



CONSUMER ASSURANCE UPDATE

EU Imidacloprid MRL

This is an important update on the status of the EU Imidacloprid MRL. Although CGA/CRI were taking steps to make an Import Tolerance application to retain an Imidacloprid MRL for citrus, recent developments mean the prospects of a successful Import Tolerance application are now extremely low. Specifically, some toxicological data required to support the application are no longer available and would take significant resources to update. Therefore, CGA/CRI have taken a decision to NOT proceed with an Import Tolerance application.

The EU Imidacloprid MRL is now expected to be lowered to level of detection. The timing of the MRL change is uncertain but in May 2021 the EU Commission indicated that it will not be before July 2022. The UK Imidacloprid MRL for citrus is expected to remain as it is for now.

Having looked at the residue breakdown curves for various alternative treatment options the data sets show that there are no Imidacloprid treatments that will result in fruit free of detectable residues. The immediate implications is that Imidacloprid should not be used on bearing trees where the fruit from that orchard is likely to be on EU market from July 2022. Use on non-bearing trees can proceed as registered. The *Recommended Usage Restrictions for Plant Protection Products on southern African Export Citrus* (RUR) will be updated accordingly.

South Korea MRL update

A number of revised MRLs take effect from 1 January 2022 in South Korea as the Positive List system comes into play. These changes have been taken into account in the July edition of the RUR. Some context on how Korean authorities have approached these changes is provided here so that a correct interpretation of the RUR can be made. Essentially, there are three scenarios for the future status of an MRL:

- 1) For permanent (already published) MRLs, these will be retained beyond 1 January 2022.
- 2) For MRLs currently identified as temporary, if no import tolerance has been

submitted then the MRLs will be lowered to level of detection on the 1st January 2022.

- 3) For MRLs currently identified as temporary, if an application for an Import Tolerance has been submitted the temporary MRL will be maintained until the data is evaluated and a decision reached. If the data is found to be sufficient the Temporary MRLs will become permanent. If the data is insufficient then the MRLs will be lowered to level of detection.

The challenge facing the industry is some plant protection products must be applied during the production cycle (in the next 6 months) and before a decision is made on the MRL. Therefore a precautionary approach should be followed by growers when planning the South Korean programme. If there are any doubts or questions on whether a PPP is suitable for South Korea, please make contact with the CGA office so this can be discussed (Paul Hardman – ph@cga.co.za).

Citrus Sustainability Forum

The second CSF took place on the 21st July 2021. The virtual meeting was well attended. A range of food safety and sustainability topics were covered, including the results of the recent Citrus Sustainability Survey, upcoming MRL changes, the CRI response to the loss of key active substances, and research projects looking into various pest and disease management practices. Representatives from SIZA and the Confronting Climate Change project also provided feedback on these initiatives. Presentations and minutes from the meeting are available from CGA (Paula Bester – pb@cga.co.za).

Compiled by
Paul Hardman
CGA