

Update on MRL Harmonization Situation for Hops

IHGC Harmonization Commission

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EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy

The EU has the strictest pesticide policy in the world. In 2019, the European Union launched the European Green Deal, with the objective of making the EU economy sustainable. The Farm to Fork Strategy was released in May 2020 and is the agricultural part of the larger European Green Deal. The Farm to Fork Strategy aims to reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides in the EU by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50% by 2030. It also aims to have at least 25% of the EU's agricultural land grown under organic farming by 2030.

In addition to applying these policies within the EU, the Farm to Fork Strategy specifically states the objective of promoting such policies in international forums and third countries as well as enforcing such policies through the EU's trade agreements.

Further MRL restrictions are expected to take place in the coming years as the EU has begun to withdraw MRLs for substances that they have identified environmental concerns. Up to now, the EU was restricting only MRLs for which its hazard methodology identified health concerns. The first MRL restrictions based on environmental concerns, for clothianidin and thiamethoxam, have been notified to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in July. The restrictions are presented based on the EU's objective to focus on "substances of global environmental concern."

Stretching the interpretation of the EU's responsibility to "global environmental concern" is problematic as it will further restrict EU MRLs and adversely impact exporters to the market. Besides not being consistent with the EU's obligations to the World Trade Organization's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement, this policy is causing great concern around the world.

Specific EU Hop MRL Updates

The substances below are no longer approved for use in the EU and the European Commission has indicated proposals will be drafted to restrict the corresponding MRLs to LOQ. Currently the timing of proposal and implementation is uncertain, as is whether Codex MRLs or import tolerances may be maintained.

- **Bifenazate** (Acramite) – US MRL: 15 ppm; EU MRL 20 ppm
- **Flutriafol** (TopGuard/Rhyme) – US MRL: 20 ppm; EU Import Tolerance 20 ppm
- **Imidacloprid** (Provado/Admire/Confidor) – US MRL: 6 ppm; EU MRL 15 ppm
- **Myclobutanil** (Rally/Systhane) – US MRL: 10 ppm; EU MRL 6 ppm
- **Quinoxifen** (Quintec/Fortress) – US MRL: 3 ppm; EU MRL 2 ppm

Proposed and Established EU MRLs:

The following list includes newly established EU MRLs on hops:

Proposed MRLs:

- **Acequinocyl** (Kanemite): proposed EU MRL at 20 ppm; current EU and U.S. MRLs (15 ppm)
- **Flupyradifurone** (Sivanto): proposed EU MRL at 0.05 ppm; current EU MRL (4 ppm); U.S. and Codex MRLs (10 ppm).
- **Beta-cyfluthrin** and **Cyfluthrin** (Baythroid): proposed EU MRLs at 0.05 ppm. Current EU and U.S. MRLs (20 ppm). Insecticides no longer approved for use in the EU based on human health concerns.
- **Thiamethoxam** (Platinum): proposed EU MRL at 0.05 ppm. Current EU and Codex MRLs (0.09 ppm); U.S. MRL (0.1 ppm).

Established MRLs:

- **Ametoctradin** (Zampro): 90 ppm EU MRL went into effect January 27, 2022. U.S. MRL 100 ppm.
- **Fenazaquin** (Magister): 0.05 ppm EU MRL went into effect January 27, 2022. U.S. MRL (30 ppm).
- **Imidacloprid** (Provado, Admire, Confidor): U.S. MRL (6 ppm); new EU MRL (15 ppm) went into effect on May 16, 2022. However, Bayer expects the MRL to be lowered to LOQ in 2022.
- **Hexythiazox** (Onager Optek/Ordovol): current EU MRL harmonized with U.S. MRL at 20 ppm, new EU MRL at 3 ppm will go into effect on August 9, 2022.

Korean MRLs

Korea implemented its new MRL system on January 1, 2022. All temporary Korean MRLs have been withdrawn and only the permanent national Korean MRLs are in effect. If no Korean MRL exists, a 0.01 ppm default tolerance applies.

Since last winter, Korea has established **one** hop MRL, which is a result of the industry's request:

- **Hexythiazox** (Onager/Ordovol): established MRL harmonized with the U.S. MRL (20 ppm)

There are **55** established MRLs or where the default is acceptable, including **six** covered by the block grant. In addition, **four** submissions have been made and are currently under review in Korea; **two** submissions that did not require an import tolerance due to different residue definitions in the United States and Korea; and **one** submission (Folpet) was withdrawn due to lack of data.

Iron Residues on Hops

The Korean government has detected metallic dust on some hop shipments to the country that they consider to be iron power. The Korean standard for iron in food is 10 ppm and findings were above that level. In order to address this concern, the US and German hop industries are coordinating studies in partnership to determine naturally occurring levels of iron on hops. Three tests have been carried out on raw cones and processed pellets:

1. **Magnetic foreign matter test**, which produces a metallic dust and is the method used by the Korean authorities.
2. **Specific metals test**, which is a test done in the metallic dust found in the test above to determine the iron levels in that metallic dust.
3. **Iron (ICP)**, to determine the specific iron level following the international method of analysis.

UK's Pesticide and MRL Regulation post Brexit

The United Kingdom is no longer a Member of the European Union as of January 1, 2021 and is in the process of establishing its own regulatory review systems and standards. Due to the challenges of

leaving the Union, new pesticide MRL regulations will only apply to Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland) and not to Northern Ireland, which will continue to follow EU regulations.

Great Britain adopted all established EU MRLs as of December 31, 2020, into its own system and is working to establish its own review system. The MRL review process is expected to begin in 2024, but a review schedule has not yet been developed. Great Britain (GB) has however, taken some MRL actions since the transition. Great Britain has established **1** hop MRL, and proposed **1** hop MRL:

- **Flupyradifurone** (Sivanto): 10 ppm established GB MRL as of June 14, 2022; harmonized with U.S. MRL; current EU MRL (4 ppm) and proposed EU MRL (10 ppm).
- **Pymetrozine** (Fulfill/Plenum): 0.1 ppm proposed GB MRL more restrictive than U.S. MRL (6 ppm); EU MRL (0.1 ppm).

In addition, import tolerance applications for cyflufenamid (Torino) and fenazaquin (Magister) have been submitted and are under review.

Chinese MRLs

Since China's announcement last summer there have been **seven** new hop MRLs established and **four** proposed. In total there are now **35** relevant hop MRLs established in China. In general, China announces large MRL updates every one to two years as part of their MRL review process. While China frequently sets their national MRLs at Codex levels; they do not defer to Codex.

One of the new 2021 MRLs sets a level of 0.01 ppm for acequinocyl (specifically on the Beverages category), which is out of alignment with the US and EU MRLs of 15 ppm.

There are many Chinese MRLs missing for hops. This gap in MRLs is correlated with the absence of China's long-promised Import Tolerance System for maximum residue levels, which would allow foreign industries to seek import tolerances in China. The hop MRLs established in 2021 are based on China's internal MRL review process. This is separate from import tolerance requests. Currently, all MRLs in China must go through a full registration process including field trials in China. Should an import tolerance process be established in China, a MRL would be established without having to register the product in China.

In discussions with the US Embassy in Beijing the second week of July, it appears that such an import tolerance system has been permanently delayed and is unlikely to be established in the near future. The US Embassy recommends seeking Codex MRLs as the most efficient way to seek Chinese MRLs. They moreover informed BCI that China tends to test against established MRLs in China.

Codex MRLs

The Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) met in early July to consider the MRL recommendations made by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticides Residues (JMPR). Due to the pandemic, the JMPR and CCPR work have been delayed, which will continue to impact the review schedule in the next couple of years.

In the latest CCPR, the following actions are relevant to hops:

- **Clofentezine** (Apollo): 7 ppm MRL will now be considered by the Codex Commission in its meeting in November and is likely to be in place by 2023. The new MRL is harmonized with the U.S. MRL and is less restrictive than the EU MRL (0.05 ppm). Unfortunately, the EU introduced a

reservation, pending the outcome of the current evaluation in the EU. For this reason, we do not expect the EU to adopt this MRL going forward.

- **Metalaxyl-M** (Ridomil Gold): 10 ppm MRL will remain in place while registrant develops new data to support this MRL. No changes at this time.