

Background of Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap. 132CM)

Centre for Food Safety
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Background

- ✿ The Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap. 132CM, “the Regulation”) came into operation on 1 August 2014 after a two-year grace period
- ✿ It aims
 - ✦ to strengthen the regulation of pesticide residues in food to better protect public health
 - ✦ to promote harmonization between local and international standards

Background

- ✿ The general principle of the Regulation
 - ⊕ The levels of pesticide residues present in food are not permitted to exceed the MRLs/EMRLs* set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulation
 - ⊕ For pesticide residues with no specified MRLs/EMRLs in Schedule 1
 - except for **exempted pesticides**, import or sale of food containing pesticide residues with **no specified MRLs/EMRLs in Schedule 1** is only allowed if the consumption of the food concerned is not dangerous or prejudicial to health

* MRLs: Maximum Residue Limits
EMRLs: Extraneous Maximum Residue Limits

Background

- ✿ Any person who imports, manufactures or sells any food not in compliance with the requirements of the Regulation concerning pesticide residues
 - ⊕ commits an offence
 - ⊕ is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for six months upon conviction

Background

- ✿ The formulation of Schedule 1 to the Regulation was based
 - ✿ primarily on the available standards recommended by Codex* in 2011
 - ✿ supplemented by standards of major food exporting places to Hong Kong (including Mainland, the United States and Thailand) available at that time
 - ✿ taking into consideration comments received from stakeholders during public consultations

* Codex: the Codex Alimentarius Commission

Background

- ✿ The Centre for Food Safety made reference to Codex's food classification system for consistency
 - ✿ the **1993** version of “Codex Classification of Foods and Animal Feeds” (CAC/MISC 4)
 - ✿ the revised classification for **fruits** adopted by Codex in **2012**
- ✿ This has the added benefit of adopting the uniform nomenclature used in international trade

Schedule 1 and 2 to the Regulation

- ☀ Schedule 1 specifies a list of MRLs and EMRLs for certain pesticide-food pairs, i.e. the maximum concentration of specified pesticide residues permitted in specific food commodities
- ☀ Schedule 2 specifies a list of exempted pesticides with no specified MRLs/EMRLs

Mechanism for handling proposal on adding/revising MRLs/EMRLs and exempted pesticides

- ✿ Members of the trade may submit proposals, **with sufficient supporting information** to Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene for consideration
 - ✿ to **propose revision to existing** MRLs/EMRLs
 - ✿ to **propose new** MRLs/EMRLs and exempted pesticides for inclusion in Schedule 1 and 2

End