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In 2024, as part of the National Plan for the control of pesticide residues in food of animal origin, the Veterinary Inspection took 50 samples of honeys from all over the country for testing. Among them, 27 honey samples were analysed by a multi-residue method for the determination of 122 pesticide residues in them. The remaining 23 samples were tested for residues of glyphosate, AMPA and glufosinate. The analyses were carried out according to published analytical procedures^{1,2}.

The multi-residue analyses carried out showed that 19 of the 27 honey samples tested contained pesticide residues. The majority were acetamiprid residues. In one sample, acetamiprid concentration exceeded the maximum residue limit (MRL) laid down in Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council. It is noteworthy that apart from acetamiprid, residues of only four other pesticides were determined: azoxystrobin, DMF (amitraz metabolite), pyraclostrobin and thiacloprid.

Glyphosate residues were determined in only 2 of the 23 honey samples tested. None of the samples had glyphosate residues above the MRL set in Regulation (EC) No 396/2005. In addition, no residues of glufosinate or AMPA were detected in the samples tested.

Although glyphosate is one of the most widely used pesticides in the world, the frequency of its residues in honey has been shown to be very low. Recently, the European Commission approved an extension of its use in the EU, but with restrictions on its conditions of use. Glyphosate should not be used during crop flowering, control of flowering weeds and during high pollinator insect activity. However, it is necessary to review the conditions of use of plant protection products containing acetamiprid, especially in the context of their use during crop flowering.

¹ Gawęł et al, 2019, Determination of neonicotinoids and 199 other pesticide residues in honey by liquid and gas chromatography coupled with tandem mass spectrometry, Food Chemistry 282, 36-47; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodchem.2019.01.003>

² Małysiak and Kiljanek, 2022, Method of Glyphosate, AMPA, and Glufosinate Ammonium Determination in Beebread by Liquid Chromatography–Tandem Mass Spectrometry after Molecularly Imprinted Solid-Phase Extraction, Molecules 27(17), 5741; <https://doi.org/10.3390/molecules27175741>