



The Value of Countries Working Together to Regulate Pesticides and Food Safety

In the 21st century, food production and distribution are global. Pesticides are developed and marketed globally for use in controlling agricultural and other pests, and pesticide residues often remain in the food we eat. Scientific research and advances in risk assessment and management are also global. Decisions on pest control and pesticide management made in one country can have global repercussions. Increasingly, the agricultural labor force crosses national boundaries. Therefore, to achieve public health and environmental protection goals and fulfill our statutory and treaty mandates, our national pesticide program must actively engage with international partners.

Since 2001, U.S. agricultural trade has more than doubled, from \$91 billion to about \$195 billion. Food imports have increased from \$39 billion to \$80.5 billion. While this expanding international trade in food helps ensure a varied, abundant, and affordable food supply, it also underlines the critical importance of ensuring that foods that may contain pesticide residues meet high safety standards. Working with source countries is a critical component of our multifaceted safety scheme.

Many pesticide ingredients and pesticide products used in the United States are manufactured abroad. Since the 1960s, those pesticide imports have increased dramatically. It is in America's interest to help ensure those foreign products are safe and effective.

International regulatory, scientific, and risk communication work on pesticide issues advances public health and environmental protection in the United States and worldwide. It improves the effectiveness and efficiency of regulation, builds capacity that enhances sound management of pesticides, and encourages the development and deployment of effective pest control technologies in the United States and globally.

About Some of Our International Partners

OECD - The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, an intergovernmental organization consisting of 30 industrialized countries in Europe, North America, Asia, and the Pacific.

NAFTA TWG - The North American Free Trade Agreement Technical Working Group on Pesticides, a collaboration among the pesticide regulatory government agencies of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, initiated in 1997.

Codex Alimentarius - The joint food standards program of the World Health Organization and the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. Over 160 countries are members of Codex, and many other international organizations and consumer, environmental, and industry non-governmental groups participate as observers in Codex activities.

The Numbers

FOOD IMPORTS

\$80.5 Billion (2008 data)¹

The United States imports food from over **150 countries**¹

44 percent of fresh fruit is imported²

16 percent of fresh vegetables is imported (2003 -2005)²

55 percent of agricultural imports is from the European Union, Canada, and Mexico (FY 2008)³

FOOD EXPORTS

\$115 Billion¹

One-third of U.S.-harvested acreage is exported (wheat, corn, cotton, and soybeans), according to USDA estimates³

\$28 billion was forecasted in FY 2008 for total U.S. agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico, the first- and second-largest markets for U.S. agricultural exports³

PESTICIDE IMPORTS

\$2.2 billion in 2008⁴

PESTICIDE EXPORTS

\$2.5 billion in 2008⁴

PESTICIDE USE

5.0 billion pounds

Estimated world pesticide use (2000-2001)⁴

1.2 billion pounds

Estimated U.S. pesticide use (2000-2001)⁴

Three-quarters of pesticide use occurs in developed countries, mostly in North America, Western Europe, and Japan³

Data Sources:

¹<http://www.fas.usda.gov/ustrade/USTExFatus.asp?Q1>

²<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/fts/2007/08/Aug/fts32801/fts32801.pdf>

³<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FATUS/DATA/XMScy1935.xls>

⁴<http://www.epa.gov/oppbead1/pestsales/>

EPA's Regulation of Pesticides:

Pesticide products intended for market or use in the United States must be registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs. The composition and label content must be in compliance with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Pesticide product imports that are not registered with EPA or do not meet EPA requirements may be denied entry into the United States.

PESTICIDES AND FOOD

Food containing pesticide residues may be seized and destroyed if they contain residue levels that are not consistent with EPA's established tolerances. Under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), EPA sets maximum residue limits for pesticides in both domestic and imported food, to ensure the levels of pesticides in food are safe. These maximum residue limits are known as "tolerances" (called MRLs abroad).

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are responsible for enforcing EPA-established pesticide tolerances on domestic and imported food to ensure that any residues detected are within these tolerances.

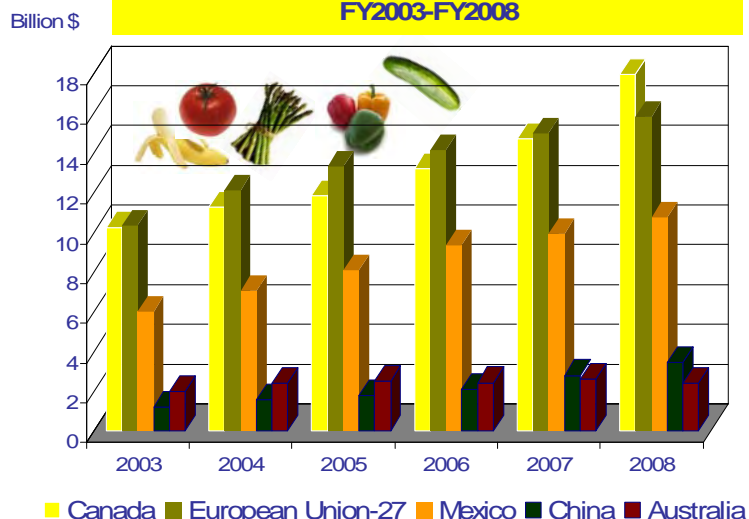
TOP 15 SOURCES OF U.S. FOOD IMPORTS

Canada
European Union (27 Countries)
Mexico
China
Australia
Brazil
Indonesia
Chile
New Zealand
Colombia
Thailand
Costa Rica
Argentina
India
Malaysia

OPP's international work is fundamental to helping OPP achieve key domestic program objectives:

- **Safer Food:** Reducing the possibility of illegal products (pesticides and foods containing excessive pesticide residues) entering the United States. Ensuring that food to be imported is protected at the source is fundamental to the web of activities necessary to promote a safe food supply.
- **Collaboration with Enforcement Agencies:** Improving compliance with U.S. food safety standards by collaborating with enforcement agencies. The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for enforcing EPA's pesticide residue requirements for most foods, and the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for enforcement for meat, poultry, and some egg products. This includes sampling and enforcement for imported foods at the borders, as well as domestically produced food. While preventing problems at the source is our goal, enforcement remains an important tool and deterrent.
- **Lower-risk Pesticides:** Promoting use of safer means of pest control in the United States through greater international harmonization. Without international collaboration, the health and environmental benefits of safer means of pest control will not be realized. U.S. agricultural producers/exporters will not use newer, often safer, pesticide products approved by EPA unless residue standards that reflect U.S. agricultural practices are in place for those products in key export markets.
- **Better Science:** Improving the scientific basis of decisions by utilizing a broader range of scientific expertise and sharing reviews of scientific studies submitted in support of pesticide registration. Better, more protective, and defensible regulatory decisions result. Quicker actions can be facilitated through the international exchange of ideas and priorities.
- **Control of Trans-Boundary Pollution:** Providing expertise on the assessment and management of pesticides that affect the global commons (e.g., most of the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) that are the focus of international attention are pesticides, as are most chemicals identified under the Rotterdam Convention relating to Prior Informed Consent/PIC for hazardous chemicals in trade).
- **Protection of Agricultural Workers:** Addressing the needs of a common agricultural labor force in the Americas through more effective training programs for worker protection, which also reduces the cost to employers of meeting their training obligations. Findings from the 2003-2004 National Agricultural Worker Survey (over 6,000 workers surveyed) show that:
 - 72 percent of the workers were born in Mexico.
 - The agricultural workforce has a high turnover rate, with foreign-born newcomers comprising 14 percent of the hired crop labor force.

TOP 5 SOURCES OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS FY2003-FY2008



The top fresh fruit and vegetable imports include bananas, pineapples, citrus, avocados, apples, grapes, melons, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, asparagus, and onions.