

BIOSECURITY UPDATE

20 September 2023

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has suspended the registration and labels of chemical products containing dimethoate used as a post-harvest dip for fruit with inedible peel, due to potential risks to human health, effective 19 September 2023.

BACKGROUND

Dimethoate is an insecticide used to control insect pests in a wide range of crops and is used for interstate quarantine treatment for fruit fly.

REASONS OF SUSPENSION

The APVMA's most recent reconsideration of dimethoate was completed in 2017, after which the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for dimethoate, and its degradation product omethoate, were revised. Updated MRLs were included in the APVMA MRL Standard in August 2020 after the end of the phase out period for dimethoate allowed at the end of the dimethoate reconsideration.

In March 2023, the APVMA was notified of a series of omethoate **MRL exceedances in avocados and mangoes**, likely caused by degradation of dimethoate to omethoate after use of dimethoate as a post-harvest dip. This use is approved in the current instructions for use of dimethoate products.

The APVMA considers the level of residues detected are unlikely to pose a significant risk to human health but are above the acceptable level for an appropriate margin of safety.

SUSPENSION OF SPECIFIC DIMETHOATE PRODUCTS

The APVMA has published a Notice of Suspension of specific dimethoate products on 19 September 2023. Please refer to the Table 6 in the [APVMA Gazette, 19 September 2023](#) for further details.

The Gazette Notice includes instructions for use in a deemed permit that is valid for one year. These instructions allow the continued use of dimethoate but prohibit use of dimethoate as a post-harvest dip on tropical and sub-tropical fruit.

The APVMA has also varied Permit 87164, held by Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd, to remove the use of dimethoate as a post-harvest flood spray for assorted tropical and sub-tropical fruits – inedible peel (crop group 006).

IMPLICATIONS

Pre-shipment treatment options using post-harvest dimethoate dip or flood spray for interstate movement of **avocados and mangoes** from fruit fly areas will no longer be available.

The permitted use of dimethoate on citrus fruit with inedible peel remains acceptable.

The APVMA remains satisfied that all other [approved uses of dimethoate are safe](#).

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

For any enquiries or further information about this matter, please contact:

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