



Market Access Secretariat  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
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**Submitted Via Email to:** [aafc.mas-sam.aac@agr.gc.ca](mailto:aafc.mas-sam.aac@agr.gc.ca)

To Whom It May Concern:

**RE: European Union - WTO Notification - Draft regulations concerning the review of several existing Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for plant protection products [MAS-SAM #6683]**

On behalf of the Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable industry, it is our pleasure to provide comments to the Market Access Secretariat (MAS) to inform Canada's position in response to the European Union's (EU) notification to the World Trade Organization (WTO) of Draft regulations concerning the review of several existing Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for plant protection products. Our comments pertain to the Draft Commission Regulation amending Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regards to MRLs and will focus on changes to MRLs on crop protection tools that impact fresh fruit and vegetable crops in the EU and that are also registered for use in Canada. With that in mind, we would also like to take this opportunity to echo the Canadian Horticultural Council's (CHC) concerns regarding the proposed amendments related to Azoxystrobin, Oxyfluorfen, Methoxyfenozide, Spinosad and Thiram, due to their potential to impact sales of Canadian fresh fruit and vegetables to the EU.

**About CPMA**

Based in Ottawa, the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA) is a not-for-profit organization representing companies active in the marketing of fresh fruit and vegetables in Canada, from the farm gate to the dinner plate spanning the entire produce industry. The Association's members include major growers, shippers, packers, and marketers; importers and exporters; transportation and logistics firms; brokers, distributors, and wholesalers; retailers and foodservice distributors; and fresh cut operators and processors. Founded in 1925, CPMA is proud to represent domestic and international members who are responsible for 90% of fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Canada.

**Comments**

To begin, CPMA would like to emphasize that crop protection tools play a vital role in controlling insect pests, weeds, and diseases on a wide variety of fruit and vegetable crops. It is therefore important to note that CPMA is concerned regarding the EU's amendment to Annexes II and III of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. More specifically, the MRL changes to Azoxystrobin, Oxyfluorfen, Methoxyfenozide, Spinosad and Thiram may pose a risk to the business operations of Canadian growers and negatively impact their ability to access European markets. As seen in Appendix 1 of CHC's submission and noted in the chart below, these crop protection tools are used on an array of fruit and vegetable crops.

Active ingredient	EU Crop (MRL reduction)	Equivalent crops registered in Canada (MRL)
Azoxystrobin	-lettuces and salad plants (from 15 to 10)	-leafy vegetables (30)
Oxyfluorfen	-berries and small fruits (from 0.05-0.1 to 0.01) -bulb vegetables (from 0.05 to 0.01) -Brassica vegetables (from 0.05 to 0.01)	-raspberries, strawberries (0.05), highbush blueberries (0.01) -dry bulb onions, shallots (0.05) -broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower (0.05)
Methoxyfenozide	-apples, pears (from 2 to 0.01) -peaches (from 2 to 0.01) -tomatoes (from 2 to 0.6) -broccoli (from 3 to 0.01)	-apples, pears (1.5) -peaches (6) -tomatoes (2) -broccoli (7)
Spinosad	-sweet peppers/bell peppers (from 2 to 0.6) -spinaches (from 15 to 4), lettuces (from 10 to 4), escaroles/broad leaved endives (from 10 to 3), chards/beet leaves (from 15 to 4), witloofs/Belgian endives (from 10 to 0.02)	-bell pepper (0.4) -leafy greens Crop Subgroup 4-13A (leaf lettuce (25), spinach, head lettuce, escarole, chard, endive (8))
Thiram	The EU is proposing to reduce MRLs on all horticultural crops ranging from 0.1-10 on various crops (most are currently 0.1) to 0.01-0.05 (most to 0.05).	Canadian registrations: As a seed treatment on: celery (7), tomato (7), onion, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, grasses, lettuce, mustard, pepper, radish, spinach, sugar beet, turnip, eggplant, onion, squash, pumpkin, watermelon, cucumber, cantaloupe, sweet corn, snap common beans, peas, sweet corn As an animal repellent in a paint-on formulation on dormant: fruit trees (7), apple (7), buffaloberry, cherry, crab apple, cranberry, hackberry, juneberry, plum, prune

We must emphasize the essential contribution of crop protection products to the fresh fruit and vegetable sector, one of the most global supply chains in the world, while also acknowledging that crop protection tools must be used within the guidelines of good agricultural practices, which consider the needs of environmental quality and human health, as well as agricultural stability and effective pest management.

Promoting international trade and investment with export markets is a priority for the Canadian produce sector. The harmonization of international standards, including crop protection tools, products, and allowable residues, is essential to increasing market access and ensuring the continued sustainability of the Canadian fresh fruit and vegetable industry. This requires collaboration both within Canadian governmental agencies, and between the Canadian government and other governments with which we trade.

CPMA emphasizes that phytosanitary requirements that are not science-based or essential to security act as effective non-tariff trade barriers between countries and must be eliminated. The harmonization of MRLs should be a goal to remove such barriers to the movement of fresh produce with countries across the globe. Any amendments by the European Union must therefore ensure that MRL changes to Azoxystrobin, Oxyfluorfen, Methoxyfenozide, Spinosad and Thiram be based on sound science and an appropriate risk-based approach.

It is also important to note that consumer confidence in the safety of the food supply is eroded when jurisdictions have different regulations, or if there is not sound science behind them. Consistent, evidence-based MRLs will serve to boost trade for producers while also allowing a variety of healthy, safe fresh produce choices to continue to be available to consumers around the world.

Finally, in the event of changes to the MRL for a product, it is necessary that governments consider the availability, cost, and safety of alternative tools in addition to appropriate implementation timelines to ensure a smooth transition and avoid unintended negative impacts to food security or trade.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to Canada's position in response to the EU's notification to the WTO of their intent to amend MRLs for Azoxystrobin, Oxyfluorfen, Methoxyfenozide, Spinosad and Thiram. We appreciate you taking the time to review our comments and would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line.

Ron Lemaire  
President  
Canadian Produce Marketing Association