

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF)

# Minutes of the meeting of the Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) 19 July 2023

The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting.

The Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food provides independent advice to the Health and Safety Executive, Food Standards Agency and UK Ministers on matters relating to the monitoring programme; this is the 47<sup>th</sup> meeting of the committee.

### **Those present:**

#### **Chair:**

Ms A Davison

#### **Members:**

Dr J Blackman; Mr I Finlayson; Dr G Hart; Mr J Points and Ms D Winstanley

#### **Representatives:**

Ms H Ainsworth (Defra); Ms K Carter (HSE); Ms H Cooke (HSE); Mr D Faulkner (Northern Ireland Executive); Ms H Kyle (HSE); Ms C McCartney-Collard (FSA); Dr S Nawaz (National Reference Laboratory); Ms K Reid (Scottish Government); Dr R Scrivens (HSE) and Mr W Turley (HSE)

#### **Apologies:**

Mr G Stark (HSE)

## **Agenda item 1: Introduction**

1.1 The Chair reminded the meeting of the sensitivity of the papers and their discussions. If Members believed that they had a commercial or financial interest in any of the items being discussed, they are required to declare their interest to the Chair and secretariat prior to the meeting. They may then either be invited to absent themselves from the discussions; not participate and/or not be involved in any discussions and decision-making, unless invited to do so.

1.2 One member declared a non-personal, non-specific conflict and it was decided they could remain and participate in discussion on the relevant agenda item.

## **Agenda item 2: Action points from PRiF Meeting of 24 May 2023**

2.1 The secretariat provided an update on actions from the previous meeting and informed the committee that the majority of actions were complete, a small number were still ongoing, and an update would be provided at a future meeting.

## **Agenda item 3: Matters arising from forward business plan**

3.1 The Chair provided an update to the Committee on the ongoing recruitment process.

3.2 The Secretariat introduced the forward business plan and invited Members to suggest any additions/amendments which would be incorporated before the next meeting.

3.3 Members raised adding an update on variability factors, how they are considered and communicated. HSE will consider how this could be addressed.

**Action: HSE**

## **Agenda item 4: 2024 Monitoring Programme update**

4.1 HSE presented a paper detailing the list of foods to be sampled and tested in 2024 for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. A planning sub-group, made up of committee members, HSE and FSA, was held in June to discuss the proposed list of foods for 2024. The paper provided a summary of the issues discussed at the sub-group meeting and the final proposal which will be taken forward to the next stage of commissioning the work.

4.2 HSE noted that a reference in the paper to a joint project with FSA was nearing conclusion which would update the consumption data from the FSA dietary surveys. This was not correct, a joint project (HSE/VMD/FSA) has been undertaken reviewing the approaches to chronic dietary assessment, and a report of this work is available [Draft FSA/HSE/VMD report on approaches to chronic dietary exposure assessment for chemicals in food | Committee on Toxicity](#). Separately two R&D project undertaken by FERA, which are informing HSE working towards updating the dietary consumer models, have been completed. However considerable work needs to be done to verify the data inputs and assumptions and to evaluate reverse yield factors being applied to convert the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) data into raw agricultural commodity format. Therefore revised consumption estimates are not yet ready to use in the ranking tool for 2024.

## **Agenda item 5: Draft Quarter 4 2022 report – NI Data**

5.1 Due to working with a new laboratory and ensuring that data was delivered to specification and in line with the in-house data transfer systems, the Northern Ireland (NI) data for quarter 4 2022 was not available at the May meeting when members viewed and

advised on this report. The data is now complete and was presented to the committee by HSE.

5.2 There were no residues of concern detected and members were content with the data that was presented to them.

## **Agenda item 6: Draft Quarter 1 2023 report**

6.1 Before the meeting the members were asked to view a draft version of the Quarter 1 2023 report and associated compliance correspondence received from the suppliers. The Committee discussed all areas of the report identified as requiring further consideration, including those surveys requiring a risk assessment. Particular attention was given to those findings of pesticides where any detection is considered undesirable due to uncertainty regarding genotoxicity.

### **6.2 Dried beans**

6.2.1 The Committee discussed the continued findings of low level genotoxic residues. The levels are below the MRL but due to the genotoxic nature a detailed risk assessment is required. HSE explained to the committee the steps they take to feed the relevant results to the Food Standards Agency and actions that are able to be taken. The Committee asked if a summary of these steps could be added to the report to reassure readers that the continued findings are given attention.

**Action: HSE**

6.2.2 HSE informed the committee that a suppliers response had been received for one sample with a residue of fosetyl above the MRL. The supplier confirmed fosetyl had not been applied and felt the cause was likely to be the use of liquid phosphate or phosphite fertiliser. Members asked if the supplier will be informing their growers of this to avoid future exceedances. HSE will consider this in their response to the supplier.

**Action: HSE**

### **6.3 Beans with pods**

6.3.1 The committee considered a detailed risk assessment for a sample of beans with pods that contained dimethoate and omethoate. Members asked for explanatory wording to be added to the report to make it clear what was meant when it is stated a sample has been sent to FSA for 'further consideration'. HSE will ensure the wording discussed under item 6.2.1 includes some explanatory wording to cover this and link to it when appropriate.

**Action: HSE**

## **6.4 Oranges**

6.4.1 PRiF members observed that the risk assessments for lambda-cyhalothrin and cypermethrin in oranges compounded various worst case elements (consumption of large amounts of orange peel with the fruit and assuming the most toxic isomer form) leading to large estimated exceedances of the ARfDs. HSE noted that a further refinement excluding the dietary consumption of juice might be possible as orange juice is a significant proportion of the total amount of orange consumed. Residues would not be expected in juice as peel is not included in juice, and PRiF survey data show lack of findings of these residues in juice. Since tailored consumption data are available for oranges, excluding juice, PRiF members requested further work up of the assessment.

**Action: HSE**

## **6.5 Rice**

6.5.1 Members asked if the breakdown of which metabolites are sought as part of the ethylene oxide (sum) residue definition could be included in the report. HSE confirmed they would ensure this was added to back of the report where residue definitions are detailed.

**Action: HSE**

## **6.6 Pineapple**

6.6.1 The committee considered a combined risk assessment for a sample of pineapple with a residue of diazinon and ethephon. HSE concluded that a short-term effect on health is not expected if the peel is removed prior to consuming the food or unlikely if the peel is consumed. Members noted that another sample of pineapple that contained these two residues had a higher level of diazinon than the one in the detailed risk assessment.

*Post meeting note: The sample noted was the only one with that combination of residues that triggered the need for further consideration. The assessment is done on the combinations in each individual sample as they are found rather than on the highest detection of each residue across the samples.*

## **Agenda item 7: Rolling report update**

7.1 The Committee noted the results of the April and May rolling reporting. HSE confirmed the rolling reports for June will be circulated to members shortly.

## **Agenda item 8: Defra Update**

8.1 The National Action Plan (NAP) remains under Ministerial review. As part of the NAP, Defra are progressing work on a GB Active Substance Renewals Programme and

are exploring regulatory and guidance changes to biopesticide regulation. They are assessing the potential role of targets to support our policy ambitions.

8.2 Retained EU Law will now be retained unless it is specifically cited in the revocation schedule, published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). Other REUL will be assimilated into UK law, keeping protections in place and providing certainty to businesses and interested groups. Defra's Retained EU Law programme will now look at how they tailor the laws they inherited from the EU to better suit the UK, while ensuring that they maintain their high standards, maintain environmental protections, and drive positive environmental outcomes. Defra's future reform programme, planned for 2023-26 will build on the opportunities for bespoke legislation that have come from leaving the EU. Any REUL reform must be consistent with international obligations including the Northern Ireland Protocol and Defra will demonstrate compliance with non-regression clauses in their trade agreements, including the TCA.

8.3 Some divergence between GB and NI is an inevitable result of running an independent GB pesticide regime whilst NI remains within the EU regime. Legislation to implement the Windsor Framework 'Green Lane' is on track for October – GB MRLs will be acceptable on the NI retail market.

8.4 Now that the EU exit transitional arrangements on parallel trade imports for PPPs and treated seeds are coming to an end future options are being explored.

8.5 Defra continue to monitor concerns expressed by WTO members about EU MRLs and the legislative regime.

## **Agenda item 9: Any Other Business**

9.1 HSE informed members that they were considering how to implement some format changes to the quarterly report that were required to ensure the report was brought in line with government's accessibility guidance. They will keep the committee informed of the changes that they are required to make.

9.2 HSE informed the committee that there is a draft reasoned opinion (dRO) for the MRL for chlorpropham which was published on 7 July. This shows HSE are proposing adoption of a GB temporary MRL (tMRL) of 0.35 mg/kg, which is in line with the level the EU tMRL will soon be at.

9.3 The committee queried if an update from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) had been received following the committee's correspondence with them in 2022 with regards to how to report findings of chlorate residues when they come from the use of water and disinfectants in infant food and formula production. The secretariat will seek an update ahead of the next committee meeting.

**Action: Secretariat**

## **Agenda item 10: Date of next meeting**

10.1 The next meeting will be held as a virtual meeting on 18 October 2023