



Questions and Answers

Q How are MRLs established for a pesticide?

A It is stipulated in the Pesticide Control Act that pesticides must be used according to standards for safe use. The MFDS sets MRLs at 80% of maximum dietary intake per person per day, taking into account dietary intakes and results of residue tests performed according to the standards of safe use, in order to ensure that the pesticide residue will not pose risk to human health even if people are exposed to it through eating food throughout a lifetime.

Q If MRLs are established for a pesticide as a result of an application for import tolerance, can the pesticide be used for domestic agricultural products produced?

A The answer is no. Although MRLs (marked by “†”) may have been established for a pesticide through the import tolerance process, it does not mean that the pesticide is allowed for use also in Korea. To grow agricultural products in Korea, you must use only the pesticides registered for the crops concerned pursuant to the Pesticide Control Act.

Q If there are no MRLs for a processed food after the introduction of the PLS, how do you apply MRLs for it?

A If there are MRLs established for processed foods, as is the case with raisins and ginseng extracts, the MRLs will be applied. If not, we apply standards taking into consideration the content of raw materials and water content. However, dried red pepper is subject to seven times the MRL for red pepper and dried green tea extracts are assigned six times the MRL for green tea. Dried ginseng and red ginseng are subject to four times the MRL for fresh ginseng, whereas eight times the MRL for fresh ginseng applies to ginseng extracts and red ginseng extracts.

Questions and Answers

Q What is the scope of food subject to the Positive List System?

A All agricultural products and processed food imported into Korea or produced, manufactured, processed, distributed or sold in Korea are subject to the PLS. However, commodities used for purposes other than food, such as crude drugs used as medicinal herbs, are excluded from the application of the system.

Q Where can I find MRLs for a pesticide?

A You can find the information on the Food Safety Korea website (<http://www.foodsafetykorea.go.kr/foodcode>).



www.mfds.go.kr

MINISTRY OF FOOD AND DRUG SAFETY



Ministry of Food and
Drug Safety

Residues and Contaminants Standard Division
Osong Health Technology Administration Complex, 187,
Osongsaengmyeong2-ro, Osong-eup, Heungdeok-gu,
Cheongju-si, Chungcheongbuk-do, 28159, Korea
■ Tel : 043-719-3867 ■ Fax : 043-719-3850

Positive List System of pesticide



Ministry of Food and
Drug Safety

What is the Positive List System (PLS)?

- It is a system introduced to facilitate safety management for pesticides. Under the Positive List System, the “Uniform level” rule (0.01mg/kg or less) applies to all pesticides except for those for which MRLs are set in Korea, in order to control pesticide residues in food at or below the level that is not harmful even if people eat for a lifetime.

Uniform level (0.01 mg/kg or less)



Background

- As imported food increases in quantity and diversity, agricultural products containing a pesticide residue for which safety has not been assessed inevitably grow, too. The Positive List System (PLS) has been introduced to prevent the importation of agricultural products for which a pesticide with unproven safety was used and ensure that safe agricultural products will be imported and distributed.



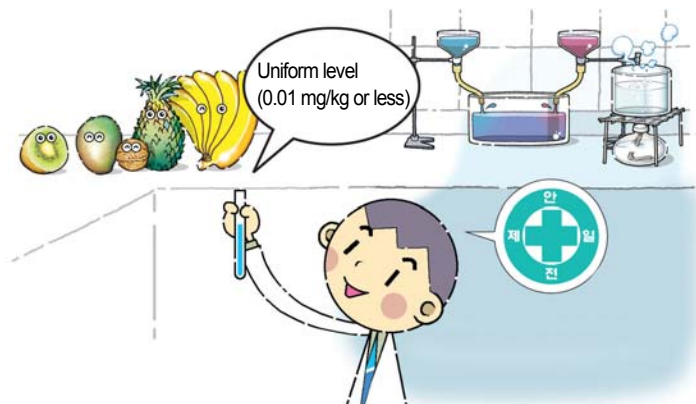
Changes due to Introduction of the PLS

- When the PLS goes into effect, provisional standards that apply when there are no MRLs established, such as MRLs defined by the CODEX or set for similar products, will be abolished. A uniform level (0.01 mg/kg or less) will be applied instead.

MRL established for the pesticide	Before introduction of the PLS	After introduction of the PLS
Established	Apply the MRL that is set	Apply the MRL that is set (Same as before enforcement of the PLS)
Not established	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the CODEX standards for the particular agricultural product (excluding crop groupings). 2. Apply the lowest of the standards set for similar agricultural products. 3. Apply the lowest limit set for the pesticide concerned. 	Apply the uniform level of 0.01 mg/kg or less.

* What does it mean when there are no MRLs for a pesticide residue?

It means that the pesticide is not registered in Korea or that toxicity and safety assessments have not yet been completed to set MRLs. If there is no MRL established for a pesticide, it will be left out from the list of pesticides subject to dietary intake and exposure assessment, which means that the pesticide cannot be controlled at a safe level.



What can I do as an importer?

- You are advised to check if a pesticide being used in an export country has MRLs also set in Korea. Initial inspections are performed for 58 pesticides, while random inspections are conducted for 370. The inspection list is available in the “Regulations on Inspections for Imported Food, Ect. (Attached Table 3).” If there is no MRL for the pesticide of interest, you need to request your counterpart in the exporting country to apply for an import tolerance for the food products to be imported.

* What is an Import Tolerance (IT)?

An IT is a maximum residue limit (MRL) for a pesticide for which there is no MRL set in Korea but it is legally allowed to be used in or on food in exporting countries. An import tolerance is set when results of safety assessment on the food for which the pesticide was used indicate that there is no concern for risk to human health.

What can I do as a producer of an agricultural product in Korea?

- You must use a pesticide registered for the agricultural product that you produce in accordance with the standards of use defined for the pesticide. Any agricultural products for which a non-registered pesticide is used may be found to be non-compliant.

What can I do as a pesticide inspector?

- The PLS has been in force for nuts and seeds as well as tropical and subtropical fruits since December 31, 2016. It is scheduled to take effect for all agricultural products on January 1, 2019. Please pay attention to the timing of enforcement for each agricultural product.
- If a pesticide has both group MRLs and individual MRLs for agricultural products, the individual MRLs will take priority.
- In the case of processed food, manufactured, processed, sold or imported products prior to the implementation of the PLS will be excluded from the application of the PLS.