



2016 Pesticide Data Program (PDP) Annual Summary What Consumers Should Know

What is the Pesticide Data Program (PDP) Annual Summary?

- Each year, USDA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) work together to identify foods to be tested for pesticide residues on a rotating basis.
- The PDP annual summary provides reliable data to help assure consumers that the food they feed themselves and their families is safe. This report shows that when pesticide residues are found on foods, they are nearly always at levels below the tolerances set by EPA.

What were the results in 2016?

- Again this year, the PDP results shows that the U.S. food supply is one of the safest in the world. The PDP testing methods detect the lowest possible levels of pesticide residues, including levels below the EPA established tolerances.
- In 2016, surveys were conducted on a variety of foods, including fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, eggs, and milk. The report includes data from over 10,000 samples collected in a variety of States and throughout the year ensuring the samples are representative of the entire United States.
- Over 99 percent of the samples tested had residues well below the EPA established tolerances. The results also showed more than 23 percent had no detectable pesticide residue.
- Samples with residues exceeding the EPA established tolerance were found in 0.46 percent (48 of 10,365) of the samples, and 2.6 percent (273 of 10,365) of the samples had residues with no established tolerance for the specific commodity tested. For eggs and milk, there were no residues found that exceeded the tolerance levels, nor were there any residues with no established tolerance.

Is the food I buy safe for my child?

- Yes, based on the PDP data and on EPA's assessment, the small amount of pesticides found in a few of the samples present no health risk. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has concluded that pesticide residues pose no risk of concern for infants and children.



What is a tolerance level?

- A tolerance is the maximum amount of a pesticide residue allowable on a raw agricultural commodity. If a pesticide is used on food crops, EPA sets a tolerance for the pesticide that can remain in or on foods. In setting the tolerance, EPA evaluates hazard and exposure data to assess risk to human health and the environment for requested uses. EPA is required to make a safety finding for the pesticide that accounts for exposure through various food items, water, and home environments. PDP data is a critical component of EPA's dietary assessments of pesticide exposure.
- EPA is required to periodically re-evaluate pesticide registrations and tolerances to ensure that the scientific data remain up to date. The PDP provides data for the periodic re-evaluation of tolerances.

What happens when samples have residues but no tolerance set by EPA?

- FDA considers samples that contain pesticide residues for which no tolerances have been established by EPA to be in violation of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. FDA uses this information to develop compliance activities, such as conducting targeted testing or implementing Import Alerts to flag future shipments for closer scrutiny.
- PDP informs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) if residues detected exceed the EPA established tolerance or have no EPA tolerance established. The PDP residue results are reported to FDA and EPA through monthly reports.
- With the 2016 data, FDA evaluated the PDP data and, in consultation with EPA, determined there was no immediate health risk. It is important to remember that the samples for which no tolerance was established had extremely low levels of residues and were found in 2.6 percent of samples.

Does PDP test water?

- PDP is currently testing bottled water. PDP tested raw and finished drinking water drawn from municipal systems from 2001 through 2013. Samples were collected from 29 States plus the District of Columbia. PDP also tested groundwater drawn from municipal systems, private residences, schools, and daycare facilities from 2007 through 2013. PDP's water surveys for raw/finished drinking water and groundwater were discontinued in 2013 due to funding constraints.

Why doesn't PDP test for some pesticides, such as glyphosate?

- Currently, FDA is testing corn, soybean, milk, and eggs for glyphosate residues. The FDA glyphosate residue testing will provide results to help determine if EPA needs additional data. When FDA results become available, USDA will consult with EPA to ensure we continue to provide quality data to meet EPA's data needs.