



Pesticides in TTIP

Working together to make trade easier and help farmers grow more 'niche' crops

- Regulators from the EU, the US and other countries already discuss pesticides together.
- With TTIP we want to complement this work, to make EU-US trade easier and help farmers grow more 'niche' crops.

Reasons for discussing pesticides

Regulators from the EU, the US and other countries already discuss pesticides in international bodies, including:

- the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – which brings together 34 industrialised countries
- the United Nations (UN).

The OECD has a Pesticides Working Group. In it member countries work together to:

- share their findings
- harmonise their strategies and guidelines for testing pesticides.

At the UN, a body called the CODEX Alimentarius deals with international food standards. It sets global limits for pesticides, called Maximum Residue levels, or MRLs.

Both the EU and US play an active part in these and other groups.

And we want to continue doing so, and avoid duplicating the work these groups do.

For that reason we don't plan to include a specific chapter on pesticides in TTIP.

Instead, EU and US regulators would complement their work in these global bodies, by continuing to discuss specific issues between themselves.

Doing so could benefit consumers and companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

EU goals

1. Making trade easier

The EU wants to look at make it easier to export food and drink products, like olive oil, to the US.

One example of how we could do this is 'pre-export checks'.

We could agree with the US that whenever an EU company wanted to export a food or drink product to the US, EU regulators would check pesticide levels in the product *before* the company shipped it.

Then:

- EU regulators would tell their counterparts in the US if the product met US standards for pesticide levels
- if the product did meet US standards, the company could export in confidence – without the risk that US customs could block their product, which would cost the exporter a lot of money.

2. Promoting 'niche' crops

So-called 'niche' crops are ones like parsley, leeks, celery or lettuce, where at the moment the market isn't as big as for other crops like wheat or maize (corn).

We want to help farmers produce more of these niche crops. To do that they need to be able to use certain pesticides, at levels which studies have proved are safe.

In many cases no-one has yet carried out these studies. So there's no official safe limit, and farmers can't use the pesticides in question for these crops.

That's where TTIP could help. Regulators could agree to share information they've gathered from studies on niche crops which they've carried out already, or are planning.

Doing so would also mean they could:

- make better use of their limited resources, helping to protect consumers more effectively
- speed up approvals for using pesticides within strict limits, and without compromising on safety.

Sensitive or controversial issues

In this area some issues are sensitive or controversial. Here's a summary of the main ones, and what we're doing to address each.

Sensitivity/concern	EU response
---------------------	-------------

1. Health and the environment

TTIP could weaken the EU's regulations on pesticides and lower our strict health and environmental standards.	TTIP will fully respect the EU's existing regulatory standards on pesticides.
---	---

We will:

- keep the EU Plant Protections Products Regulation (1107/2009)
- uphold the levels of protection for people's health and the environment which the regulation sets.

2. Residues in food

TTIP could mean EU regulators allow higher pesticide residues in food sold in Europe.	TTIP will not lower the food safety standards for pesticides. And it won't allow products from the US onto the EU market that don't meet these standards.
---	---

3. Hormone-disrupting chemicals

TTIP could stop the EU from regulating hormone-disrupting substances.	TTIP will not stop the EU from regulating hormone-disrupting substances.
---	--

For products sold in the EU, this could allow residues of some pesticides which might otherwise be banned.

The EU will continue to do so in line with legislation which is already in force.
