



FPC PRESS RELEASE

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FPC STATEMENT – PRC QUARTER 4 2008 REPORT

The independent Pesticide Residues Committee regularly publishes information about the produce marketed by the industry which confirms that it is consistently safe for consumers to enjoy. According to the latest report by the independent Pesticide Residues Committee (Quarter 4 2008) the vast majority of samples were found to have no residues at or above the MRL.

“The survey indicates a good performance from those supplying multiple retailers but it is a concern that a number of samples of specialty beans and yams purchased randomly from independent retailers were found to have residues above the MRL. This issue has arisen previously, and we urge those involved in the supply chain to proactively manage the situation by following our guidance,” commented Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium.

“There are stringent standards in place to ensure that the UK consumer can enjoy healthy good quality fresh produce including a rigorous testing and regulatory process for the use of pesticides. The Fresh Produce Consortium’s *Code of Practice for the Control of Pesticides* is widely recognised throughout the industry as a well established practical guide on managing pesticide use and residues. We believe that it is important for everyone within the fresh produce industry to ensure that they maintain high standards and follow good practice to reassure consumers that every care is taken by both UK and overseas growers.

“There is evidence of residues found on UK produce of pesticides which are not approved for use on those crops. We will await the findings of the Chemical Regulations Directorate,

which will investigate these cases thoroughly and take the necessary action against any use of non-approved pesticides.

“Fresh produce is recognised as an essential part of our diet, yet people in the UK are not eating enough fresh fruit and vegetables to maintain a healthy diet. Consumers must be able to have confidence that fresh produce is safe to eat and that they can enjoy the benefits of eating a wide variety of fruit and vegetables all year round, grown both in the UK and overseas,” added Nigel Jenney.

The presence of a residue does not mean that produce is not safe to eat. Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) are not safety limits but are based on good agricultural practice and are usually well below the levels that would be a concern for people’s health. The PRC has confirmed through its risk assessments that there is no risk to health from these exceedances.

Ends

Notes for editors:

1. The Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) is the UK’s fresh produce trade association and is based in Peterborough. The FPC has represented the fresh produce sector for many years and is recognized across the UK and EU as the voice of the industry.
2. Extensive membership covers the complete spectrum of industry businesses including growers, importers, wholesalers, retailers, distributors, processors, packers, food service companies and other allied organisations.
3. The PRC report can be found at: <http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/prc.asp?id=2536>
4. The FPC’s *Code of Practice for the Control of Pesticides* is available free to FPC members. It offers comprehensive guidance on managing pesticide use and residues in particular for produce marketing organisations, but also other businesses involved in the process, including suppliers and growers, as well as the residue testing laboratories. The guide includes practical advice, including a number of form templates.

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