Pesticides: maximum levels of residue in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin (repeal. Directives 76/895/EEC, 86/362/EEC, 86/363/EEC, 90/642/EEC, amend. Directive 91/414/EEC)

2003/0052(COD) - 20/04/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Robert STURDY (EPP-ED, UK), broadly backing the proposal. Parliament stated that the aim of the Regulation is to set harmonised maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides in products of plant and animal origin in order to protect all European consumers against possible health effects. MRLs should therefore be set at the lowest reasonably achievable level with the aim of ensuring the best possible consumer protection, and with a view to protecting vulnerable groups such as children and the unborn, and in order to minimise possible combined effects of multiple residues. Aggregate MRLs should be set after consultation of the European Food Safety Authority, who will submit proposals for the calculation of aggregate MRLs. In addition: - Maximum Residue Level (MRL) is now defined as the upper legal level of concentration for a pesticide residue, based on the best available agricultural methods of crop protection, i.e. integrated pest management in a given climate zone, and the lowest consumer exposure necessary to protect all vulnerable consumers; if an MRL is exceeded, measures are to be taken to withdraw a product from the market; - the role of the Commission, Member States and the Authority are more tightly defined by the amendments. The Commission must have the final say in setting, modifying or deleting an MRL. Parliament lists a series of factors that must be taken into account before a decision is made; - Member States must, on a quarterly basis, publish all results of national residue monitoring on the Internet, providing all individual data. Where MRLs are exceeded, Member States may name the retailers, traders or producers concerned; - The annexes on the maximum safe amounts of pesticide residues have not been prepared and Parliament has set deadlines for their entry into force.