

EN
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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.6.2026)

Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 on maximum residue levels (MRLs) of pesticides¹ imposes Member States to carry out controls to ensure that food placed on the market is compliant with the legal limits. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) collects the information from national and EU-coordinated control programmes and publishes the EU report on pesticide residues in food². In 2024, 86 449 samples were analysed. 96% contained no residues or residues below or equal to the MRLs. Non-compliant samples (1.8%) triggered sanctions or enforcement actions. Out of 38 169 samples analysed for the presence of imazalil, including fruits with their peel³, only 35 contained residues above the MRL. This confirms that the food available to EU consumers is safe.

The MRLs for imazalil were last updated in 2020⁴ considering EFSA's opinion of 2019⁵. Although imazalil is classified as carcinogen category 2, recent studies reviewed by EFSA⁶, show that it is not genotoxic. Further EFSA opinions confirmed that new MRLs for imazalil do not present a risk for consumers^{4,7}. The Commission prepared new draft Regulations reviewing some MRLs for imazalil that are under discussion with Member States.

The food additives authorised for surface treatment of citrus and/or other fruits, and their conditions of use, are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008⁸.

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2429⁹ lays down the marketing standard for citrus fruit, which lists the 'commercial specifications' required to appear on each package¹⁰. This includes: 'When used, mention of the preserving agent or other chemical substances used at post-harvest stage'. This requirement applies to all citrus species covered by the marketing standard, which includes limes, pummelos and grapefruits¹¹.

¹ ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2005/396/oj>.

² EFSA (2026). The 2024 European Union report on pesticide residues in food. EFSA Journal, 24, e10054. <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2026.10054/>

³ ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2005/396/oj>. See Annex I.

⁴ ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/856/oj>.

⁵ EFSA (2019). Scientific Report on scientific support for preparing an EU position in the 51st Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR). EFSA Journal 2019;17(7):5797, 243 pp. <https://doi.org/10.2903/j.efsa.2019.5797>.

⁶ EFSA (2025). Evaluation of confirmatory data following the Article 12 MRL review and modification of the existing maximum residue levels in citrus fruits for imazalil. EFSA Journal, 23(8), e9614. <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2025.9614>.

⁷ EFSA (2023). Reasoned Opinion on the modification of the existing maximum residue levels for imazalil in courgettes, cucumbers and gherkins. EFSA Journal 2023; 21(4):7980, 33 pp. <https://doi.org/10.2903/j.efsa.2023.7980>.

⁸ See Part E of Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives (OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, pp. 16–33), ELI: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2008/1333/oj>.

⁹ ELI: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2429/oj/eng.

¹⁰ See Part 2 of Annex I to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2429.

¹¹ The complete list of covered citruses is the following: Lemons, Persian limes, Mexican and Indian sweet limes, Satsumas, other mandarin varieties and hybrids, Clementines, Oranges, Grapefruit and hybrids, Pummelos and hybrids. The inclusion of limes, pummelos and grapefruits in the citrus specific marketing standard dates

