

IHGC Commission on Regulatory Harmonization
7 November 2016 – Nuremberg, Germany

The Commission on Regulatory Harmonization works closely with the US Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee and the European Union Commodity Expert Group for Hops on the harmonization of issues impacting the international trade of hops, particularly in the area of chemical (pesticide) residue Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs). Information from around the world is summarized and provided to IHGC delegates, to insure that all hop producing countries are aware of regulatory issues impacting the trade of hops.

MRL Tracking Chart

The US Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee maintains a database comparing hop MRLs in several key hop producing and customer countries, as well as the international Codex Alimentarius Commission. This database was emailed to IHGC delegates prior to this meeting.

Asia Pacific Activities

The US Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee is currently working on a 2.5 year project to harmonize hop MRLs in the following markets:

Australia:

A total of 33 new hop MRLs have been established in Australia during the past 2 years. On April 28, 2016, USHIPPCC petitioned the Australian government for another 23 priority MRLs. USHIPPCC expects MRLs to be established for many of these in the spring of 2017.

Taiwan:

When this project began, Taiwan had no hop MRLs. USHIPPCC worked with the U.S. government and Taiwan officials to seek Taiwan MRLs. In December 2015, Taiwan officially adopted 33 new hop MRLs relevant to the U.S. hop industry. This is a huge victory for the hop industry. Additional Taiwan hop MRLs have been established for compounds that are not registered in the US.

So far in 2016, Taiwan has proposed new hop MRLs for two priority compounds: carfentrazone-ethyl at 0.1 ppm, which is harmonized with the U.S. MRL, and flupyradifurone, which is the active ingredient in Bayer's new Sivanto insecticide product. Taiwan also adjusted its abamectin MRL from 0.05 ppm to 0.2 ppm, which is now harmonized with the U.S. MRL.

South Korea:

Korea is completely overhauling its MRL system and will require Korean national MRLs to be established by January 2019. To do this, data packages must be submitted to the Korean government. USHIPPCC conducted an analysis and found that only four percent of currently applied hop MRLs in Korea would remain after their major regulatory transition unless new data applications were made. In the last year, the USHIPPCC contractor has met with 15 chemical registrants and asked them to include hops in their data submissions to Korea, so MRLs can be established by the transition deadline.

In June 2016, the government of Korea announced its first new national hop MRLs that will be in place for the upcoming 2019 positive list transition. They were for:

- Spirodiclofen: Import tolerance proposed at 40 ppm; same as current MRL derived from Codex.
- Spirotetramat: Import tolerance proposed at 4 ppm; lower than current MRL derived from Codex at 15 ppm.

In September, Korea announced a third hop MRL of 3 ppm for boscalid, harmonized at the US level of 35 ppm. These three MRLs demonstrate that hop industry efforts are beginning to pay off as data packages

make their way through the Korean review system. Many more are needed, but this is an excellent start. More hop MRLs are expected in the coming two years.

Japan:

For the past five years, USHIPP has traveled to Tokyo to meet with registrants, the Japanese government, and the US embassy in pursuit of hop MRLs in Japan. This effort has been coordinated with European hop growers, who send their representative at the same time. This allows the hop industry to speak with a unified voice on Japan MRLs issues. Over this period, several important MRLs have been established in Japan including a MRL for BASF's metrafenone just before the 2016 season.

Hong Kong:

In September, USHIPP contractors met with the Hong Kong government for a second time regarding Hong Kong MRL policies. Hong Kong has 50 hop MRLs in place, and there are several pending. The industry needs several more MRLs. Hong Kong has established no new MRLs since the implementation of its new MRL system.

This year we confirmed that political issues continue to prevent the advancement of new MRLs in Hong Kong. This could change in the future, but for now, the issue remains in the Hong Kong legislature. This was further confirmed in October 2016 in Geneva with the Hong Kong delegation to the World Trade Organization. USHIPP will continue to engage with the Hong Kong government to learn where there are opportunities to advance additional hop MRLs.

China:

China has established a total of 18 hop MRLs since 2014. Fortunately, most have been set at Codex levels. In September 2016, the USHIPP contractor traveled to Beijing to meet with the U.S. Embassy on China's MRLs policies. They discussed options for increasing hop MRLs in China and whether a new system would be established to allow for import tolerances to be pursued, as opposed to requiring full registrations. To date, such a system is not in place and full registrations are needed.

EU MRL Proposals

The European Union Commodity Expert Group for Hops met on 28 September in Freising. Several specific chemicals were reviewed to discuss issues and research status. This is a very useful forum to discuss EU registration priorities, efficacy results, and critical needs for EU hop growers. This group has allowed for increased cooperation and exchanges between the US and European industries.

International Conference on Plant Protection

An International Conference on Plant Protection will take place on 2 August 2017, in conjunction with the IHGC Congress (30 July – 1 August 2017) in Yakima, WA, USA. Details will follow.

Sustainability and Best Practices Platforms

As customers are increasingly asking suppliers for certification of food safety and sustainability program compliance, several schemes and checklists have been developed in recent years by customers, merchant/processors and grower organizations. US growers are proposing the development of a globally recognized standard through GLOBALG.A.P., to serve as an option for producers who do not have access to a customized program specific to their country's hop industry. Additional information will be provided during the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
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