

EU extends approval periods for 21 crop protection active substances as regulatory reviews continue

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Move provides regulatory certainty for farmers and agrochemical companies while the European Commission completes scientific reassessments of widely used pesticide molecules



The European Union has extended the approval periods of 21 active substances used in crop protection products, giving agrochemical companies and farmers additional regulatory certainty as scientific reviews of these molecules remain underway.

The extension, adopted through a new European Commission implementing regulation, does not represent a fresh approval of the products. Instead, it prevents existing authorisations from expiring while regulators complete their ongoing assessments under the EU's rigorous pesticide renewal framework. The measure took effect on August 1, 2026, ensuring uninterrupted availability of several widely used fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and plant growth regulators across the European market. The decision reflects a recurring challenge within the European Union's pesticide regulatory system. Active substances are approved only for fixed periods and must undergo comprehensive scientific reviews before their approvals can be renewed. However, the evaluation process—which involves assessments by member states, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Commission—often takes longer than the original approval period. Rather than forcing products off the market because of administrative timelines, the Commission can temporarily extend their approvals until the scientific reviews are completed.

Among the substances receiving extended approval are several products that play important roles in European agriculture. Fungicides such as pyraclostrobin, cyprodinil, fludioxonil, fosetyl and penconazole remain essential tools for managing fungal diseases in cereals, fruits, vegetables and vineyards. Insecticides including pirimicarb and formetanate continue to be widely used against aphids and other sucking pests, while herbicides such as clomazone, dichlorprop-P and phenmedipham support weed management in a range of crops. The revised validity dates vary by active substance, reflecting the progress of individual renewal assessments. While the approval for pyraclostrobin has been extended until December 2026, other

molecules have received significantly longer extensions. Penconazole, for example, will remain approved until February 2029, while substances including fosetyl and beflubutamid have been extended into 2028.

For pesticide manufacturers, the decision removes the immediate uncertainty surrounding products approaching regulatory deadlines. Companies can continue manufacturing, marketing and supplying formulations containing these active ingredients while the European review process proceeds. The extensions are particularly significant because many of the affected molecules are well-established products with broad commercial use across the EU's fruit, vegetable, cereal and horticultural sectors. An interruption in approvals could have disrupted crop protection programmes, affected seasonal input planning and forced growers to switch to alternative products with little notice.

For farmers, the decision provides continuity during upcoming growing seasons. Growers relying on these active substances for disease, weed or pest management will not have to alter their crop protection strategies solely because of pending regulatory reviews. However, the extensions should not be interpreted as permanent endorsements of the products. Each active substance must still complete the full scientific renewal process, and the final outcome could include renewal, restrictions on use or, in some cases, non-renewal depending on the evidence reviewed by regulators. The move also highlights the increasingly demanding nature of pesticide regulation in Europe. Under Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2009, every active substance is reassessed against updated scientific standards covering human health, environmental safety, biodiversity, groundwater protection and potential risks to non-target organisms. As scientific requirements become more extensive and datasets grow larger, regulatory evaluations have become more time-consuming, making temporary approval extensions a more common feature of the EU's regulatory system.

For the crop protection industry, the decision offers breathing space but not long-term certainty. Companies continue to invest heavily in new active ingredients, biological products and lower-risk technologies as regulatory expectations become more stringent. At the same time, manufacturers must continue generating additional scientific data to support renewal applications for established chemistries. The latest extensions therefore illustrate the balancing act facing European regulators. On one hand, authorities are under pressure to maintain one of the world's most rigorous pesticide approval systems. On the other, they must ensure that essential crop protection tools remain available until science-based assessments are completed, avoiding unnecessary disruption to agricultural production and food supply chains.