

Leveraging Resources for Risk Assessments - The Brazilian Experience by Guilherme Antonio da Costa Junior

Coffee in Brazil has stood out economically and socially since the arrival of the first seedlings from French Guiana in the middle of the 18th century. The product acquired importance in the market due to its swift adjustment to the soil and climate and became one of the foremost export items.

Nowadays, Brazil leads globally in production and export. In 2013 Brazil produced 49.2 million 60 kg bags of Arabica coffee (71.2%) and Conilon (28.8%). Brazil exports 65 % of its production. In 2013 it exported 32 million 60 kg bags of green and processed coffee earning US\$ 5.3 billion. The main importers from Brazil are Germany, The United States, Italy, Belgium and Japan.

In 2009 Brazil requested Japan to increase the Import Tolerance of Flutriafol residue in coffee beans from 0.01 mg/Kg to 0.05 mg/Kg. The Japanese Government then informed the Brazilian authorities they detected Flutriafol residue in coffee beans at levels above 0.01 mg/kg. On this opportunity, the Japanese Government increased its inspection regime application up to 100% of Brazilian shipments due to the violation of 0.01 mg/Kg Flutriafol residue limit in coffee. Such measures have caused trade impact on companies and Brazilian producers.

Flutriafol is a triazole class contact and systemic fungicide used on a wide range of cereal crops and for treating seeds. Its fungicidal mechanism inhibits the ergosterol biosynthesis resulting in fungal cell wall synthesis disruption.

In 2009 and 2010, many studies related to Flutriafol toxicological and residues from the private sector were presented in this case history. In 2011 Brazil also requested Japan to consider the existing data produced by the European Union which amended Flutriafol MRL from 0.01 mg/kg to 0.05 mg/kg. In July 2012, the Codex Alimentarius Commission adopted an MRL of 0.15 mg/kg for Flutriafol in coffee beans. This decision was taken based on science-based risk assessment of the scientific advice from The Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR).

After many bilateral negotiations and considering the scientific advice provided by the private sector, the EU and JMPR, the Japanese Government reviewed its maximum residue level for Flutriafol in coffee beans to 0.2mg/Kg. It is therefore most important to praise the cooperative approach used by the Japanese Government on this issue.