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European Union - Transitional periods for minimum residue in pesticides

Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay and the US considered that the 6-month transitional period given by the EU before its new maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides enter into force is insufficient to allow exporters to adapt, in particular exporters from developing, tropical countries.

The European Union said that the setting of minimum residue levels for pesticides is more suited for discussion at the committee on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, not the TBT committee. The EU nonetheless informed members that a transitional period of 6 months is normally granted when MRLs are lowered, so that third countries and food business operators can prepare themselves to meet the new requirements. The EU also noted that products that are on the market before the application date may remain on the market, if high-level consumer protection guarantees are provided.