

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Costa Rica

**Post:** San Jose

### Costa Rica will increase residue testing

**Report Categories:**

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Trade Policy Monitoring

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**Report Highlights:**

The Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) plans to gradually increase the number of pesticides tested for at their laboratory. The MAG tests for pesticide residues in fresh fruits, vegetables, and grains either locally produced or imported.

## **General Information:**

### **Costa Rica will increase testing for residues in fresh vegetables, fruits and grains.**

Costa Rica's regulation of Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) is established by Executive Decree 35301 MAG-MEIC-S, Technical Regulation on Pesticide MRLs 424-2008. The most relevant parts of the decree are translated below:

“5.1 Maximum Residue Limits to apply in first instance. Adopt as official the MRLs established by Codex Alimentarius, which will be applied as a first option.

5.2 Maximum Residue Limits to apply in a second instance: In those cases where there is no MRL established by Codex Alimentarius, the MRLs established by EPA or the European Union (EU) will be applied. When the MRL established by the EPA and the EU are different, the one with the higher nominal value will be adopted, everything according with article 5, points 1, 3 and 4 of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

5.5 Publication of the list of MRLs. The Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) through its Phytosanitary Service (SFE), will make available to the public the list of allowed MRLs through its website, which will be updated yearly, not precluding any specific updates at any time, published or approved by the reference entities (CODEX, EPA, EU) or those that have been authorized by the SFE according to points 5.1 and 5.2 above.”

The full text of the regulation (in Spanish) may be found using the following link:

[https://www.sfe.go.cr/quienes\\_somos/normativa/leyes%20y%20decretos/Decreto\\_35301.pdf](https://www.sfe.go.cr/quienes_somos/normativa/leyes%20y%20decretos/Decreto_35301.pdf)

The current MRL list can be found by selecting “Descargue los límites máximos de residuos adoptados por Costa Rica” using the following link: <https://www.sfe.go.cr/agroquimicos/lmr.html>

Also, the MAG conducts tests for residues in fresh vegetables, fruits, grains and semi-processed plant products consumed and sold in the country, either locally produced or imported. The MAG has been increasing investments in laboratory equipment. MAG's laboratory currently has validated testing procedures for 65 pesticides on both local and imported products. Starting in March, the MAG will increase that number to 136 products on local production, and starting in May it will test for the 136 molecules in both local and imported products.

The MAG has informed Post that it will gradually continue to increase the number of validated products, eventually reaching close to 400. Since the MAG started testing for a larger number of compounds, Post has noticed an increase in product rejections related to MRL violations. These rejections have occurred in different products such as nectarines, potatoes and rice. Exporters are advised to check the MRL list since some levels are based on Codex and EU limits, which are in some cases lower than U.S. approved levels. Exporters can check the list of validated compounds that MAG is testing for, using the link below and selecting “Análisis de Residuos de Agroquímicos”, followed by “Descargue la lista de pesticidas (analitos) validados” and selecting “vegetales” :

[https://www.sfe.go.cr/tramites/tramites\\_analisis\\_laboratorio.html](https://www.sfe.go.cr/tramites/tramites_analisis_laboratorio.html)

Also, if there are doubts regarding these regulations, exporters should contact their local representative or the local importer since the MAG notifies every registered importer of changes to the validated list of compounds when they occur.