



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture

National Residue Survey 2013–14

Apple & Pear



Apple & Pear

The program

The apple and pear program is a cooperative arrangement between NRS and Apple & Pear Australia Limited (APAL). It has been part of NRS random residue testing programs since 1998 and is currently funded by a 75 cent per tonne NRS levy on apple and pear production.

The program monitors the residue status of Australian pome fruit and provides assistance for growers to meet quality assurance and industry requirements.

Sampling

Samples are collected according to NRS protocols by either the quality assurance (QA) manager at the packing shed or by approved third-party samplers in wholesale markets and packing sheds.

Approved third-party samplers include officers from Commonwealth and state government departments of agriculture, private consultants and/or NRS officers. Each three-kilogram sample of apples or pears is selected at random from the produce of a specific grower.

The origin of the samples and the number of samples collected are proportional to the level of production in each state.

Chemical screen

The apple and pear program multi-residue screen is developed in consultation with APAL and industry, taking into account Australian registered chemicals, chemical residue profiles and market sensitivities that are important for international trade.

The chemical groups covered in the multi-residue screen include fungicides, insecticides, herbicides and the scald inhibitor (diphenylamine).



Results

During 2013–14, the residue testing results from the analysis of 314 apple and 110 pear samples collected from packing sheds and central markets showed compliance rates with APVMA Australian Standards of 98.1 per cent and 100 per cent, respectively.

Since 2000, 4 622 apple and 1 495 pear samples have been collected and analysed for agricultural chemical residues.

These results continue to demonstrate that Australian apple and pear producers use in-crop and post-harvest agricultural chemicals according to good agricultural practice, and assure customers of the excellent residue and contaminant status of Australian pome fruit.

Traceback

If a sample is found to contain a residue above the relevant Australian Standard, a traceback investigation is undertaken to establish the cause. The responsible state or territory agency then provides advice to the producer to prevent recurrence. In more serious circumstances regulatory action may also be taken.

Year	Apples		Pears	
	Samples	Compliance (%)	Samples	Compliance (%)
2000-01	220	97.7	112	100
2001-02	233	97.4	74	97.3
2002-03	231	100	77	100
2003-04	214	100	71	98.6
2004-05	221	99.5	71	100
2005-06	250	100	68	100
2006-07	455	98.0	91	98.9
2007-08	469	99.6	141	100
2008-09	471	100	136	100
2009-10	479	98.1	144	99.3
2010-11	420	100	150	98.7
2011-12	346	98.3	142	97.2
2012-13	299	100	108	98.2
2013-14	314	98.1	110	100

All traceback activities and findings are reported to NRS. Where appropriate, traceback information is also forwarded to participating industries and government authorities such as the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority for consideration during its chemical review processes. The feedback to participating industries is important in highlighting potential problems (such as inappropriate chemical use) and improving on-farm practices.

Laboratory performance

NRS contracts laboratories to analyse samples for residues of pesticides, veterinary medicines and environmental contaminants.

NRS has been accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) as a proficiency test provider since July 2005. The NRS proficiency testing system is recognised within the laboratory community as meeting

internationally accepted standards (ISO/IEC 17043:2010) to establish the technical competence of participating laboratories.

Laboratories are selected through the Australian Government tendering process on the basis of their proficiency, accreditation against international standards (ISO/IEC 17025:2005) and value for money.

Laboratories are proficiency tested by NRS to ensure the validity of analytical results.

Current laboratory contracts began on 1 July 2014 and will run to 30 June 2019.

International maximum residue limits

NRS maintains a database of international maximum residue limits for countries that are major export markets for Australian primary produce. The database can be accessed from the NRS website.

The National Residue Survey

The National Residue Survey (NRS) is part of an Australian Government and industry strategy to minimise chemical residues and environmental contaminants in Australian food products. In doing so, NRS programs support primary producers and commodity marketers by confirming Australia's status as a producer of 'clean' food and facilitating access to key domestic and export markets.

For those industries funding and, participating in, the NRS, national residue monitoring programs provide verification of good agricultural practice (GAP), help to identify potential residue problems, and indicate where follow-up action is needed. The NRS programs form part of a national pesticide and veterinary medicine residue management framework which covers assessment and registration of chemicals, maximum residue limit (MRL) setting, control-of-use regulation, verification of GAP and traceback/review.

All NRS programs are underpinned by an ISO 9001:2008 quality management system.

Participants in the NRS include:

- 31 animal products including meat, honey, eggs, wild-caught fish and aquaculture products
- 21 cereal grains, pulses and oilseeds
- Six horticultural products including pome fruit, macadamia, almond, citrus and onion.



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