

OIA22-0713

26 October 2022

Christine Woods

fyi-request-20443-8425483e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Christine

Thank you for your email of 2 September 2022 requesting information relating to information on testing of food products for agricultural herbicides and pesticides. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

On 30 September 2022, the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) extended the time limit to respond to your request to 28 October 2022.

Your request has been broken into the following two parts that I have responded to below:

Part One

Can you please what food products are tested for agrichemicals?

Can you please advise what food products to have been found to have agrichemical residue?

What specific agrichemicals do MPI test for?

With reference to section 18(d) of the OIA, New Zealand Food Safety publishes food monitoring and surveillance reports on the MPI website. You can find this information at the following link <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/food-monitoring-surveillance/>.

The National Chemical Residues Programme (NCRP) tests animal material and animal products to demonstrate that residue and contaminant levels meet acceptable standards.

The results of NCRP tests are published annually at the following link:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/food-monitoring-surveillance/national-chemical-residues-programme/documents-for-national-chemical-residues-programme/>.

The National Chemical Contaminants Programme (NCCP) monitors milk and dairy products to confirm that residue or contaminant levels do not exceed acceptable limits for New Zealand and export markets. These results are published annually at the following link:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/dairy-products-processing-manufacture-testing-requirements/monitoring-testing-dairy-products/documents-for-nccp/>.

The Food Residues Survey Programme (FRSP) tests for chemical and microbiological contaminants in foods intended for sale in New Zealand. These results are published annually at the following link:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/food-monitoring-surveillance/food-residues-survey-programme/documents-for-food-residues-survey-programme/>.

The New Zealand Total Diet Study (NZTDS) is a nationwide survey of foods sold in New Zealand. The survey aims to assess New Zealanders' exposure to certain food safety risks. This study is published every five years, with the most current study for 2016 being published in May 2018. For further information on the NZTDS, please refer to the following link: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/food-monitoring-surveillance/new-zealand-total-diet-study/>.

Part Two

What studies have MPI carried out on impacts of agrichemicals?

What work is MPI carry out with Industry on the sustainability of these practices?

MPI has supported several studies on the impacts and sustainability of agricultural herbicides and pesticides. For studies supported through the Sustainable Farming Fund (2000-2019), you can find details through our MPI funding programme portal by entering your desired search terms. The portal is available at <https://mpiportal.secure.force.com/public/>.

Through the Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund, MPI is currently supporting industry to develop alternative practices to minimise the use of agricultural herbicides and pesticides:

- The *Smart and Sustainable* programme will develop innovative solutions to reduce spray and agrichemical use in New Zealand's apples and pears industry through new technologies, data, and information solutions
- The *Precision weeding with a Smart Waterjet Weeder, not chemicals or cultivation* project will introduce, test and adapt a new-to-New Zealand high-pressure Smart Waterjet Weeder to control weeds in vine or tree rows
- The *A Lighter Touch* programme brings the horticulture, wine, and arable sectors together to find ways to meet consumer demands for food produced through more sustainable pest management practices.

You can find more information about these projects on our Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures website in the *Current SFF Futures projects* section: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/sustainable-food-fibre-futures/current-sff-futures-projects/>.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Allan Kinsella
Director Assurance