

# Get to Know the Food Quality Protection Act

In 1996, the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) amended the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), strengthening EPA's pesticide regulation process. **FQPA modernized the health-based safety standard for pesticides.**

## 1 FQPA provides more stringent parameters around use of pesticides on food crops.

Considers total or "aggregate" exposure to a pesticide from multiple sources (food, drinking water, residential uses, and other non-occupational sources) when assessing pesticide tolerances.

EPA sets tolerances, the maximum amount of a pesticide residue allowed to remain in or on a food, as part of the regulation process.

Considers cumulative effects of different pesticides that share a common mechanism of toxicity.

Provides incentives for pesticide registrants to develop reduced risk pesticides.

FQPA required EPA to develop methodologies to perform more refined pesticide risk assessments to better reflect real-world circumstances.

## 2 FQPA provides enhanced protection for infants and children.

Considers the potential for higher susceptibility of children to pesticides by applying an additional tenfold (10X) safety factor when setting and reassessing tolerances for foods that children eat, unless reliable data supports a different factor. This considers potential pre- and post-natal toxicity of the pesticide residues and completeness of the data with respect to exposure and toxicity to infants and children.

**What is a 10X Safety Factor?**  
So how exactly does the 10X safety factor work? Think of it as an extra layer of protection. For example, think about a toddler riding in a car. A seatbelt would not provide the appropriate amount of protection. Add a car seat - this is an example of increasing the safety factor many times over (10X). Add an alarm to alert the driver to anything left in the backseat, which protects the child from possibly being left in the car, which is another 10X. This example results in two 10X safety factors. Prior to the passage of FQPA, pesticide risk assessments generally had two 10X safety factors added. FQPA added a third 10X safety factor to provide even greater protection of infants and children.

## 3 FQPA requires that pesticides are reviewed regularly.

Federal regulators must review each pesticide approved for use in the U.S. a minimum every 15 years. Each registered pesticide is also subject to continuous review whenever new scientific data becomes available.

Any newly discovered or unexpected risks (revealed by new research, incident reports, etc.) attributed to a pesticide must be reported promptly to EPA by the registrant (if they are known to the registrant).

Accelerated the reassessment of all pesticide tolerances in effect at the time FQPA was enacted.

Using these newly developed methodologies, EPA completed the reassessment of the **9,721 pesticide tolerances** in effect in 1996 during the 10 years after FQPA was enacted. In the process, EPA revoked or modified almost **4,000 tolerances**.

