

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: France extends ban on US cherries over dimethoate use despite new EU rules

Country: France

Post: Paris

Report Category: Stone Fruit, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety, SP2 - Prevent or Resolve Barriers to Trade that Hinder U.S. Food and Agricultural Exports

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Report Highlights:

On April 8, 2020 France published its fifth emergency decree banning fresh cherry imports from countries where the use of the chemical dimethoate is permitted in cherry production. France made the decision because the EU, despite prohibiting dimethoate use, has not yet set the maximum residue limits for the pesticide. As a result, the United States cannot export fresh cherries to France. French cherry production continues to fall because of the government's ban on dimethoate use. Fruit importers and traders fear that France may implement similar domestic use and import bans for other EU-approved pesticides because this would disrupt the free movement of EU and third-country fruits and vegetables into France.

On April 8, 2020, France reinstated the [ban](#) on fresh cherry imports from countries where use of chemical product dimethoate is permitted in cherry production. The ban will continue until April 7, 2021. This reinstates the safeguard measures of [2019](#), [2018](#), [2017](#) and [2016](#). The countries impacted are Canada and the United States. Organic and frozen cherries are not banned under this safeguard measure.

The EU did not renew the approval of dimethoate with [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1090](#). However, despite the EU prohibition of dimethoate use on cherries since October 17, 2019, the EU commission had not yet finalized the [new regulation](#) amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) 396/2005 regarding the maximum residue level (MRL) for dimethoate on cherries. Thus, France justified its April 8 decision because MRLs have not been set, allowing it to implement a safeguard measure as allowed for in Article 53 and 54 of [EU Regulation 178/2002](#).

Dimethoate is used to control *Drosophila suzukii*, an Asian fruit fly that causes considerable damage in cherry orchards. France claims it is also dangerous to human health. France imports roughly one fifth of its cherry consumption, the majority coming from EU countries such as Spain and Germany that have both already banned dimethoate use.

The United States exported about \$1 million in cherries to France annually before the ban began in 2016. As France's production declines and production costs rise because France's producers no longer have access to dimethoate, French cherries continue to be scarcer and more expensive. This creates opportunities for competitors in traditional French export markets such as the United Kingdom.

As in 2019, the 2020 ban excludes Turkey from the list of country prohibited from shipping fresh cherries to France, angering French cherry producers who claim Turkish producers illegally use the chemical and therefore have an unfair advantage in production. Turkey was banned from the French export market in 2016 and 2017, although Turkey does not permit the use of dimethoate for cherry production. France is an important export market for Turkish cherry producers. The French Ministry of Agriculture responded that Turkey provided France with extensive documentation including thousands of residue tests demonstrating the absence of any dimethoate residue on Turkish cherries.

Attachments:

No Attachments.