active substances were set to 0.01 mg/kg or the limit of determination (LOD – the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods)

◊ **Effective date:** 6 May 2024

7 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
8 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
9 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8206
10 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
11 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8237
12 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
13 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8220
14 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
15 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/8195
16 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1078#ntr2-L_202401078EN.000101-E0002
17 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/7552
18 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1076

2,4-DB19: a herbicide used for post-emergence control of many annual and perennial broad-leaved weeds. During a review of the MRLs for 2,4-DB, the EFSA identified gaps in the data that prevented them from confirming the safety of these MRLs in animal products. Therefore, the MRLs for 2,4-DB on animal products have been reduced to 0.01 mg/kg (LOD). The new MRLs and the full list of products can be consulted here: https://agrinfo.eu/book-of-reports/maximum-residue-levels-for-24-db/.

◊ **Effective date:** 6 November 2024

Iodosulfuron-methyl20: a post-emergence herbicide used to control weeds in cereals and other crops. The EFSA identified gaps in the data that prevented them from confirming the safety of these MRLs in linseeds, maize/corn. Therefore, the MRLs have been reduced to 0.01 mg/kg (LOD).

◊ **Effective date:** 6 November 2024

Mesotrione21: a pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicide used to control some grass and broad-leaved weeds mainly in maize crops. The EFSA identified gaps in the data that prevented them from confirming the safety of these MRLs in sugar canes. Therefore, the MRLs have been reduced to 0.01 mg/kg (LOD).

◊ **Effective date:** 6 November 2024

Pyraflufen-ethyl22: a herbicide used to control broad-leaved weeds and grasses in crops.The EFSA identified gaps in the data that prevented them from confirming the safety of these MRLs in hops. Therefore, the MRLs have been reduced to 0.01 mg/kg (LOD).

◊ **Effective date:** 6 November 2024

Bifenazate[23]: an effective pesticide for phytophagous mite control. The European Commission has reduced the maximum residue levels (MRLs) for bifenazate to the limit of determination 0.01 mg/kg (LOD, the lowest level that can be detected using the most modern and reliable analytical methods) on all products. This will have potential impacts on suppliers of certain fruits, nuts, vegetables, oilseeds, and animal products for which MRLs currently exist. Existing LODs (with the exception of LODs for animal products) will also be reduced. The new MRLs and the full list of products can be consulted here: https://agrinfo.eu/book-of-reports/maximum-residue-levels-for-bifenazate/.

◊ **Effective date:** 14 October 2024

III. New approval(s)

The process of approving active substances, safeners, and synergists for use in plant protection products within the EU. These substances must meet specific safety and environmental standards before they can be approved. The approval process involves evaluation by the Member States, EFSA and the EC[24a].

Magnesium hydroxide E528[24b]: Roullier applied for the approval of magnesium hydroxide E528 as a basic substance to be used in plant protection as a fungicide on grapevines, olives, banana, oat, rye, triticale, wheat, tomatoes, aubergine, sweet pepper, chili, Physalis sp. and pepino, potatoes, rosebush, ornamental plants, peach, apricot, cherry, plum, nectarine, mirabelle and rice crops. Based on the information provided in the application and the Technical Report from the ESFA, it can be concluded that is not a substance of concern.

◊ **Date of approval:** 2 April 2024

B. EU Active Substance Renewal Monitor

I. The European Food Safety Authority (ESFA) open public consultation

EFSA regularly carries out public consultations on its scientific outputs. The stakeholders and other interested parties are encouraged to share their insights, data and other feedback on draft versions of the scientific assessments. The following active substances is open for public consultation:-

Active substance	Deadline
Mepiquat Chloride in honey (MRL)[25]	31/05/2024
Flonicamid in honey (MRL)[26]	12/06/2024
Acequinocyl in small berries (MRL)[27]	14/06/2024
Tebufenozide[28]	14/06/2024
Orange oil[29]	17/06/2024

19 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401077
20 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401077
21 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401077
22 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202401077
23 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/891/oj
24a https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/approval-active-substances-safeners-and-synergists_en
24b https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/836/oj
25 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000pZgT/pc0936
26 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000vjJl/pc0955
27 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000xzST/pc0962
28 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000ZBS1/pc0909
29 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000boib/pc0914

Diflufenican[30]	18/06/2024
Oxyfluorfention[31]	25/06/2024
Streptomyces lydicus WYEC 108[32]	29/06/2024
Trichoderma asperellum strain T34[33]	15/07/2024
Pirimiphos-methyl[34]	15/07/2024
Azadirachtin[35]	20/07/2024
Pendimethalin[36]	20/07/2024

II. Up next for review

The European Commission has extended the approval periods for the following active substances under Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1280[37]:

Active Substances	Extended until
Fatty acids C8-C10 methyl esters; Lauric acid; Methyl octanoate; Methyl decanoate; Oleic acid	15/12/2024
Dodemorph; Trichoderma atroviride (formerly T. harzianum) strain IMI 206040	30/12/2026

III. Active Substances due for renewal – expected to expire

For the below active ingredients, applications for renewal of approval were not submitted or applications have been withdrawn.

Active Substance	Date
Spirotetramat	30/04/2024

C. EU News Corner

Monthly report on EU suspicions of agri-food fraud

The European Commission has begun publishing monthly reports on foods that are non-compliant with EU food law and may involve fraudulent practices. The January 2024 report includes data from various countries and covers products such as natural mineral water, milk, fruits, vegetables, and more. These reports aim to help agri-food sector stakeholders identify risks and improve monitoring strategies. Exporters should pay attention to identified non-compliance to address potential issues. Published by AGRINFO on 14/03/2024. https://agrinfo.eu/book-of-reports/monthly-report-on-EU-suspicions-of-agri-food-fraud/.

Stopping banned pesticides in the EU to be exported to 3rd countries would have little economic impact, NGOs report says

The report by European NGOs highlights that stopping the export of pesticides banned in the EU to third countries would have minimal economic impact. These pesticides, prohibited within the EU due to their harmful effects on health and the environment, are still being produced and exported to countries outside the EU. The NGOs argue that an export ban would not significantly affect the EU economy but would have substantial positive effects on global health and environmental safety. They call for the EU to enforce stricter regulations to prevent these dangerous substances from being exported. https://www.euractiv.com/section/agriculture-food/news/stopping-banned-pesticides-in-the-eu-to-be-exported-to-3rd-countries-would-have-little-economic-impact-ngos-report-says/.

Compilation :

Dr. Venkatesh Palani Samy
Adviser (Agri. & Marine Products)

Mr. Oliver Trusgnach
Assistant (Commerce & Economic Wing)

30 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000dswb/pc0917
31 https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0lTk000000hAaP/pc0923
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37 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/1280/oj