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EPA Takes Action to Address Risk from Chlorpyrifos and Protect Children's Health

EPA measures will stop the use of the pesticide chlorpyrifos on food

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Contact Information

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WASHINGTON - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it will stop the use of the pesticide chlorpyrifos on all food to better protect human health, particularly that of children and farmworkers.

In a final rule released today, EPA is revoking all "tolerances" for chlorpyrifos, which establish an amount of a pesticide that is allowed on food. In addition, the agency will issue a Notice of Intent to Cancel under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to cancel registered food uses of chlorpyrifos associated with the revoked tolerances.

"Today EPA is taking an overdue step to protect public health. Ending the use of chlorpyrifos on food will help to ensure children, farmworkers, and all people are protected from the potentially dangerous consequences of this pesticide," **said Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "After the delays and denials of the prior administration, EPA will follow the science and put health and safety first."

Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphate insecticide used for a large variety of agricultural uses, including soybeans, fruit and nut trees, broccoli, cauliflower, and other row crops, as well as non-food uses. It has been found to inhibit an enzyme, which leads to neurotoxicity, and has also been associated with potential neurological effects in children.

The steps the agency is announcing today respond to the [Ninth Circuit's order](#)[Exit EPA's website](#) directing EPA to issue a final rule in response to the 2007 petition filed by Pesticide Action Network North America and Natural Resources Defense Council. The petition requested that EPA revoke all chlorpyrifos tolerances, or the maximum allowed residue levels in food, because those tolerances were not safe, in part due to the potential for neurodevelopmental effects in children.

Under the previous Administration, EPA denied the petition in 2017 and denied the subsequent objections in 2019. These denials were challenged in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2019 by a coalition of farmworker, health, environmental, and other groups. In April 2021, the Court found that "...EPA had abdicated its statutory duty under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act..." to "conclude, to the statutorily required standard of reasonable certainty, that the present tolerances caused no harm." In its decision, the Court ordered EPA to grant the petition, issue a final rule in which the agency either modifies the chlorpyrifos tolerances with a supporting safety determination or revokes the tolerances, and modify or cancel food-use registrations of chlorpyrifos.

EPA has determined that the current aggregate exposures from use of chlorpyrifos do not meet the legally required safety standard that there is a reasonable certainty that no harm will result from such exposures. A number of other countries, including the European Union and Canada, and some states including California, Hawaii, New York, Maryland, and Oregon have taken similar action to restrict the use of this pesticide on food.

While farmers have historically relied on chlorpyrifos, its use has been in decline due to restrictions at the state level and reduced production. Additionally, some alternatives have been registered in recent years for most crops. There are also other chemistries and insect growth regulators available for certain target pests. EPA is committed to reviewing replacements and alternatives to chlorpyrifos.

The U.S. has a safe and abundant food supply, and children and others should continue to eat a variety of foods, as recommended by the federal government and nutritional experts. Washing and scrubbing fresh fruits and vegetables will help remove traces of bacteria, chemicals, and dirt from the surface. Very small amounts of pesticides that may remain in or on fruits, vegetables, grains, and other foods decrease considerably as crops are harvested, transported, exposed to light, washed, prepared, and cooked.

This action will also be incorporated into the ongoing registration review for chlorpyrifos. EPA is continuing to review the comments submitted on the chlorpyrifos [proposed interim decision](#)[Exit EPA's website](#), [draft revised human health risk assessment](#)[Exit EPA's website](#), and [draft ecological risk assessment](#)[Exit EPA's website](#). These documents are available in the chlorpyrifos registration review docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0850](#)[Exit EPA's website](#) at [www.regulations.gov](#)[Exit EPA's website](#).

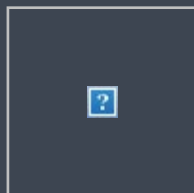
After considering public comments, the agency will proceed with registration review for the remaining non-food uses of chlorpyrifos by issuing the interim decision, which may consider additional measures to reduce

human health and ecological risks. More information on the registration review process is available [here](#).

[More information about chlorpyrifos and the final tolerance rule is available on EPA's website](#)

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