

EU ENVI Committee supports cadmium limits

On 30 May 2017 the European Parliament [Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety](#) voted to support the use of safer phosphate-based fertilizers for EU countries. The proposed regulations would establish the maximum allowed cadmium content in phosphate-based fertilizers at levels that would help reduce accumulation of cadmium and other heavy metals in soils and thus support sustainable, safe food production in the EU.

Under the proposed regulations, phosphate-based fertilizers sold in the EU would be subject to a maximum cadmium content of 60 mg of cadmium per kg of P₂O₅ as of the date of the application of the regulation. After three years, this limit would drop to 40 mg/kg, and after nine years (from the date of application of the regulation) the maximum limit would decrease to 20 mg/kg. The full list of proposals is available [here](#).

New, preliminary modelling [research shows](#) that cadmium levels in EU agricultural soils could be brought down to more sustainable levels by reducing the amount of this [heavy metal](#) introduced via phosphate-based fertilizers.

The gradual introduction of limits is designed to enable producers whose products currently contain elevated levels of cadmium to adapt to the new regulation by implementing a range of possible measures, including the use of existing decadmiation technology or Cd recovery [processing technologies](#).

There is a misconception that Cd limits will impact fertilizer supply security. Currently, there is [sufficient supply of low-cadmium phosphate rock](#) and phosphate-based fertilizers to ensure that the EU maintains a diversified supply as stricter limits are introduced to reduce the risk of heavy metal contamination in soils.