

<b>ARGUMENT</b>  A 9	<h1>MRL (Maximum Residue Levels)</h1>
	<h2>Environmental</h2>

Date (05/10/2009)

<b>WHAT IS</b>	<p>Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) are the legal levels for the maximum concentration of pesticide residues in or on food or feed. MRLs are set for a wide range of food commodities of plant and animal origin, and usually apply to the product as put on the market (for example, oranges including the peel or stone fruit including the stones). MRLs are not simply set as toxicological threshold levels, but are derived from a comprehensive assessment of the properties of the active substance and the residue behaviour on treated crops. An indispensable precondition for setting MRLs is the performance of a risk assessment to ensure consumer safety.</p>
<b>WHY</b>	<p>For every active ingredient included in a phytosanitary product, there is a MRL defined for every crop.</p> <p>The MRL is linked with the rate, pre-harvest delay and good agricultural practices for application of the products.</p> <p>For farmers, it is essential not to exceed MRLs, which can cause delayed harvesting to ensure the proper degradation of pesticides.</p> <p>The use of IPM or alternative measures decreases the risk of pesticide residues in food and feed.</p> <p>There are no MRLs for pheromones and products containing micro-organisms.</p>
<b>HOW</b>	<p>During the training session, highlight the issues participants need to know in order to use actively information on MRLs. Visualise the influence of substituting current practice with technical systems or IPM alternatives (show data from experiments etc.)</p> <p>You can show farmers the different advantages of IPM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Less risk when using MRLs actively.</li> <li>▶ Fewer or no constraints on pre-harvest delays if using a more 'IPM-like' approach.</li> </ul> <p>Show practical solutions.</p>
<b>SOURCES</b>	<p>European database for MRLs of pesticides: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/sanco_pesticides/public/index.cfm">http://ec.europa.eu/sanco_pesticides/public/index.cfm</a></p>