Checked carefully

Only flawless goods should reach the food retail market. This is the purpose of residue monitoring. The current results are extremely satisfactory.

The low exceedance rate shows how carefully producers are when working with plant protection products.

Wilfried Kamphausen, Head of the Fruit, Vegetables and Potatoes Division at QS

As part of the QS residue monitoring, fruit, vegetables and potatoes are systematically monitored and examined for the highest permissible levels of plant protection products. Inspectors regularly take samples of the goods to be analysed by QS-recognised laboratories to check that the legally stipulated maximum residue levels (MRL) have been complied with. In addition, QS checks to make sure that only legally permitted active substances are used. The aim of the residue monitoring is to make sure that only flawless goods reach the market.

Wilfried Kamphausen, Head of the Fruit, Vegetables and Potatoes Division at QS, is very happy with the results from the residue monitoring: “Similar to in the last evaluation, the exceedance rate in Germany is quite low, at just 0.5 percent”, he explains. “The exceedance rate in Europe has even decreased by 0.6 percent,” reports Kamphausen.

In the previous evaluation it was 1 percent. The exceedance rate in Europe, excluding Germany, is 0.8 percent, significantly lower than last year’s rate of 1.8 percent. So there was less reason to complain.

Keep going regardless: this does not apply in the event of an accident. If a company receives a complaint, they will be blocked from selling the corresponding culture and will only be authorised to start delivering it again after they have had an independent sample taken and tested. In addition, in accordance with QS requirements the company must have a case-related consultation with an official plant protection or advisory authority, or a person or organisation authorised to do this in Germany, and provide proof of this consultation to QS inspectors.

Further information available at: www.q-s.de/rueckstandsmonitoring

CAUSES FOR COMPLAINTS

- 55% Spray drift
- 6% Carry-over
- 13% Contaminated sites
- 15%* not known
- 7% Contamination*
- 6% Slow breakdown due to the weather
- 2% Individual approval does not apply
- 6% Individual approval does not apply

*Contamination: during harvesting, storage, sampling; by wash water, cross-contamination or through use in previous preparatory culture.

COMPLAINED

If residues of plant protection products over the permissible maximum residue level or active substances not permitted for the plant are detected in fruit, vegetables or potatoes, usually something has gone wrong. Most of the time, the producers concerned blame this on spray drift.
Significantly better

In comparison to the last evaluation period, the permissible maximum residue levels of plant protection products were rarely exceeded.

In total, 193 samples were tested for residues. More than 95 % of the samples came from sweet cherries from Germany. 33 different active substances were detected, with the most common being acetamiprid (detected 145 times), boscalid (76 times), fluopyram and cyantraniliprole (69 times each). With 90 % of the detected active substances, the maximum residue level exploitation was no more than 20 %. In 5 samples, the legally stipulated MRL was exceeded. The exceedance rate was 2.6 % over the average.

If kohlrabi is sold with its leaves, the legally permissible maximum residue levels for both parts of the plants must be adhered to. QS compared the results. In total, 170 kohlrabi samples and 97 kohlrabi leaf samples were tested. No active substances were detected in more than 59 % of all kohlrabi samples. But just under 20 % of the kohlrabi leaf samples contained no active substances. The exploitation of the maximum residue levels was 80 % maximum. The exceedance rate for kohlrabi was 1.8 % in total, but for kohlrabi leaves was more than 7 %.

393 strawberry samples, more than 94 % of which were from Germany, were tested for residues and an active substance was detected in more than 88 % of all samples. The exploitation of the maximum residue levels was no higher than 20 % for 96 % of the detected active substances. The maximum residue level was only exceeded in one of the samples.