



Pesticides: Health and Safety

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Pesticides and Food: What the Pesticide Residue Limits are on Food

EPA sets limits on how much of a pesticide residue can remain on food and feed products, or commodities. These pesticide residue limits are known as tolerances. Tolerances are set to protect you from harmful levels of pesticides on your food. Inspectors from the Food and Drug Administration and the United States Department of Agriculture monitor food in interstate commerce to ensure that these limits are not exceeded.

The Environmental Protection Agency sets maximum residue limits (MRLs), or tolerances, for pesticides that can be used on various food and feed commodities. Below are two resources for maximum residue limits (MRLs), or tolerance information.

Questions on Pesticides?

- National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC)
1-800-858-7378
[EXIT Disclaimer](#)

Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (e-CFR)

Look up the preferred commodity term. Consult the Food and Feed Commodity Vocabulary. The names of agricultural food and feed products, or commodities, are being standardized. The preferred commodity term is the only term accepted in establishing pesticide tolerances.

- Go to the e-Code of Federal Regulations (e-CFR)
- On the sidebar under "Database features", select "simple search"
- On the "simple search" page, enter the following information:
 - "Title Number" box, enter "40" to search the 40 CFR
 - "Search for" box, enter the commodity name found in the Food and Feed Commodity Vocabulary
 - "within box" leave as the default "Full Text"
 - click on the "submit search" button

The results returned from the e-CFR are the pesticides that have MRLs or tolerances for that commodity. Also provided are the results for Part 180, Subpart C that contain the specific tolerances.

For a list of pesticides that have MRLs or exemption from the requirements of an MRL, see "[40 CFR Part 180: Tolerances and exemptions from tolerances for pesticide chemicals in food](#)".

For indexes to 40 CFR Part 180 tolerances, see [Indexes to Part 180 Tolerance Information for Pesticide Chemicals in Food and Feed Commodities](#).

(Note that the eCFR is not an official legal version of the Code of Federal Regulations, but is updated by the Office of the Federal Register on a daily basis to reflect documents published in the Federal Register.)

USDA International Maximum Residue Limit Database

The International Maximum Residue Limit Database contains maximum residue limits (MRLs), or tolerances for U.S. specialty crops. This database is maintained by the Foreign Agricultural Service, Horticultural & Tropical Products Division, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The [International Maximum Residue Limit Database](#) can be searched by crop or pesticide, for just the United States or for 70 foreign countries included in the database.

For more information on specific chemicals:

- [Registration and Chemical-Specific Information](#) - Through this page, EPA has numerous documents providing detailed information about pesticides, such as their toxicity, use patterns, and registration status. However, not all pesticides are currently featured on the Web site.
- [Extoxnet](#) - a Web site designed to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about exposure to toxicants in our environment. The Web site provides various types of pesticide toxicology and environmental chemistry information (e.g., pesticide profiles, fact sheets, information briefs, newsletters, etc.)
[EXIT Disclaimer](#)
- [USDA's Pesticide Data Program](#) provides an overview of the pesticide residues found on food through this sampling program.