Lidl GB Policy

Pesticides

Lidl Great Britain • Last updated 01.11.2024

Contents

The purpose, scope and goal of our policy

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to inform Lidl GB's growers, suppliers and other key stakeholders about our policy regarding the use of pesticides in the supply of our Fresh Produce. We also hope this document will demonstrate supply chain best practice to encourage positive change.

Scope

This policy covers all pesticides used on Fresh Produce supplied to Lidl GB, unless otherwise stated. Our suppliers and growers are to use this document in conjunction with other relevant policies (more information can be found here).

Goal

Supply into Lidl GB requires the responsible use of pesticides at all times. Suppliers are required to action the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Good Agricultural Practice (GAP).

We aim to phase out the use of Highly Hazardous Pesticides in our supply chains using the Strategic List of Active Substances. We strive to do this in collaboration with our supply chain, the wider industry and through engagement with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK).

The policy

Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) & Integrated Crop Management (ICM)

Lidl GB requires that all of its fresh produce is grown using the principles of GAP and that growers are certified to demonstrate compliance with these principles. Therefore, all growers supplying produce to Lidl GB must have their production certified as being compliant with a GAP standard such as Red Tractor https://redtractor.org.uk/ or GlobalG.A.P. IFA (Integrated Farm Assurance) standard https://www.globalgap.org/.

Additionally, all British fresh fruit and vegetables must be certified to either LEAF Marque or organic standards. LEAF Marque is an environmental scheme based on nine Integrated Farm Management (IFM) principles, which are developed and maintained by LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming).

Certain international produce are certified to GlobalG.A.P. SPRING and GlobalG.A.P BioDiversity add-ons or equivalent. Both GlobalG.A.P add-ons look to strengthen existing standards and help our supply chain demonstrate their commitments towards more responsible water stewardship and biodiversity management. For more information, please see our Purchasing Policy for Water here.

GlobalG.A.P. SPRING covers a wide range of topics such as water use and extraction rates, legal compliance and protection of water sources, and watershed management.

GlobalG.A.P BioDiversity covers aspects such as soil management, land restoration measures, and integrated pest management. The add-on monitors, enhances, and protects key on-farm biodiversity aspects, raising awareness and providing guidance on the development of a comprehensive biodiversity action plan.

Equivalent standards and schemes will be considered by our CSR and quality teams on a case-by-case basis; these must align to the policies and procedures of our international business.

ICM is a system of crop production which conserves and enhances natural resources while producing food on an economically viable and sustainable foundation. It is based on a good understanding of the interactions

between biology, environment, and land management systems. Lidl GB supports the use of ICM and its principles throughout its supply chain. Lidl GB also offers a range of organically certified products; these products must be certified by an accredited UK organic certifier.

Further to this, in terms of ethical certification, Lidl requires growers to adhere to accredited social practices on the farm - specifically the GLOBALG.A.P. Risk Assessment on Social Practice (GRASP) as a minimum ethical requirement. GRASP is a voluntary module developed to address specific aspects of workers' health, safety and welfare and help producers establish good social management system on their farms.

Growers will not be required to have GRASP if they can demonstrate that they already have one of the following in place:

- Rainforest Alliance certification
- Fairtrade certification
- SMETA

This is not an exhaustive list, so please refer to our Fruit and Veg Responsible Sourcing Policy and Sustainability policy page for more information.

Our Customers

Lidl GB is committed to taking a proactive approach with our customers to inform and drive change in pesticide use. This includes proactively promoting our commitment to LEAF Marque in all of our fresh British supply and taking a more flexible approach to fruit and veg specifications.

The LEAF Marque certification ensures and encourages farmers to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) when planning pest control strategies. IPM emphasize the use of biological controls and other non-chemical methods to manage pests. Farmers are also required to regularly monitor pest levels and only use chemical pesticides when absolutely necessary. This helps to minimize the environmental impact and ensures that pesticides are used responsibly. Additionally, LEAF Marque provides training and resources to farmers to ensure they are knowledgeable about the latest sustainable farming practices, including the safe and effective use of pesticides. Part of the LEAF Marque audit process includes checking that the above practices are being followed as well as ensuring that pesticide use is in line with the guidelines and that records are kept of all pesticide applications.

Lidl GB works in a collaborative nature with its fresh produce suppliers and is constantly reviewing our range of fresh produce, to source seasonal products that are grown locally in Britian. This ensures that our fruit and veg is more affordable and better for the planet.

Customer Engagement

As a business, we are committed to communicating with customers to drive better understanding and a change in attitudes to enable a reduction in pesticide use. We will also try to encourage acceptance among our customers that they may occasionally find a ‘bug’ (either a pest or a beneficial) in fresh produce they buy.

We have signed the NFU fruit and veg pledge and encourage the supply of UK fresh produce when it is available, even when supply is tight, or imports are available. Examples of this can be seen in the following pages:

- Lidl GB Backing British Farming
- Lidl GB ‘Helping farmers through the harvest’ media announcement

Customer Products

Lidl GB was the first discount retailer in the UK to ban high-risk chemical gardening products including weedkillers, off our shelves in a move aimed at protecting wildlife and boosting nature. Instead, we offer our customers a range of products based on less harmful ingredients such as acetic acid.

Legislation

Following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, suppliers must ensure that they have an understanding of the current relevant EU/UK legislation. Pesticide use on crops grown in the United Kingdom must comply with the latest regulatory approvals listed in the Pesticides Register database for on-label approvals or the Extension of Authorisation for minor use database for off-label approvals.

Residue Monitoring

Lidl conducts a detailed risk-based pesticide monitoring programme covering all fresh produce and food items which meet Lidl testing sampling criteria. Within this monitoring programme, compliance is checked against not only legal requirements but our stringent Lidl Policies and Strategic List of Active Substances: https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/sustainability/fruit-veg/pesticide-reduction.

All analysis is conducted by accredited ISO 17025 laboratories, and then reviewed by our Quality Assurance Team.

Key Terms

- MRL – Maximum Residue Limit – "*A maximum residue level (MRL) is the highest level of a pesticide residue that is legally tolerated in or on food or feed when pesticides are applied correctly (Good Agricultural Practice).*" [1]
- ARFD – Acute Reference Dose –"*an estimate of a substance in food or drinking water, expressed on body weight basis, that can be ingested over a short period of time, usually during one meal or one day, without appreciable health risk to the consumer on the basis of all known facts at the time of evaluation.*"[2]

Lidl Pesticide Specification

In addition to following legal and safety limits, Lidl goes even further and imposes "Lidl Specification Values" for fresh produce (fruit and vegetables) which are among the strictest in the food industry and form the basis of Lidl's 'Early Warning Prevention System' with its global suppliers as outlined below:

- The detected level of each active substance must not exceed 1/3 of the maximum residue level (MRL) set for that active substance.
- The sum of the MRLs of all detected active substances must not exceed 80%.
- The number of active substance residues must not exceed five (5).
- The max percentage of the "acute reference dose" (ARfD) for each active substance must not exceed 100%.

- The requirements of the Strategic List of Active Substances must be complied with.

In the event non-conformance is identified with any of these criteria, as a result of our risk-based sampling process, appropriate measures are implemented. This can include an in-depth root cause analysis through the supply chain, down to grower level. This is to ensure that the non-conformance can be understood and mitigation methods can be implemented where required to prevent recurrence.

Regular trending and analysis of non-conforming results are conducted with repeated exceedances of high residue levels result in more in-depth investigations. Further measures such as blocking of goods or specific supply chains can also be implemented depending on the type and level of non-conformance. This is to ensure robust corrective actions can be implemented within the supply chain where appropriate.

References

1) https://food.ec.europa.eu/plants/pesticides/maximum-residue-levels_en

2) https://food.ec.europa.eu/document/download/158b4c88-4f0a-4c00-844c-1c12daaed2f2_en?filename=pesticides_ppp_app-proc_guide_tox_acute-ref-dose.pdf

Lidl's Pesticide Control Policy

Our aim as a retailer is to market safe, legal and compliant high quality fresh produce. To further support this aim we have implemented an additional pesticide residue requirement in our Fruit and Vegetable Specification, the Strategic List of Active Substances. The Strategic List of Active Substances details substances which must be avoided at all stages of production when growing Lidl products.

The purpose of this list is to identify and ultimately exclude undesirable active substances and contaminants from being used as part of agricultural production within Lidl's supply chain. The list was created by our expert technical committee consisting of representatives from agricultural production, cultivation consulting, quality assurance and laboratories and is formed on the basis of current research and practical experience.

In particular, the Lidl Strategic List of Substances was developed taking into account several different parameters that influence consumer and environmental protection and species conservation:

- Important aspects which have been evaluated include the persistence in the environment and the impact on biodiversity. The list includes all the substances from the WHO list 1a/1b and Rotterdam/Stockholm Convention; one of the main aims of the list is to phase out majority of highly hazardous pesticides and pesticides harming pollinators, such as neonicotinoids.
- The risk parameters for environmental protection also considered the degradation and environmental behaviors of active ingredients as evaluated by the expert committee. Species protection focused specifically on the protection of bees, which are regarded by Lidl as critically important pollinators within agricultural production. Lidl therefore considered the impacts of crop protection products on biodiversity.
- Consumer protection risk parameters were also considered, including the "Acute Reference Dose" (ARfD), the "Acceptable Daily Intake" (ADI) and the "CMR classes" (i.e. carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic to reproduction) of active ingredients.

Lidl GB conducts on average over 2,500 residue tests per year, with nearly 70,000 tests conducted across the wider group. These results inform the approach of the expert technical committee and provide Lidl with a unique and up-to-date overview of the global residue outlook in the production of fresh produce.

Using the risk parameters described above, Lidl's "Strategic Substance List" prioritises substances for removal in fresh produce. In collaboration with suppliers Lidl is working hard to move towards alternative active substances in its fresh produce supply chains. Implementation periods are agreed with suppliers to allow time to adapt to the new substances and find alternative approaches.

The "Strategic Substances List" is under constant review by the expert technical committee and updated as necessary in line with technical and legislative developments. We also encourage feedback from our suppliers to ensure they are part of the process.

We encourage all our suppliers to keep working closely with all their producers, packers, brokers to reduce the use of pesticides where applicable.

Derogations

In the event a supplier is unable to meet our stringent requirements, a derogation request may be submitted. These requests are reviewed by our trained Quality Assurance Team, in collaboration with our Buyers and CSR team to ensure a holistic view of the derogation can be taken.

In every instance we require our suppliers to provide detail of the exact supply chain the derogation is relevant for as well as details as to why no alternative options are available. Each case is assessed on its own merit, with an overall outcome communicated to the supplier prior to produce being supplied to Lidl.

Transparency

Lidl GB will publish and review this policy and our prohibited and restricted list periodically, to ensure that these are up to date and for transparency. We will continue to share learnings, review best practice, and engage with our supply chain and NGOs.

Lidl is committed to being transparent with customers and suppliers, so we publish our pesticide policy and Strategic List of Active Substances (https://corporate.lidl.co.uk/sustainability/fruit-veg/pesticide-reduction).

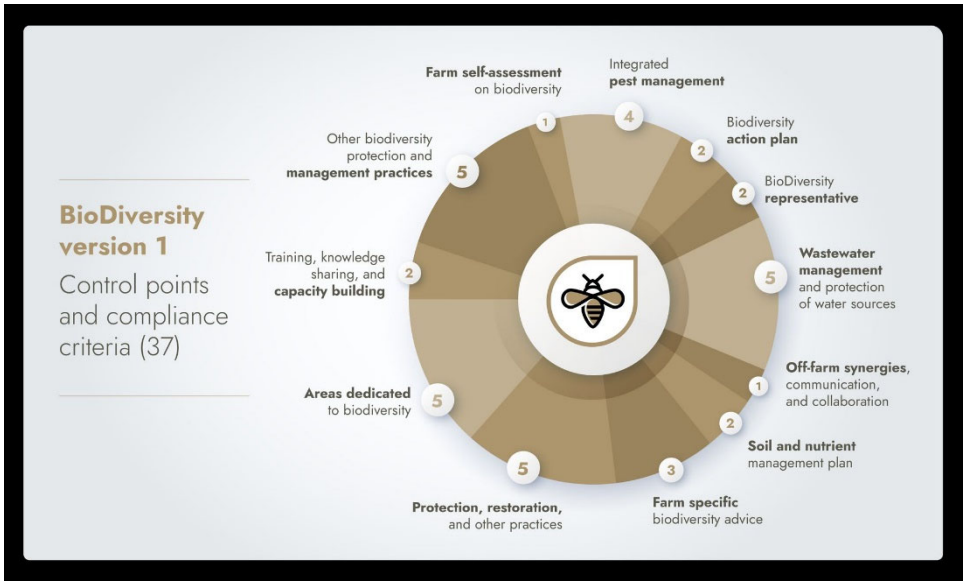
These documents are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect the dynamic nature of the food industry.
Our pesticide testing data is regularly reviewed to ensure that learnings can be addressed, and improvements can be implemented within our supply chains, in collaboration with our suppliers.

Organic

We offer a range of Organic produce to our customers, certified to recognised independent national and international Organic standards. These products must be certified by an accredited UK organic certifier.

Pollinators

Our Lidl international business has worked directly with GlobalG.A.P, NGO's and key Fruit and Veg supply chain partners to develop a brand-new module focussed on improving biodiversity. This new BioDiversity module uses a set of science-based requirements which help producers demonstrate their on-farm biodiversity management practices through the below control points:



Further, to protect and enhance biodiversity and pollinators, we work closely with our suppliers. Asplins for example, one of our soft fruit suppliers implements a number of actions to support pollinators under 8.2 of the LEAF Marque certification (v16.1) scheme such as:

- Introducing nectar flower mixes in blocks or strips around the farm.
- Introducing flower rich margins and plots in and around field edges.
- Establishing grassy field corners to provide shelter for pollinators over winter.

One of our top fruit suppliers AC Hulme is implementing the following actions to support pollinators and encourage biodiversity:

- Introducing and encouraging natural predator populations such as earwigs (through introduction of Wignests), anthocorids, ladybirds, parasitic wasps, lacewings and hoverflies.
- Establishing flower-rich margins, alleyways and plots to buffer hedgerows, ditches and existing

wildflower-rich grasslands and woodland, and provide a transition from farmed land to natural habitat.

- Increased use of biopesticides: e.g. Sentinel, Flipper, SB Invigorator, Wetcit, Magnesium Sulphate, Surround – natural products that physically deter and suppress pest populations reducing the requirement for insecticide use and making the pest more accessible for natural predators.
- Exploring novel e-weeder technologies to reduce herbicide usage in perennial crops.

The above represents just a sample of what we are doing as a business. For more information, please see our sustainability reports and website here.

Case studies

Pear Sucker (AC Hulme):

Issue:

- Pear sucker is a devasting pest of pear production; broad spectrum crop protection products are harmful to naturally occurring pear sucker predators and the pest cannot be controlled without them.

Approach:

- Create the environment to allow a natural orchard balance of predators vs pests.

Actions:

- Establish predator populations – develop earwig hotels using bamboo canes and introduce 'farmed' anthocorids to support natural populations (both identified species in AC Hulme LANCEP plan).
- Ensure we have a network of hedgerows and complex windbreaks, especially including willow which are also rich harbours for other pear sucker predators such as ladybirds and spiders.
- Leave alleyways unmown during the growing season to provide 'insect motorways' and to allow nettle growth as alternative host for natural predators.
- No insecticide interventions unless they are the only option.

Results:

- More consistent cropping patterns where we are able to control pear sucker.
- Reduced number of insecticide applications – we do not use broad spectrum products (such as Agrimec, Hallmark and Insegar) in pear growing anymore.
- More balanced orchard predator vs pest ratio.

SWD (Drosophila Suzukii) in Cherries (AC Hulme):

Issue:

- ACH is a later producing site due to the use of different translucency of plastic to delay some crop. The advantage is that this means we do not produce in the peak of UK cherry production but this does create higher risk of crop failure due to Spotted Wing Drosophila (experienced in 2014).

Approach:

- Work with industry experts (AHDB, SWD Steering Group including NIAB East Malling Research) to agree best approach and controls to mitigate risk
- https://horticulture.ahdb.org.uk/news/stopping-spotted-wing-drosophila

Actions:

- Determine optimum size of net/mesh around the sides of plastic tunnels to stop SWD entering the crop.
- Establish a strict hygiene regime to ensure all fruit is removed from the orchard during harvest, to ensure that are minimal opportunities for SWD populations to increase.
- Reducing over-winter populations of SWD through precision monitoring.
- Working closely with AHDB with regards to timings, application and intervals for control products.

Results:

- Minimised incidents of SWD catches in the crop.
- Consolidated position as a later UK cherry producer.
- Industry factsheet to manage orchard hygiene.