

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014-2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000430

OUTCOME: 1 – Population Health

Topic: Chemicals in Frozen Raspberries

Type of Question: Hansard Page 133, 2 June 2014

Senator: Xenophon, Nick

Question:

In relation to imported frozen raspberries:

- a) Has FSANZ conducted a risk assessment and if so, what was the result?
- b) What are the current permitted MRLs for berries, including raspberries?

Answer:

- a) Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) assessed the dietary exposure of the Australian population to a range of chemicals that may occur in frozen berries, including raspberries (red and black) most recently as part of its Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) Proposal M1009 in 2013. The results showed that potential exposures to the assessed chemicals were all below the relevant health-based guidance values. Details of the FSANZ dietary exposure assessment for berries are available at Attachment 1.
- b) Schedule 1 of Standard 1.4.2 in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code lists all agricultural and veterinary chemical limits for particular foods, expressed in mg/kg. This schedule is listed per chemical rather than per commodity. If an MRL is not listed in Schedule 1, there must be no detectable residues of that chemical in any food. Berries are listed under numerous chemicals either as individual berries (e.g. raspberries, blueberries) or as the group ‘berries and other small fruits’ (see Attachment 2 for the full MRL list). The full MRL list also includes MRLs considered as a part of previous FSANZ and APVMA processes.