

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.7.2025)

The EU's sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards fully apply to imported products, which must always comply with the EU's stringent food safety requirements including maximum residue limits (MRLs) for pesticides. The Commission establishes a principle that the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU for health and environmental reasons are not allowed back through imports products¹. The Commission will launch this year an assessment to consider the impact on the EU's competitive position and, if needed, propose amendments to the legal framework. The Commission will also strengthen its controls on pesticide residues for imported products and pursue in international fora a stronger alignment of production standards for imported products, notably on MRLs.

The Commission has amended the data requirements for plant protection products that are based on biological alternatives, simplified the evaluation of application dossiers², and adopted or updated several relevant guidance documents³ which support the development of such products, or innovative application techniques⁴. As announced in the Vision for Agriculture and Food, it will propose further simplification measures in the fourth quarter of 2025.

EU-funded initiatives are actively conducting research and innovation in alternative approaches, focusing on integrated pest management, alternative weed and pest control solutions and agroecology. These areas will remain a key in future Horizon Europe programmes⁵. Under the successive Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, a total of 64 projects on plant health, integrated pest management, plant pests and diseases, pesticides reduction technologies and biopesticides have been funded for a total amount of EUR 333 million⁶.

¹ As outlined in its Vision for Agriculture and Food: COM/2025/75 final.

² https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/micro-organisms_en.

³ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023XC0609\(02\);](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023XC0609(02);)
[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023XC0609\(01\).](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023XC0609(01).)

⁴ https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-10/pesticides_ppp_app-proc_guide_imp-data-req_micro-organisms-ppp_imp-reg-11072009.pdf.

⁵ Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2025-2027 https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/strategic-plan_en; https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-6-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en.

⁶ Agri-Research Factsheet on Plant Health available at:
https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/c0e214ed-bf9a-4e24-b992-8fe859cc3b48_en.