

CALIFORNIA CITRUS QUALITY COUNCIL

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JAPAN COUNTRY ALERT

TO ALL CALIFORNIA CITRUS PACKINGHOUSES AND INTERESTED PARTIES

This week we learned of a second report of a pesticide residue violation for California citrus for the herbicide Prowl (pendimethalin). This pesticide recently has a new label that will allow harvest after only one day after treatment. Pendimethalin has a tolerance of 0.1 ppm on citrus in the U.S. and a lower MRL (equivalent to the US term tolerance) of 0.05 ppm in Japan. The two California citrus violations have raised a high level of concern at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo as they anticipate the reactions by the Japan Ministry of Health and Welfare. A coalition of U.S. commodity groups has been working with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service on the penalty system in Japan for pesticide violations and the negotiations between U.S. and Japan officials have reached a critical stage. We are concerned that these two violations will result in more restrictive measures for our shippers in general or for the two houses involved thus far. One possible outcome of multiple violations is a stated policy by Japan to hold and test **100% of that commodity for an indefinite period** at the expense of the exporter.

We strongly recommend that all citrus shippers to Japan examine the spray records of every lot of fruit before shipment to Japan. If the block has been sprayed with Prowl you should **test every lot of citrus for pendimethalin before shipment. If there are detectable levels of pendimethalin reported by the testing laboratory, that lot of fruit should not be sent to Japan.** We will contact the registrant of Prowl to have more information to share with you before our next alert on this issue. We will also gather information on the testing laboratories in California that are approved by the Japanese government and their schedules and will share it with the industry.

Our alert to you needs your immediate attention. If you have lots of fruit for which you cannot determine whether Prowl has been used or not, we recommend that you error on the side of caution and refrain from shipping those lots. Your house and the industry need to avoid additional violations in order to maintain this very important market without very severe restrictions.

Let us know if you have specific questions on your scheduled shipments. Additional information will be shared with you on this issue very shortly.

Sincerely,

Wally Ewart