Proposed Maximum Residue Limit PMRL2012-40

Propylene Oxide

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Under the authority of the *Pest Control Products Act*, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is proposing to establish maximum residue limits (MRLs) for propylene oxide on tree nuts (Crop Group 14-11), herbs (Crop Subgroup 19A; dried leaves) and spices (Crop Subgroup 19B) to permit the import and sale of foods containing such residues.

Propylene oxide is a fumigant used for control of insect infestation and bacterial contamination of food products in the United States, but is not currently registered for use in Canada.

The PMRA has determined the quantity of residues that are likely to remain in or on imported food commodities when propylene oxide is used according to label directions in the exporting country. The Agency has also determined that such residues will not be a concern to human health and is proposing to legally establish corresponding import MRLs. An MRL applies to the identified raw agricultural food commodity as well as to any processed food product that contains it, except where separate MRLs are specified for the raw agricultural commodity and a processed product made from it.

Details regarding the import MRLs can be found in the corresponding Evaluation Reports available in the Pesticides and Pest Management section of Health Canada's website, under Public Registry, Pesticide Product Information Database.[1]

Consultation on the proposed MRLs for propylene oxide is being conducted via this document (see Next Steps, the last section of this document).

To comply with Canada's international trade obligations, consultation on the proposed MRLs is also being conducted internationally by notifying the World Trade Organization, as coordinated by the Standards Council of Canada.

The proposed MRLs in Canada in or on food, to replace or be added to the MRL currently established for propylene oxide, are as follows.

Table 1 Proposed Maximum Residue Limits for Propylene Oxide

Common Name	Residue Definition[a]	MRL (ppm)	Food Commodity
Propylene Oxide	oxirane, 2-methyl-	300	Tree nuts (Crop Group 14-11), herbs (Crop Subgroup 19A; dried leaves), spices (Crop Subgroup 19B)

ppm = parts per million

[a] The residue definition in Table 1, reflecting parent chemical only, is proposed to replace the currently established residue definition for almonds, "2-methyloxirane, including the metabolites 1-bromo-2-propanol, 2-bromo-1-propanol, 1-chloro-2-propanol and 2-chloro-1-propanol". Almonds represent the only commodity currently with a Canadian MRL for propylene oxide and the 300 ppm MRL remains in effect, consistent with the tree nut crop group MRL proposed in this action.

[1] The relevant reports can be accessed by selecting Applications/New/Historical and requesting the Evaluation Reports found under Application Number 2010-2734 (tree nuts) and 2009-2232 (herbs and spices).

MRLs are proposed for each commodity included in the listed crop groupings in accordance with the Residue Chemistry Crop Groups webpage in the Pesticides and Pest Management section of Health Canada's website.

A complete list of pesticide MRLs established in Canada, as of the date indicated, can be found on the Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides webpage in the Pesticides and Pest Management section of Health Canada's website.

International Situation and Trade Implications

The proposed Canadian MRLs are the same as the corresponding tolerances established in the United States for "Nutmeat, processed, except peanuts" and "Herbs and spices, group 19, dried". American tolerances are listed in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, 40 CFR Part 180, by pesticide.

Currently, Codex MRLs[2] have not been established for propylene oxide in or on any commodity. Codex MRLs are listed on the Codex Alimentarius Pesticide Residues in Food webpage, by pesticide or commodity.

Next Steps

The PMRA invites the public to submit written comments on the proposed import MRLs for propylene oxide up to 75 days from the date of publication of this document. Please forward your comments to Publications (see the contact information on the cover page of this document). The PMRA will consider all comments received before making a final decision on the proposed MRLs for propylene oxide and posting a corresponding Established Maximum Residue Limit document on the PMRA website.

[2] The Codex Alimentarius Commission is an international organization under the auspices of the United Nations that develops international food standards, including MRLs.