

# Residues

## Approach in the USA

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# Regulatory Agencies

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
Local Group (IR4)
- Federal Drug Administration (FDA)
- California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
- California Department of Pesticide Registration (CDPR)

# Product Registration and Establishment of MRLs in US

- Close working relationship with USEPA, IR4, and CDPR to register products and establish MRL's.
- Identify needs, work with registrants and conduct field trials
- Stress reduced risk chemicals when possible
- EPA reviews typically take 12-36 months
- In California product reviewed by CDPR in addition to EPA

# PUBLIC CONCERNS IN US ON MRL's

- Public is not in tune to Food Safety Issues
- US public less concerned about pesticides residues
- No private sector MRL standards in US
- Organic and Sustainability are growing concerns but relatively small market.

# International MRL Harmonization Efforts

- Major and growing issue for US Pear Industry
- Growers can follow US label, be perfectly legal in US, and have a residue violation abroad
- Not just affecting pears: affecting all US agricultural products
- Fresh produce particularly vulnerable to delays in foreign ports
- A residue violation can affect an entire industry. Especially in Japan or Taiwan
- As US has over 10,000 MRLs, US products among most vulnerable when exporting, as many foreign markets have limited lists

# International MRL Harmonization Efforts (Continued)

- US grower groups, including CPAB and USA Pears, work with US government to address international MRL harmonization issues
- Three-tiered approach:
  - Work to address major MRL system overhauls when they occur in markets like Japan, EU, Canada, and Taiwan
  - Comment on new MRLs when announced through WTO notification system. Commenting early can avoid trade disputes later
  - Work to seek new MRLs through international Codex systems. Many markets around the world defer in part or in whole to Codex MRLs. System greatly improved. MRLs in as little as 18 months.
- Combined, this effort can minimize exposure to international MRL risk.

# International MRL Resources

- Growers must be aware of International MRL differences and proactively address them.
- The US Pear Industry uses several resources:
  - **USDA/EPA MRL Database:** [www.mrldatabase.com](http://www.mrldatabase.com) best and most up-to-date MRLs on the Internet. Free. Updated daily
    - Foreign MRLs based on US MRL list, so some foreign MRLs may not appear if you are a foreign user, but still incredibly useful tool
  - **WTO Announcements**
    - Forwarded by USDA to grower groups. Allow us to comment on MRLs
  - **Bryant Christie Inc.** Firm in Sacramento and Seattle, specialize in MRL issues. Recognized as experts on international MRL issues
    - CPAB works closely with BCI when we face MRL issues

# What to say to media and consumers on Food Safety

- Established talking points when addressing food safety issues
  - Science based message
  - Oversight message
  - Healthy eating message
  - Practice Message



# Message 1

- Scientists and government officials agree that the **mere presence of pesticide residues on food does not mean there is a risk.** An overwhelming number of fruits and vegetables tested have no pesticide residues at all. When residues are found, they are at such low levels that a person would have to eat 10,000 servings or 100 eight-pound boxes of fresh fruits and vegetables at one meal to ingest enough pesticide residues before seeing any measurable reaction.

# Message 2

- Each year the United States Department of Agriculture tests a variety of foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, to measure existing pesticide residues. According to the most recent data, **98 percent of the samples tested have no detectable pesticide residues at all.** Of the 1.9 percent of samples found to have residues, nearly all (99 percent) are at levels below those considered safe by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

# Message 3

- Many health experts agree that the most important thing is that **consumers eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables**, regardless of whether they are organic, to get the most nutritional value from their diets.

# Message 4

- According to the federal Food and Drug Administration, **washing fresh produce before eating is a healthful habit.** You can reduce and often eliminate pesticide residues if they are present on fresh fruits and vegetables by washing them with cold or warm tap water.

# California Specific

- In California, before farmers apply a pesticide, they must comply with **more than 70 laws and regulations governing the use of pesticides**. This system is unique to California and ensures that pesticides are applied only when necessary and in a safe manner.

# Advancement

- Farmers of fruits and vegetables are increasingly using new technologies and advanced practices developed by university scientists **to improve farming practices that are safer and more environmentally sound**. They have been leaders in adopting integrated pest management systems which use a variety of biological methods combined with the judicious use of pesticides to control pests and diseases.

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# Pesticide Data Program

## Annual Summary, Calendar Year 2007

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service

Science and Technology  
Programs





# Pesticide Data Program Results

percent. Over 99 percent of the samples analyzed did not contain residues above the safety limits (tolerances) established by EPA and 96.7 percent of the samples analyzed did not contain residues for pesticides that had no tolerance established.

Of the samples collected and analyzed in 2007, 64 percent were fresh fruits and vegetables. Many of these are often eaten in a fresh, raw state. Health experts and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration agree that washing fresh fruit and vegetables before eating is a healthful habit. Consumers can reduce and often eliminate pesticide residues if they are present by washing them with cool or lukewarm tap water.



# Conclusion

- The Us Pear industry actively seeks MRLs and registrations for new crop protection products
- US public not as concerned about pesticide residues as other issues and not as concerned as foreign market consumers
- MRL harmonization major and growing concern. Unintentional trade barriers
- International MRL issues should be proactively managed to avoid trade disruptions
- Data shows very low residues if any on fruits and vegetables
- We need to know how to talk to the media and consumers.

# Resources

- Bryant Christie International  
[www.bryantchristie.com](http://www.bryantchristie.com)
- Alliance for Food and Farming  
[www.foodandfarming.info](http://www.foodandfarming.info)

Thank You