



Definitions, abbreviations and acronyms

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Definitions

Australian Standard

The Australian Standard is the maximum residue limit (MRL)/extraneous residue limit (ERL) or maximum level (ML) (as applicable) stipulated in the Food Standards Australia New Zealand Code, Standard 1.4.1 (MLs) and Standard 1.4.2 (MRLs), up to Amendment 101, 14 August 2008.

Contaminants

Contaminants include substances not intentionally added to a product, but which may be present following routine production (see 'Maximum level'). For example, some metals and natural toxicants are contaminants. A food will contravene the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (ANZFS) if it contains a contaminant at a concentration greater than the maximum level (ML). However, where no ML is established, the detection of contaminant is not interpreted as a contravention. Australian MLs are listed in Section 1.4.1 of the ANZFS.

In this report, environmental contaminants are defined as undesirable metal residues that can be found in soil or water and can contaminate animals and plants.

Extraneous residue limit¹

An extraneous residue limit (ERL) is defined as the maximum permitted limit of a pesticide residue, arising from environmental sources other than the use of a pesticide directly or indirectly, in or on a food, agricultural commodity or animal feed. The concentration is expressed in mg/kg (milligrams per kilogram or parts per million) of the commodity. There are ERLs for selected commodities for several organochlorine pesticides no longer in use in Australian agriculture (e.g. DDT and dieldrin).

Limit of reporting

The limit of reporting (LOR) is the minimum concentration (mg/kg) of a residue used for reporting purposes. Results of analyses lower than the LOR are not included in this report. Typically the LOR set by NRS is 10–20% of the respective maximum residue limit (MRL), extraneous residue limit (ERL) or maximum level (ML).

Maximum level

A maximum level (ML) is defined as the maximum tolerable concentration of a contaminant (e.g. metal or natural toxicant) in or on a food, agricultural commodity or animal feed. The concentration is expressed in mg/kg (milligrams per kilogram or parts per million) of the commodity.

Maximum residue limit²

The maximum residue limit (MRL) is the maximum concentration of a residue that is legally permitted, or recognised as acceptable in, or on, a food, agricultural commodity or animal feed. It results from the officially authorised safe use of an agricultural or veterinary chemical. The concentration is expressed in mg/kg (milligrams per kilogram or parts per million) of the commodity. Australian MRLs are listed in Section 1.4.2 of the ANZFS.

¹ Based on the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

² Based on APVMA definition of the MRL

Residues

Residues include pesticides and veterinary drugs currently in use (see 'Maximum residue limit' [MRL]) or pesticides that are no longer registered for use (see 'Extraneous residue limit' [ERL]), but are known to persist in the environment (e.g. some organochlorine chemicals). Residues can also include derivatives of chemicals, conversion products, metabolites, reaction products and impurities considered to be of toxicological significance. Australian MRLs and ERLs are listed in Section 1.4.2 of the ANZFSC.

Detections of chemicals above the specified MRL or ERL contravene the ANZFSC. Also, if no MRL or ERL is listed for a chemical in the ANZFSC, there must be no detectable residue of the chemical in the product tested. Any detection at any level is deemed a contravention.

Residue action level

The residue action level is the concentration of a residue of an agricultural or veterinary chemical or contaminant in a food, agricultural commodity or animal feed above which a detection can result in action by the state or territory government regulatory authorities, including the initiation of a traceback investigation to the property where the residue-containing product originated.

Residue random monitoring projects

Projects designed to obtain a profile of the occurrence of a residue in a commodity, using a statistically defined sampling process.

Abbreviations and acronyms

the Act	<i>National Residue Survey Administration Act 1992 (Cwlth)</i>
agvet	agricultural and veterinary
AMRA	Australian Milk Residue Analysis
ANZFRMC	Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council
ANZFSC	Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
APVMA	Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority
AQIS	Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
AWB	Australian Wheat Board Limited
AWI	Australian Wool Innovation Limited
the Code	Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
Codex	Codex Alimentarius Commission
CCPR	Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
CCRVDF	Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
CCMAS	Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling
CSO	community service obligation
Cwlth	Australian Commonwealth
DDT	dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane or 1,1,1-trichloro-2,2-bis(p-chlorophenyl) ethane
DFSV	Dairy Food Safety Victoria
ERL	extraneous residue limit
EU	European Union
FSANZ	Food Standards Australia New Zealand
GCA	Grains Council of Australia
HCB	hexachlorobenzene
HCH	hexachlorocyclohexane (formerly benzene hexachloride–BHC)
HGP	hormonal growth promotant
IEA	industry equalisation account

ILAC	International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation
IWTO	International Wool Textile Organisation
LOR	limit of reporting
LPA	livestock production assurance
LPE	laboratory performance evaluation
LPE Committee	NRS Laboratory Performance Evaluation Committee
ML	maximum level
MRL	maximum residue limit
NARM	national antibacterial residue minimisation project
NATA	National Association of Testing Authorities
NORM	national organochlorine residue management project
NRS	National Residue Survey
NVD	National Vendor Declaration
OC	organochlorine
OP	organophosphate
PCB	polychlorinated biphenyl
PIAPH	Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health
PT	proficiency testing
RC-LPE	NRS Residue Chemistry and Laboratory Performance Evaluation team
SP	synthetic pyrethroid
START	sheep targeted antibacterial residue testing project
TART	targeted antibacterial residue testing project
US	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

