



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF THE TRADE IN DRIED FRUIT & EDIBLE NUTS • PROCESSED FRUIT & VEGETABLES • PROCESSED FISHERY PRODUCTS • SPICES • HONEY

Brussels, 18/September/2024

To: DG Health and Food Safety, Unit A4 – Multilateral International Relations
E-mail: sps@ec.europa.eu

Subject: Need for a longer transitional period for MRLs for acetamiprid

FRUCOM officially represents European traders, importers, agents and brokers in a wide range of products, including dried fruit and nuts, peanuts and processed seafood.

Legal Framework:

On 17 July 2024, the European Commission notified the WTO of its draft Commission Regulation amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for acetamiprid (neonicotinoid). In its statement, EFSA established a lower acceptable daily intake ('ADI') and a lower acute reference dose ('ARfD') for acetamiprid and included the metabolite IM-2-1 in the residue definition for the risk assessment of acetamiprid in fruit and leafy crops. The published draft regulation would significantly reduce the acetamiprid maximum residue levels (MRLs). The new, stricter levels would apply from 1 May 2025, which may be interpreted as meaning that only food products meeting the new MRLs can be marketed in the EU after that date. Lowering the MRLs is based on the EFSA statement of March 2024. EFSA proposed in its statement to lower the acceptable daily intake (ADI) and acute reference dose (ARfD) from 0.025 to 0.005 mg/kg body weight (per day). EFSA concludes that for grapes, among other foods, exceedance of the new ADI and ARfD was identified. **However, since acetamiprid is an approved substance in the EU and has no identified severe toxicological effect on humans according to the latest EFSA conclusion, we would ask the Commission to grant a longer transitional period for long shelf-life products.**

Current use of acetamiprid:

We are aware that acetamiprid has been used in some third countries during this growing season for grape production. For instance, the acetamiprid pesticide is currently widely used in Turkish vineyards to control pest insects.

The implementation date for the new MRL poses significant problems as acetamiprid is being used in the 2024 crop, and the 2025 crop will not be available until most production of seasonal specialties for the end of 2025 is well underway. We are aware that precedent allows products legally grown and in compliance with the existing MRL can be sold unless a risk to public safety exists.

Impact of the transitional period:

FRUCOM does not wish to question either the EFSA assessment that led to the new MRL, or the Commission's action in setting the lower MRL for acetamiprid in table grapes. The draft regulation states that "a reasonable period should be allowed to elapse before the new MRLs become applicable in order to permit Member States, third countries and food business operators to adapt themselves to the



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requirements which result from the modification of the MRLs". However, the industry requires a longer transitional period than 3 months to comply with the new levels. FRUCOM is particularly concerned that the reduction of EU MRLs might have a significant impact on global trade commodities. The shelf life of dried products is 2 years. This means that raisins from the 2024 harvest could potentially enter the market as late as 2026. If the new regulation is published in February 2025, does not incorporate a longer transition period for dried products, it could result in a technical trade barrier. As a result, large quantities of grapes may be discarded due to non-compliance with the new MRL, leading to significant food waste and economic losses.

FRUCOM emphasises the need for an adequate transition period due to potential negative effects on the availability of long-shelf life products such as sultanas and the risk of increased food waste. Sultanas are mainly imported to the EU from third countries, where acetamiprid is still being used.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, FRUCOM urges the Commission to allow a longer transitional period for the long shelf life products to ensure the smooth functioning of trade with the third countries that still use acetamiprid in their agricultural practice.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We remain at your disposal for any further information or clarification.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anna Boulova", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anna Boulova

FRUCOM Secretary General

