

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Canada

**Post:** Ottawa

## Pesticides and MRLs in Canada

### **Report Categories:**

FAIRS Subject Report

Fresh Fruit

Vegetables

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### **Report Highlights:**

Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is responsible for pesticide regulation in Canada, which includes registration, re-evaluation on a 15-year cycle, and establishing maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides. The various approval processes together with the database of approved MRLs are posted on Health Canada's website.

## General Information

The Health Canada [Pest Management Regulatory Agency](#) (PMRA) is responsible for pesticide regulation in Canada. Created in 1995, this branch of Health Canada consolidates the resources and responsibilities for pest management regulation. Under authority of the Pest Control Products Act, Health Canada:

- registers pesticides after a science-based evaluation that ensures risks are acceptable;
- re-evaluates the pesticides currently on the market on a 15-year cycle to ensure the products meet current scientific standards; and
- promotes sustainable pest management.

To ensure that interested parties are aware of Health Canada's proposals and decisions related to pesticides and pesticide regulations, [publications](#) are released on a regular basis detailing the relevant information, including proposed registration decisions, requests for comments on proposed decisions or policies, or pesticide registration decisions. Everyone is welcome to sign up for the [RSS feed](#) to be notified when publications are made available.

## Registering a Pesticide

Tools and detailed information necessary for pesticide manufacturers and registrants, from new pesticide applications to renewals and incident reporting can be found in the [Registrants and Applicants](#) section.

Often, applicants are required or advised to use the [pre-submission consultation](#) process. A pre-submission consultation is a service offered at no cost by PMRA that provides regulatory advice to registrants or applicants prior to the submission of an application to register or amend a pest control product. The pre-submission process may also be utilized as a mechanism for obtaining advice on a study protocol.

## Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs)

As part of the assessment process prior to the registration of a pesticide, Health Canada must determine whether the consumption of the maximum amount of residues, that are expected to remain on food products when a pesticide is used according to label directions, will not be a concern to human health. This maximum amount of residues expected is then legally established as a maximum residue limit (MRL) and is regulated under the [Pest Control Products Act](#) (PCPA).

Health Canada sets science-based MRLs. The MRLs set for each pesticide-crop combination are set at levels well below the amount that could pose a health concern. Typically, an MRL applies to the identified raw agricultural food commodity as well as to any processed food product that contains it. However, where a processed product may require a higher MRL than that specified for its raw agricultural commodity, separate MRLs are specified. If it is determined that an unacceptable risk exists, the product will not be permitted for sale or use in Canada.

## **The Canadian MRL Database**

Previously, all Proposed MRLs (PMRLs), published via the [PMRL Series](#), were legally in effect as of the publication date of the corresponding Established MRL (EMRL Series). While the PMRL Series will continue to be published under Consultations on the Health Canada website, the EMRL Series will no longer be published.

Instead, the EMRL Series has been replaced with the [MRL Database](#), an online query application that allows users to search for established MRLs, regulated under the PCPA, both for pesticides or food commodities.

Once the consultation period for the PMRL is closed, the established MRLs will be legally in effect as of the date that they are entered into the MRL database. Should comments be received, they will be addressed in a separate document that will be linked from the published PMRL.

Please note that a complete list of the [residue definitions](#) upon which all chemical MRLs are based is also available on the Health Canada website.

Also, please note that for registered pesticides having no established MRL's, residues are covered under the default of 0.1 parts per million (ppm).

## **Establishing New MRLs**

Using the tool available in the [Registrants and Applicants](#) section, the following is an example of the process a company needs to follow in order to establish an MRL for an active ingredient that is new to Canada and will be found on imported food commodities:

### **Results from Online Decision Tree Selections**

#### **Submission type**

A.1.3

#### **Pre-submission Consultation Required?**

[Recommended for first time applicants](#) - Consult the link for information and requirements for pre-submissions.

#### **Required Forms**

- Foreign Product Specifications Form
- [Application Form](#) (6005)
- [Fee Form](#) (6011)

#### **Label Required?**

[Foreign Label](#)

#### **eIndex Required?**

[Yes](#)

#### **Required Letters**

- Cover Letter
- Letter of Authorization for Access to Data if accessing Third Party Information
- Letter of Representation

#### **Data Requirements**

[Use Site Category Tables](#)

#### **Policies and other Guidance Documents**

- [DIR2003-01: Organizing and Formatting a Complete Submission for Pest Control Products](#)
- [Evaluation Templates](#)
- [DIR1998-02: Residue Chemistry Guidelines](#)
- [DIR2006-03: Confidential Business Information Designation and Segregation, Part 1: Submission of Pest Data](#)
- [SPN2003-03: User's guide - Assessing Exposure from Pesticides in Food](#)

#### **Other Links**

[Submitting Applications through the Secure Web Portal](#)

#### **Additional Information**

For more information, please contact the Health Canada [Pest Management Information Service](#).

Other resources include:

- [Administrative Changes to the Publication Process for Maximum Residue Limits Regulated Under the \*Pest Control Products Act\*](#)
- [OECD MRL Calculator](#)
- [Residue Chemistry Crop Groups](#)
- [United States-Canada Grower Priority Database](#)