Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation
(Cap. 132CM)

Draft Guidelines on
Food Classification

Technical Meeting
27 June 2013
Table of Content

- Preface
- Guide in using the food classification tables
- Food classification tables
Preface
Preface (1)

The Codex standards form the backbone of the local set of standards specified in Schedule 1 of the Regulation.

The Codex food classification system is also adopted in parallel.
This Guidelines is intended to facilitate the trade in identifying the appropriate pesticide residue limits that are relevant to the food commodities concerned.

- Only food commodities of local interest/relevance are included.
- Traders should refer to the original Codex classification for a complete Codex list of food commodities.
- The Guidelines has also incorporated food items of special local interest not found on the Codex list.
The Guidelines:

- For information only.
- Does not have the force of law and should not be interpreted in any manner which would override the provision of the Ordinance.
- Subject to periodic review by DFEH and may be amended or supplemented as necessary from time to time.
Guide in Using the Food Classification Tables
Codex Classification of Food

- intended primarily to ensure the use of uniform nomenclature; and
- also to classify foods into groups and/or sub-groups for the purpose of establishing group MRLs for commodities with similar characteristics and residue potential.
The Guidelines

Mainly focused on the classification of primary food commodities of plant origin

- fruits
- vegetables
- grasses
- nuts and seeds
- herbs and spices
Example 1: Blood orange
1. Look up the food item concerned, its food group/subgroup and its Codex code (if available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code no.</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FC 0001</td>
<td>Citrus fruits</td>
<td>(includes all commodities in this group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgroup C</td>
<td>Oranges, Sweet, Sour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Blood orange (see Orange, Sweet)</td>
<td>Cultivar of <em>Citrus sinensis</em> Osbeck</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blood orange belongs to the food group “Citrus fruits” and the subgroup “Oranges, Sweet, Sour”, with no Codex code.
2. Check if there is any further information provided for the food item concerned in the classification table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code no.</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FC 0001</td>
<td>Citrus fruits</td>
<td>(includes all commodities in this group)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subgroup C Oranges, Sweet, Sour**

- Blood orange (see Orange, Sweet)  
  Cultivar of *Citrus sinensis* Osbeck

- “See Orange, Sweet” in bracket is found following the common name of blood orange.  
  i.e., blood orange is also a kind of sweet orange
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

- **Step 1**: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the food item concerned, i.e., blood orange
  - If available, finished.
  - If not available, go to Step 1a.

- **Step 1a**: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the related food item (if available), i.e., “orange, sweet”
  - If available, finished.
  - If not available, go to Step 2.
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

Step 2: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food subgroup (if available), i.e., “Orange, Sweet, Sour”

- If available, finished.
- If not available, go to Step 3.
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

- **Step 3:** Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food group, i.e., “Citrus fruits”
  - If available, finished.
  - If not available, it means no MRL/EMRL has been specified for this food item, blood orange; go to Step 4.

- **Step 4:** Conduct risk assessment
As stipulated in Section 4 of the Regulation, except for exempted pesticides, import and sale of food containing pesticide residues with no MRLs/EMRLs specified in Schedule 1 is only allowed if consumption of the food concerned is not dangerous or prejudicial to health.

In deciding whether the consumption of the food concerned is dangerous or prejudicial to health, DFEH will conduct risk assessment.
4. Look up information on the specific portion of the food item to which the MRL/EMRL applies (i.e., the portion which will be subject to chemical analysis for pesticide residues)

Group 1: Citrus fruits (group letter code FC)

a. Portion of the commodity to which the MRL applies (and which is analysed): Whole commodity.

The MRL/EMRL will be applicable to the whole blood orange, and the whole blood orange (including peel) will be analysed for the pesticide residues concerned.
Example 2: French bean
1. Look up the food item concerned, its food group/subgroup and its Codex code (if available)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code no.</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP 0060</td>
<td>Legume vegetables</td>
<td>(includes all commodities in this group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgroup A</td>
<td>Beans, except broad bean and soya bean (young pods and succulent seeds)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP 4415</td>
<td>French bean (young pods and succulent seeds)</td>
<td>(see Common bean)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

French bean belongs to the food group “Legume vegetables” and the subgroup “Beans, except broad bean and soya bean (young pods and succulent seeds)”, with a Codex code VP 4415.
2. Check if there is any further information provided for the food item concerned in the classification table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code no.</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP 0060</td>
<td>Legume vegetables</td>
<td>(includes all commodities in this group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Subgroup A Beans, except broad bean and soya bean (young pods and succulent seeds)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP 4415</td>
<td>French bean (young pods and succulent seeds) (see Common bean)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“See Common bean” in bracket is found following the common name of French bean

i.e., French bean is also a kind of common bean.
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

**Step 1:** Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the food item concerned, i.e., French bean
- If available, finished.
- If not available, go to Step 1a.

**Step 1a:** Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the related food item (if available), i.e., “Common bean”
- If available, finished.
- If not available, go to Step 2.
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

- **Step 2**: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food subgroup (if available), i.e., “Beans, except broad bean and soya bean (young pods and succulent seeds)”
  - If available, finished.
  - If not available, go to Step 3.
3. Find the appropriate pesticide residue limits for the food item concerned

❖ **Step 3**: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food group, i.e., “Legume vegetables”
  ❖ If available, finished.
  ❖ If not available, it means no MRL/EMRL has been specified for this food item, blood orange; go to Step 4.

❖ **Step 4**: Conduct risk assessment
4. Look up information on the specific portion of the food item to which the MRL/EMRL applies (i.e., the portion which will be subject to chemical analysis for pesticide residues)

**Group 14 – Legume vegetables (group letter code VP)**

a. Portion of the commodity to which the MRL applies (and which is analysed): **Whole commodity, unless otherwise specified.**

The MRL/EMRL will be applicable to the whole French bean which will be analysed for the pesticide residues concerned.
Figure 1. A summary diagram of finding the appropriate pesticide residue limits for a specified food item using the food classification tables

Step 1: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the food commodity concerned

- Available → Finished
- Not available

Step 1a: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the related food commodity (if available)

- Available
- Not available

Step 2: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food subgroup (if available)

- Available
- Not available

Step 3: Search for MRL/EMRL specified for the relevant food group

- Available
- Not available, i.e., no MRL/EMRL specified

Step 4: Conduct risk assessment

- Finished
Food Classification Tables
Special notes to reader on food type “01 FRUITS”

- Melon-type fruits such as melon, watermelon, cantaloupe, etc., belong to “Fruiting vegetables – Cucurbits”.

- “Persimmon, Japanese” and “Persimmon, Chinese” are grouped under “pome fruits”; whereas “Persimmon, American” is grouped under “Assorted tropical and sub-tropical fruits – inedible peel”.

- Coconut belongs to “Tree nuts” whereas “Coconut, Young” is grouped under “Assorted tropical and sub-tropical fruits – inedible peel”.

- Goji berries and ground cherries belong to “Fruiting vegetables other than Cucurbits”.

Special notes to reader on food type “02 VEGETABLES”

- “Broccoli, Chinese”/“Kailan” belongs to the food group “Brassica (cole or cabbage) vegetables, Head cabbages, Flowerhead brassicas”.

- Melon-type fruits such as melon, watermelon, cantaloupe, etc., belong to “Fruiting vegetables – Cucurbits”.

- Goji berries and ground cherries belong to “Fruiting vegetables other than Cucurbits”.
Special notes to reader on food type “04 NUTS AND SEEDS”

- Coconut belongs to “Tree nuts” whereas “Coconut, Young” is grouped under “Assorted tropical and sub-tropical fruits – inedible peel”.

Way Forward

- The draft guidelines can be downloaded from the website of CFS:
- Please send your comments/suggestion on the draft guidelines are welcome before 31 July 2013
  - Email: ra_admin@fehd.gov.hk
  - Fax: (852) 2893 3547
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