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Caribou broccoli farm will have to destroy crops after illegal pesticide is detected

Maine Public | By [Caitlin Andrews](#)

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A large Aroostook County broccoli farm must destroy a large portion of its crop after an illegal pesticide was found by state regulators. The action against Emerald Valley Ranch in Caribou comes a few years after Maine and the U.S. banned the product for agricultural uses.

Chlorpyrifos is supposed to be phased out in Maine under a 2021 [state law](#). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [banned it](#) the same year. But state regulators say Emerald Valley admitted to using the product on its broccoli after it was detected in a July 14 shipment.

"The broccoli, believed to be refrigerated trucks at your farm and ready for shipment into commerce, is found to be unsound ... and therefore, it is declared to be a nuisance," the letter reads in part.

The farm will have to destroy the crop of broccoli and any others it used the pesticide on, according to a state communication issued Monday. Its crops will be subject to testing for the rest of the year.

The letter states that the Bureau of Pesticides Control is pursuing a separate investigation into the farm. Emerald Valley did not respond to requests for comment.

The pesticide has been linked to neurological development issues in children. Its use was supposed to be phased out completely in 2022.

Environment and Outdoors



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Reporter Caitlin Andrews came to Maine Public in 2023 after nearly eight years in print journalism. She hails from New Hampshire originally.

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