

ABC Global Update

USDA Publishes 2015 Pesticide Data Program Summary

On November 10, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) published the [Pesticide Data Program \(PDP\) Annual Summary for 2015](#), according to a recent [USDA press release](#). The annual report is designed to provide industry stakeholders and consumers with information regarding the level of pesticide residues found on commonly consumed food products.

The USDA works with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to determine the specific food items which will be tested each year. In 2015, fresh and processed fruit and vegetables accounted for nearly 97 percent of the 10,187 samples collected.

Domestic products accounted for approximately 76 percent of samples while imported products accounted for 23 percent. Overall, pesticide residues exceeding established tolerance levels were detected in 0.53 percent of samples while residues with no established tolerance level were found in 3.9 percent of samples.

Additional information about the PDP is available in the following [fact sheet](#).

EU Trade Commissioner Expects Pause in TTIP Negotiations with U.S.

U.S.-EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations will likely be put on hold for months as U.S. President-elect Donald Trump assembles a new team

of trade officials to represent his administration – this is according to media sources citing comments made by EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström at a recent press conference following an EU Trade Council meeting.

Commissioner Malmström stated the EU will be prepared to resume negotiations when the new U.S. administration is ready. That said, some EU officials view the pause as an opportunity for the European Commission to develop a new consensus on EU trade policy. While President-elect Trump has voiced plans to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), he has not commented specifically on the TTIP negotiations.

The U.S. and EU have held fifteen rounds of talks since TTIP negotiations were launched in 2013. Though the two sides are not expected to schedule another formal round of talks before the official end of the Obama administration in January 2017, negotiators plan to meet informally in an attempt to safeguard the progress that has already been made toward a final agreement.

Korea Positive MRL List

Starting January 1, 2017, South Korea will begin enforcing its new positive Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) list. The Almond Board of California (ABC) has worked diligently with the South Korean Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) as well as with compound registrants to be sure the almond industry is well covered during this transition. The

positive list currently has 63 MRL's established for almonds or tree nuts. An additional 10 MRL's are pending review. ABC will continue to track this important trade issue and provide updates as needed.

If you should have any questions about this transition, please contact ABC's Beth Van Meter at evanmeter@almondboard.com.

European Official Controls Legislation expected in Spring

During recent meetings in Brussels, the European Commission, indicated that the updated Official Food Controls regulation is anticipated to be published in March/April 2017. As part of the regulation, Member States will be obligated to the electronic entry system, TRACES, for plant-based products, especially where there are specific import control requirements in place. Currently, border posts are only required to utilize TRACES for veterinary products.

ABC had participated earlier in a joint project with several other commodity groups focused on developing a "portal" which would allow U.S. reporting systems to communicate with TRACES. With the advancement of the Pre-Export Checks program, ABC will be continuing to reach out to the Commission, and to work with USDA/AMS to determine how to begin preparing for electronic reporting.

Maersk Lines to Buy Hamburg Süd

On December 1, 2016, Maersk Line announced the company would be buying Germany carrier Hamburg

Süd. The deal is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

WTO Launches Global Trade Alert System

The World Trade Organization (WTO) recently launched a new online service designed to provide stakeholders with the latest information regarding global market access issues, according to a [WTO press release](#). The system was created through a joint effort by the WTO, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and the International Trade Center (ITC).

The system—known as ePing—allows government agencies, businesses, and other stakeholders to receive alerts and view WTO member notifications relating to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues as well as technical barriers to trade (TBT).

The WTO emphasized the value of the new system by citing the expansion in the number of new regulatory proposals, which has made it more difficult for producers and exporters to ensure product compliance. According to the WTO, over 3,500 SPS and TBT notifications are published annually.

Users of the ePing system will be able to specify products and markets of interest and receive notices as soon as relevant proposals are published. Additional information is available on the ePing [website](#).

'Tis the Season for Farm Bill.....

Every four years, whether we are ready or not, consideration gets underway of the Farm Bill. This sweeping piece of Federal legislation includes a variety of provisions impacting the almond industry – from Crop Insurance and conservation programs, to agriculture research and Specialty Crop research. An

important part of the Farm Bill is the funding for market development – the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development funds.

Over the years, this public-private partnership has enabled the ABC to leverage industry investments for market demand creation and trade/technical issues management with funding from these programs. Funds are currently being used to support activities in Europe, China, India, and S. Korea as well as to address technical/market access issues in several countries.

ABC will be developing more information related to the Farm Bill in the coming months, particularly as hearings get underway. If you would like further information, please contact Bunnie Ibrahim at bibrahim@almondboard.com.

Of Special Note

ABC offices will be closed Friday, December 23, 2016 and reopen Wednesday January 4, 2017.

From all of us to all of you, a joyous holiday season!



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The Global Update is a publication by the Almond Board of California. For more information, please contact the Almond Board at 209.549.8262 or staff@almondboard.com. The information reported in this document is correct to the best of our knowledge.

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