

Berries Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) App now available

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A new mobile phone app designed to help growers manage chemical application and facilitate trade has been released by Berries Australia.

The Berries Australia MRL App provides information on maximum residue limits (MRLs) and withholding periods (WHPs) for both domestic and export markets. The easy-to-use interface provides users with access to real-time pre- and post-harvest chemical application data based on domestic and export market, target pest or disease and/or active constituents. And with its offline capability, the app can be used anywhere and anytime.

The MRLs app has been developed in partnership with the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) and the Australian Table Grape Association (ATGA) with funding support from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to help industry members comply with MRLs in export markets. Changes in MRL and WHP recommendations will be updated as new information becomes available to ensure that the data provided is kept up to date.

What are MRLs and WHPs and why are they important?

A Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) is the maximum level of pesticide residue that can legally remain on a food product.

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) sets MRLs for agvet chemicals in agricultural produce, particularly products entering the food chain. These MRLs are set at levels that are not likely to be exceeded if the chemicals are used in accordance with the approved label directions (including the withholding period).

The role of MRLs is to ensure food safety and to protect consumers from exposure to harmful pesticide residues.

At the time MRLs are set, the APVMA undertakes a dietary exposure evaluation to ensure the levels do not pose an undue hazard to human health.

The withholding period (WHP) is the minimum period that must elapse between the last administration or application of a pesticide and the harvesting of the fruit for human consumption. The objective of a WHP is to provide users with the information they need to ensure that residues in their treated produce will not exceed the MRL. WHPs are mandatory for domestic sale and are on the label of every registered product.

Compliance with MRL levels is mandatory for all growers to avoid legal consequences and maintain market access. Ensuring that a product is safe and free from harmful residues is also vital to safeguard the reputation of the industry and improve consumer trust. Breaches of MRL levels can seriously jeopardise trade and existing market access.

Why do we need an App for MRLs in export markets?

MRLs in export markets may differ from Australia.

If the MRL in an export market is higher than the Australian MRL, then exporters do not need to change their practices to be compliant with that market's regulations. If the MRL is lower than the Australian MRL, then exporters must modify how they manage their production in blocks destined for export. In some circumstances, the MRL may be so low that it is not possible to use particular chemicals and growers need to be mindful of this in advance of committing fruit to export markets.

Berries Australia has developed the MRL app to help growers check if an export market MRL is higher or lower than Australia. The MRL app compiles information published by a wide range of countries and is the best available data at a point in time. Exporters are

encouraged to speak to their importer for confirmation as they should be able to clarify any particulars relating to a specific product. Breaching another country's MRL levels represents a serious export non-compliance. If detected upon arrival, the consequence may be the rejection of the consignment (at the exporters cost) or possibly broader, commodity-wide ramifications such as closure of market access.

Important points to consider

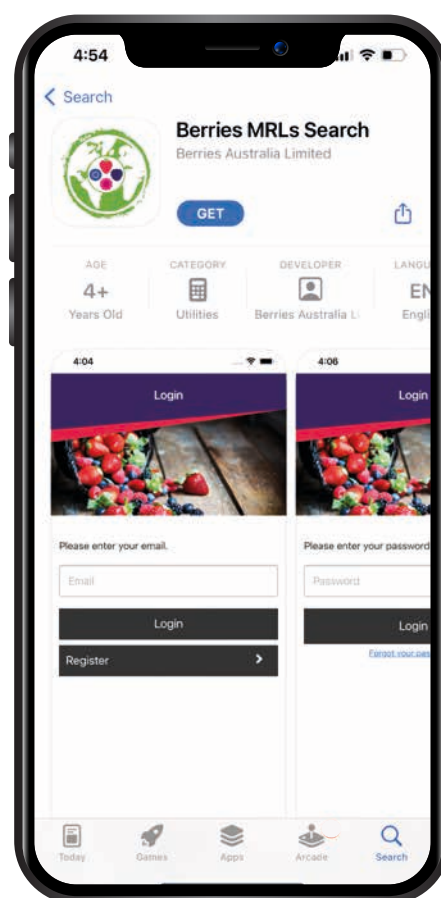
The WHP recommendations are determined by the export market maximum residue limit (MRL) and are based on the residue results of trials conducted in Australia and overseas.

As these results may not reflect the residue levels in all growing conditions and varieties, it is advised that berry growers test their produce for agrochemical residues to confirm that export market MRL levels are being met.

- WHPs may vary if chemicals are applied in a protected cropping environment.
- The growth-stage can be variable across a plot or block. When assessing for the purpose of applying agrochemicals, base the assessment on the most advanced crops in the plot or block to minimise the possibility of residues at harvest.
- When spraying, ensure that the amount of chemical applied never exceeds the rate specified on the manufacturer's label (unless otherwise specified).
- Always read the label on the chemical container. The products mentioned in the App might not necessarily be registered for use in your state.
- Keep detailed records of agrochemical applications and when spray equipment is calibrated.
- Should residue testing results not conform with the information provided in the App, contact Berries Australia.

We encourage all growers to download the App for use, whether supplying domestically or for export.

Not only can it help to protect the integrity of your own business, but compliance will help our industry to grow into international markets whilst ensuring the safety of our produce and building the trust of consumers.



The Berries MRL app is restricted for download in Australian app stores and users must have a login account to use the app.

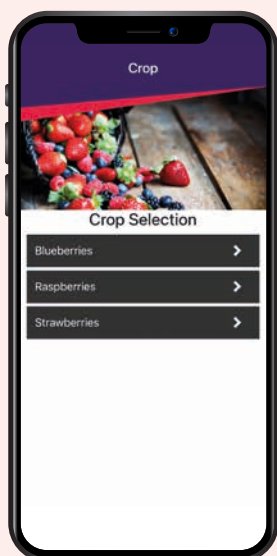
User accounts are only available to berry industry members.

After installing the app on a device, select **Register >** and follow the prompts.

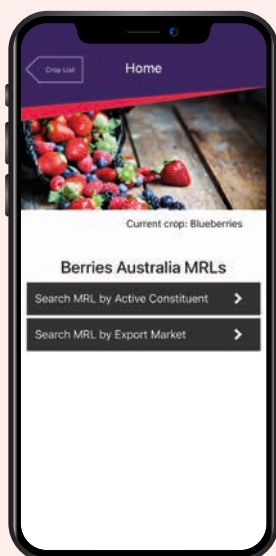
Once your access has been approved, you will receive a confirmation email with a temporary password.

Open the app & enter your registered email address then follow the prompts to set up your secure password.

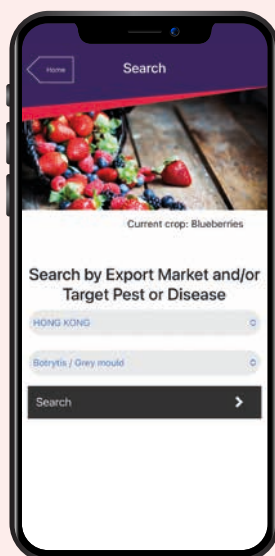
The **Berries Australia MRL App** is now available to download **for FREE**



The MRL app contains information about Blueberries, Rubus and Strawberries



For each crop, you can search the MRL by Active Constituent or by Export Market



You can also search within Markets by Target Pest or Disease



Searching by Active Constituent provides a summary with each country, the MRL level expressed in mg/kg and the Withholding Period

Download **Berries Australia MRL App** on Apple and Android devices here:



If you need any assistance to access the App, please contact Jen Rowling:
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Acknowledgements

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