

OIA25-0278

21 May 2025

Genevieve Toop
genevieve.toop@greenpeace.org

Dear Genevieve

Thank you for your email of 17 April 2025 requesting information relating to the Food Residues Surveillance Programme (FRSP). Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested the following information which we will be addressing:

- 1) *Have glyphosate residues been tested through the FRSP since the 2015/16 survey report was published?*
- 2) *If glyphosate residues have been tested since the 2015/16 survey report was published, please provide documentation of the results, and if available a summary of compliance and non-compliance with the current glyphosate MRL of 0.1 mg/kg.*
- 3) *If glyphosate residues have not been tested since 2016, please provide the documentation where the decision to exclude it from testing by the FRSP was authorised and by whom it was authorised.*

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has not conducted any glyphosate residue testing as part of the Food Residues Survey Programme (FRSP) since publication of the 2015-2016 survey report.

This is because MPI does not routinely monitor for the presence of glyphosate residues in the FRSP. In the 2015-2016 programme, a targeted survey was undertaken to test peas and wheat for glyphosate residues. The results of this survey showed no food safety concerns. Because no food safety concerns were found, further testing wasn't necessary. Therefore, no decision was required to exclude glyphosate from future testing. Your request is therefore declined under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA - *that the information requested is not held by the department or venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department.*

MPI has been consulting on changes to the maximum residue limits for glyphosate in the New Zealand Food Notice. MPI continues to evaluate the risk of residues from herbicides, including glyphosate, and may consider including testing for future residue monitoring programmes, should the risk profile change. Details of glyphosate surveys are publicly available at: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety-home/safe-levels-of-chemicals-in-food/fertilisers-pesticides-hormones-and-medicines-in-food/glyphosate-in-food/>. This webpage also includes information on how MPI regulates, monitors, and controls the use of glyphosate.

4) *In the last five years, have any financial penalties or other enforcement actions, outside of educational letters, been taken by MPI against the domestic producers whose products had breached any of the MRL's for any of the agricultural compounds?*

On 28th April 2025, you further clarified question 4. In the last five years, have any financial penalties or other enforcement actions, outside of educational letters, been taken by MPI against the domestic producers whose products had breached any of the MRL's for any of the agricultural compounds tested by the FRSP, not solely glyphosate.

The annual reports from previous years surveys include results above maximum residue levels and a summary of New Zealand Food Safety's actions. These actions include providing education on the correct use of agricultural chemicals, for example, explaining the requirements for off-label use. This may be escalated to include an on-site visit, when there are repeated test results above maximum residue levels for the same grower from previous years' surveys.

Additionally, the Food Residue Survey Programme annual reports are publicly available on our website, <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/food-monitoring-surveillance/food-residues-survey-programme/documents-for-food-residues-survey-programme/>.

After reviewing our food compliance data, MPI can confirm that there have been no financial penalties or enforcement action required in the last five years. During this time, Food Compliance Services have sent letters to seven businesses regarding their level of compliance. Further information on MPI's enforcement approach can be found on our website <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-business/running-a-food-business/enforcement-food-act-2014/>.

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143 or at info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

Marion Castle
Acting Director, Assurance