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Plant Protection Residues Policy

Barnes Williams recognises that there is often a need to use approved plant protection products at the various stages of soil conditioning, growing, harvesting, and storage. Barnes Williams supports their use provided that the pesticides are approved in the country of use (on or off-label) and are applied according to Good Agricultural Practice, that is, in the correct dosage, observing the specified pre-harvest interval and keeping records of treatments. Their use should not lead to an exceedance of an EU maximum residue level (MRL).

Statutory MRL's are set on a European Union-wide basis under EC Regulation 396/2005. This legislation contains seven annexes, as follows.

Annex I – the list of commodities covered – adopted under EC Regulation 178/2006, replaced by Commission Regulation 212/2013.

Annex II – the definitive MRL's

Annex III – temporary MRL's, which are reviewed within four years and transferred to Annex II.

Annex IV – substances for which MRL's are not required.

Annexes II, III & IV were adopted under EC Regulation 149/2008, which has been continually amended as the review process continues.

Annex V – will set alternative default MRLs where the general level of 0.01 mg/kg is not appropriate.

Annex VI – will contain processing factors to allow, for example, for dehydration of fresh produce such as herbs, where the MRL applies to the fresh herb.

Annex VII – contains details of allowed exceedances of MRLs during shipment or storage (relevant to post-harvest pesticide treatments) – adopted under Commission Regulation 260/2008.

Annexes V & VI have not yet been published.

The easiest way to track legislative developments is via the Chemicals Regulation Directorate website at:

<http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/News/Other-News/Published-Commission-Regulations-under-Regulation-396-2005>

This website also has a searchable database which lists all the MRL and commodity combinations:

<https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/MRLs/>



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It is important to be aware that MRL's are not safety limits and are, typically, significantly lower than the acute reference dose for each substance.

Barnes Williams monitors the absence/presence of pesticide residues by subjecting the fresh product to a multi-residue screen at the beginning of each crop year, typically in the country of origin using an accredited laboratory.

Mike Lambert
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