

The Development of Guidance on Import MRLs and International Initiatives.

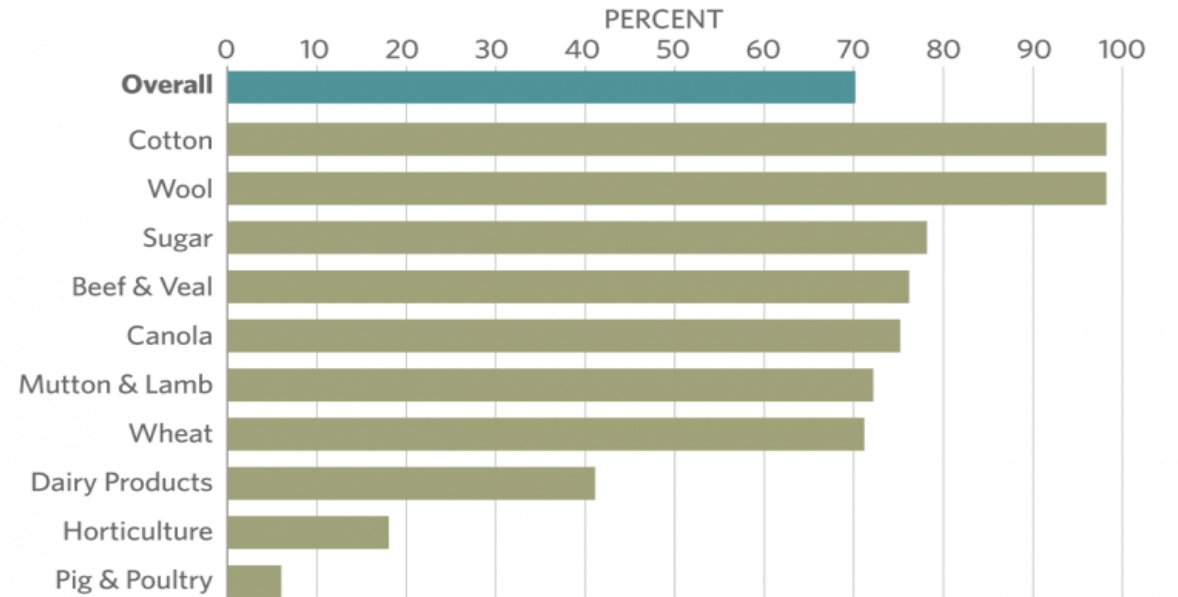
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Australia as a trading nation



Share of Australia's Agricultural Products Exported, 2014-2017

The country's small domestic market and vast territory make it an agricultural export powerhouse that exports 70 percent of its overall production.*



*2014-2015, 2016-2017 three-year average

Source: Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, ABARES

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- Australia is an active participant in the development of MRLs in the Codex Alimentarius
- Supports science and evidence- based system for setting MRLs
- Australia is an active participant of APEC Committees, including the Food Safety Cooperation Forum
- Consistent with our role as co-chair of the FSCF, Australia led work in APEC on Import MRLs for Pesticides



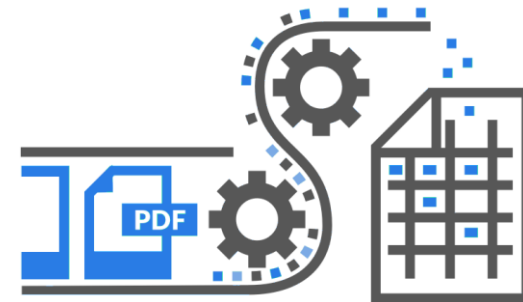
Harmonising Import MRLs

- APEC project led by Australia
- **Phase 1** (2014-2016). Development of an APEC Guideline on Import MRLs for Pesticides through workshops
- **Phase 2** (2017). Training through an expert workshop (Canberra, Feb 2017) & translation of Guideline into Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese.



Additional tools to support the Guideline

- **Phase 3** (2018-2019) of Australian led project
- Compendium of Government Administration in setting MRLs for pesticides
 - Is a snapshot of current particulars/elements of system.
 - Regulations
 - Competent authority
 - Codex / Third country recognition,
 - Formal process, Timeframes, etc.
- Common APEC MRL Application Template – [available online](#)
 - Guide to data requirements is not a formal application
 - Pesticide details
 - Residue definitions
 - HBGV
 - Commodity details, proposed MRL & source
 - Additional information, e.g. volume of imports, etc.
- Endorsement by APEC economies in Chile, May 2019



Principles underpinning Guideline

- Recognition of differing pesticide use among economies.
- Science-based - internationally accepted risk assessment methodologies.
- Minimisation of data requirements.
- Protection of public health and safety, while facilitating trade.
- Emphasis on use of Codex MRLs, including supporting JMPR monographs, where such MRLs exist.



Australia's use of the Import MRL Guideline

Implementation by Australia via an Annual 'harmonisation process'

- Annual call for requests to align with Codex MRLs and international trading partners' MRLs.
- Dietary Exposure Assessment undertaken using Australian food consumption data.
- Residue chemistry (eg. trials) data not normally required.
- Utilise JMPR monographs to identify HBGV, processing factors and residue concentrations to refine the dietary exposure as required.
- Import MRLs approved if certain 'tests' are satisfied. Also apply to domestically produced food at point of sale.
- Process usually takes 9 – 12 months, and is free of charge!
- From 2020, Codex MRLs adopted 2019 onwards routinely considered.
- In 2022, 838 chemical-commodity MRLs are being considered.



Other international initiatives

Australian-led AANZFTA project with members of ASEAN

Project title: “Technical capacity development to support ASEAN economy import MRL process and ASEAN MRL harmonization”

Aim: The projects aims to foster understanding and build capacity and the systems of its member states to further implement the *APEC Import MRL Guidelines for Pesticides*.

Phase 1 – GAP Analysis

Phase 2 – Capacity Building Workshop

Phase 3 – Pilot Application of the Guidelines



Other international initiatives (cont)

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Increase consumer confidence in the MRL setting process
- Achieve greater regulatory harmonisation of MRLs
- Reduce regulatory burden across the region to facilitate greater two-way trade



- The Australian-led MRL project is *complementary* to USDA project; strong synergies to support enhanced ASEAN capacity to establish import MRLs
- US project is focused on assisting ASEAN MRL working group to established collective import MRLs
- Australia's project is focused on working with *individual* ASEAN members states

Summary and Conclusions



- APEC has been active in the MRL space.
- Australia led project developed *Import MRL Guidelines for Pesticides*.
- Guideline focuses on science, ensuring safety, minimising data requirements & using Codex MRLs and supporting JMPR assessments.
- All countries are encouraged to use the *APEC Import MRL Guidelines for Pesticides* and the Application Template.
- Australia is leading a new project which aims to support ASEAN members in establishing import MRL systems based on the *Guidelines*.

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