Resolution on the draft Commission regulation amending Annexes II, III and IV to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 as regards maximum residue levels for acequinocyl, acibenzolar-S-methyl, Bacillus subtilis strain IAB/BS03, emamectin, flonicamid, flutolanil, fosetyl, imazamox and oxathiapiprolin in or on certain products

2021/2608(RPS) - 27/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 366 votes to 305, with 27 abstentions, a resolution ***objecting*** to the draft Commission regulation amending Annexes II, III and IV to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for acequinocyl, acibenzolar-S-methyl, Bacillus subtilis strain IAB/BS03, emamectin, flonicamid, flutolanil, fosetyl, imazamox and oxathiapiprolin in or on certain products.

To recall, flonicamid is a selective, systemic insecticide that acts by disrupting insect feeding, movement, and other behaviours, resulting in starvation and dehydration followed by death. The approval period of flonicamid as an active substance has been extended by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017 /2069.

Under the draft Commission regulation, the MRLs for flonicamid would increase from 0.03 mg/kg, which corresponds to the current limit of detection, to 0.7 mg/kg for strawberries, to 1 mg/kg for blackberries and raspberries, to 0.7 mg/kg for rose hips, mulberries, azaroles/Mediterranean medlars, elderberries, and other small fruits and berries, to 0.8 mg/kg for blueberries, cranberries, currants, gooseberries, to 0.3 mg /kg for other root and tuber vegetables generally, but to 0.6 mg/kg for radishes, to 0.07 mg/kg for lettuces and salad plants, and to 0.8 mg/kg for pulses.

Against this background, Parliament opposed the adoption of the draft Commission regulation considering it as incompatible with the aim and content of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. It acknowledged that EFSA is working on methods to assess cumulative risks, but also noted that the problem of the assessment of cumulative effects of pesticides and residues has been known for decades. Parliament requested EFSA and the Commission to address the problem as a matter of absolute urgency.

The resolution suggested that the MRLs for flonicamid should remain at 0.03 mg/kg.

The Commission is called on to withdraw the draft regulation and submit a new one to the committee, respecting the precautionary principle.