Resolution on the draft Commission regulation amending Annexes II, III and V to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels for benomyl, carbendazim and thiophanate methyl in or on certain products

2024/2758(RPS) - 18/09/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 516 votes to 129, with 27 abstentions, a resolution objecting to the draft Commission regulation amending Annexes II, III and V to Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards maximum residue levels (MRLs) for benomyl, carbendazim and thiophanatemethyl in or on certain products.

In its draft regulation, the Commission proposed, based on EFSA's reasoned opinion of 5 July 2021:

- to maintain the MRLs based on import tolerances for lemons, limes and mandarins at the existing levels of 0.7 mg/kg, and to set the MRLs for okra/lady's fingers at a new level established by EFSA of 1.5 mg /kg;

- to maintain the MRLs based on import tolerances for thiophanate-methyl above the limit of determination for use in limes and okra/lady's fingers for import purposes. The MRL for thiophanate-metyl on limes is set at 6 mg/kg, 600 times the limit of determination.

Members believe that the proposed MRLs **do not protect the health of citizens in Europe**, and they are therefore contrary to Regulations (EC) No 396/2005 and (EC) No 178/2002. They stressed that MRLs should not be set for active substances that are not approved in the Union due to health concerns. Therefore, no import tolerances should be set for thiophanate-methyl as it is identified as an endocrine disruptor or for carbendazim as it is classified as mutagenic category 1B and toxic for reproduction category 1B.

In support of its objection, Parliament pointed out that one the farmers' core demands made when they demonstrated in the first half of 2024 was for **fair and equitable treatment for products imported from third countries**, which should be subject to the same standards as those produced in the EU. However, the adoption of the draft Commission regulation would allow for the continuation of imports into the Union which do not comply with the standards by which Union farmers abide. Such a situation would place Union farmers at a competitive disadvantage.

Parliament called on the Commission to withdraw the draft regulation and submit a new one to the committee **lowering all MRLs** for carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl to the relevant limit of determination for all uses and to refuse any requests for import tolerances.