



8 March 2013

(13-1299)

Page: 1/1

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: Spanish

**MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMITS FOR CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL
PESTICIDES APPLIED TO SESAME**

COMMUNICATION FROM PARAGUAY

The following communication, dated 6 March 2013, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Paraguay.

-
1. Paraguay once again wishes to raise before the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures its trade concern regarding Japan's application of restrictive maximum residue limits (MRLs) to sesame, and the effects of those limits on trade. The delegation of Paraguay expressed its concern in this regard during the SPS Committee meeting held at the end of June 2011 (document G/SPS/GEN/1091).
 2. Imidacloprid and carbaryl are not included in the MRL table for sesame drawn up by the Japan Food Chemical Research Foundation. According to Japanese regulations and notification No. 497/2005 of the Ministry of Health of Japan, the uniform tolerance limit for pesticides that are not listed in the table is 0.01 ppm. However, MRLs for the same active ingredients are less restrictive for products such as grapefruit, groundnuts and broccoli than they are for sesame.
 3. MRLs for any product consumed by human beings should be set on the basis of scientific evidence, international regulations and acceptable daily intake levels and should be applied in the least restrictive manner possible to trade between countries. Setting "uniform limits" is therefore inconsistent with the principles of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.
 4. In recent years, shipments of sesame from sesame producing and exporting countries have been rejected following the detection of pesticide residues that exceed the maximum limits set, in the majority of cases, as "uniform limits".
 5. It is important to note that sesame production in these countries is of vital social and economic importance given that low-income rural families are involved in its production. The Japanese market is the main destination for their products.
 6. Paraguay, together with producers, exporters and the competent authorities, is taking steps to ensure the quality and safety of sesame by implementing technical regulations governing identity and quality, conducting risk mitigation programmes, introducing good agricultural practices and training for producers, and establishing a traceability system.
 7. In light of the above, Paraguay urges Japan to revise this measure so as to avoid interrupting the existing flow of trade, while ensuring that there is no increased health risk for Japanese consumers. We also ask the Government of Japan to consider the current international regulations for carbaryl and imidacloprid used on crops similar to sesame, and to include them in the food MRL table.
-