

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013

Question: E13-140

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Carbendazim

Type of Question: Hansard Page 64, 6 June 2013

Senator: Xenophon

Question:

In relation to Food Standards Australia New Zealand's consideration of carbendazim MRLs following the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority's review of carbendazim:

- a) When was this proposal undertaken?
- b) Please provide some more details in respect of the proposal.

Answer:

- a) The proposal was publicly notified on 26 March 2012 and was open for public comment from 17 July–13 August 2012. The maximum residue limits (MRLs) were gazetted in the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code) in January 2013.
- b) Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) considered variations to carbendazim MRLs for certain foods proposed by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority in MRL Proposal M1008. In addition to the four week public comment period, specific consultation with the food processing industry was also undertaken.

An MRL for carbendazim residues in oranges of 0.2 mg/kg was subsequently included in the Code. The previous limit was 10 mg/kg.

The new MRL of 0.2 mg/kg was assessed by FSANZ and determined to protect public health and safety whilst ensuring that trade is not unduly restricted. FSANZ assessed exposure to carbendazim in the context of the Australian diet, taking into account residues that may occur in both locally produced foods and those imported from other countries where the use of agricultural chemicals may legitimately differ from those in Australia. Further information about the proposal is available on the FSANZ website at <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/proposals/Pages/proposalm1008maximum5465.aspx>