

# Presence of non-authorized substances in organics

CDG Organics  
12 May 2023

# ABOUT OPTA EUROPE

OPTA Europe is the voice of leading organic processing and trade companies in Europe.

**opta**'europe



**30** Leading companies

**6** Supporting associations

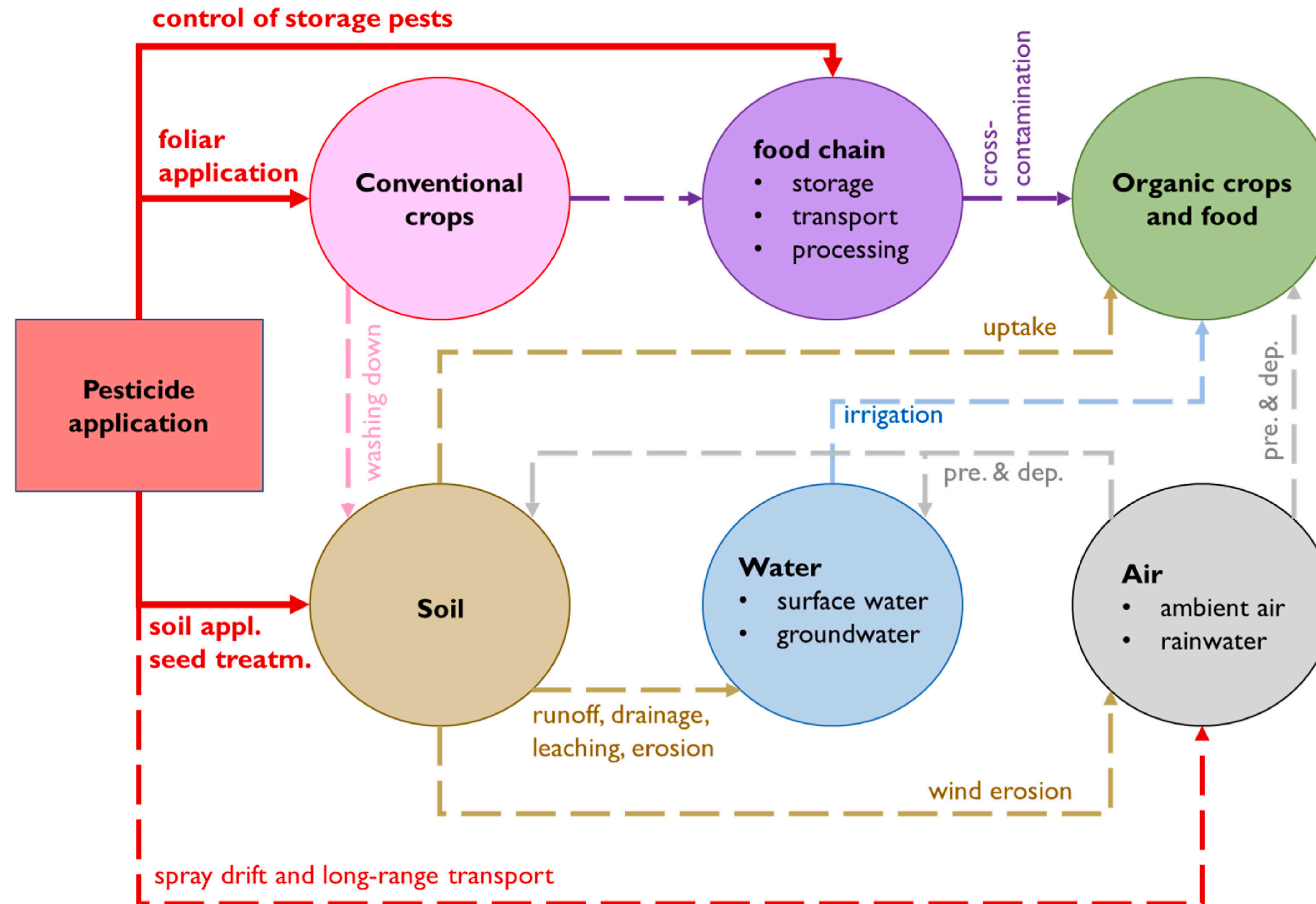
**12** EU countries

**2** Non-EU countries

**A large share** of total EU import & export and processing of organic products.

1

Organic products are at risk of technically unavoidable contamination of phytosanitary products present in environmental compartments such as soil, water and air.



Source: Schleiffer M.; Speiser, B. Presence of pesticides in the environment, transition into organic food and implications for quality assurance along the European organic food chain – A review.

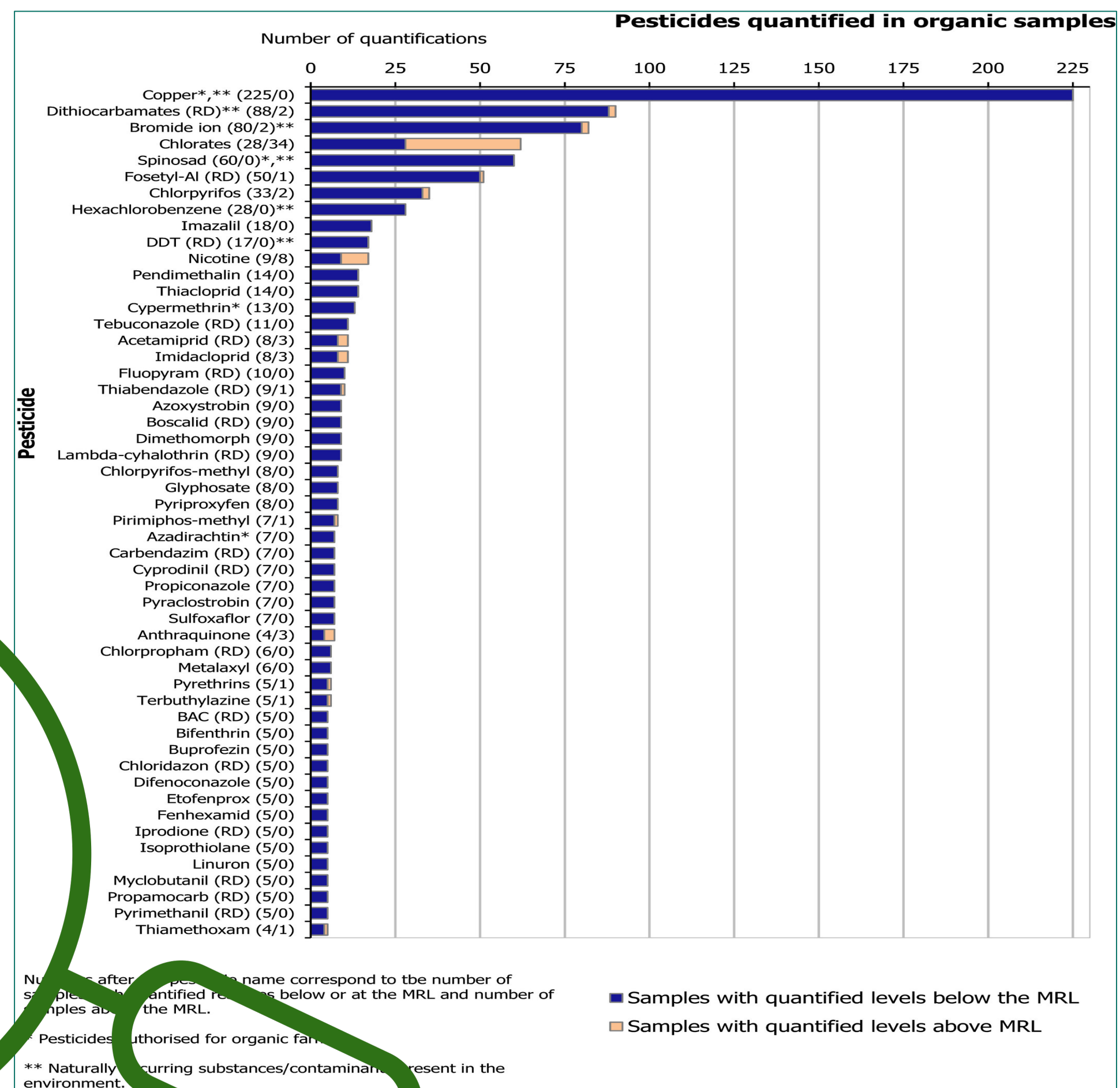


## 2 The most commonly found pesticides in organics are also naturally occurring substances / contaminants present in the environment, as established by EFSA.

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Copper  
Dithiocarbamates (RD)  
Bromide ion  
Spinosad  
Hexachlorobenzene  
DDT (RD)

\*\* Naturally occurring substances / contaminants present in the environment



Source: European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the 2018 European Union report on pesticides residues in food.

3

## IN FIGURES

Results of industry's analysis of **19,256** samples of organic products in 2022



**3,653**  
**19%**

contained quantifiable presence of non-authorized substances



**2,655**  
**73%**

**5** correspond to substances with different possible sources, other its use as pesticide.

Many of those sources are technically unavoidable or perfectly legitimate.



**3,214**  
**88%**

above 0.01 Mg/Kg

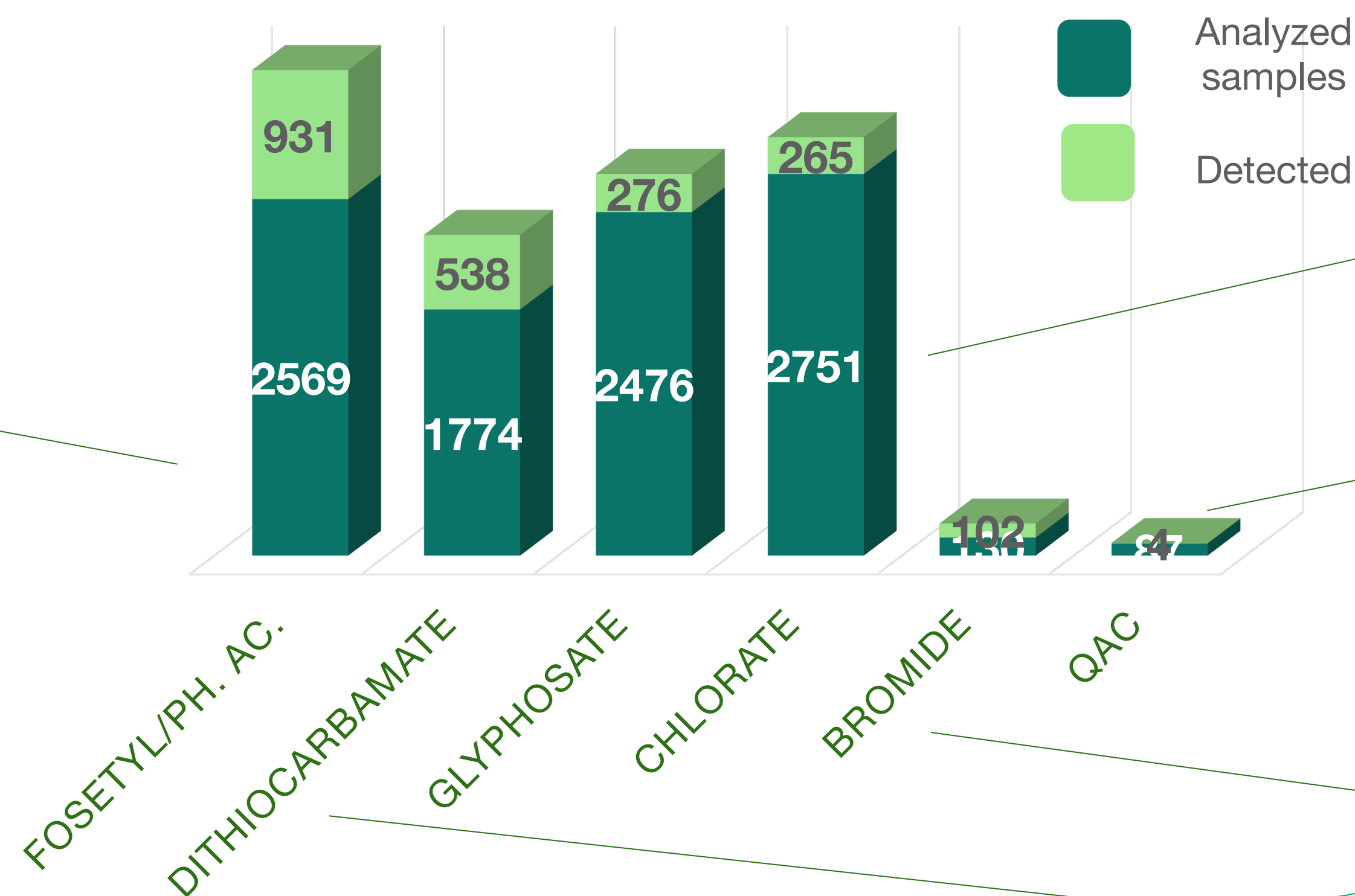
## Top detected substances in industry's analysis

**Phosphonic acid«**

« Besides their use as active substances in plant protection products, phosphonates are also ingredients to other products of agricultural relevance (e.g. fertilisers, plant strengtheners, manure, soil amendments).

It can be reasonably assumed that treatment of plants with such products could lead to the detection of phosphonic acid residues in pertinent agricultural commodities.' (1)

## Main findings with Single Method Analysis

**Chlorate**

'Can be present in food from the use of chlorinated water for food processing and the disinfection of food processing equipment ». (2)

**Quaternary ammonium compounds (QACs)**

are used as biocides, pesticides, herbicides, disinfectants and additives for technical application (3)

**Dithiocarbamate (CS2) Bromide**

Naturally occurring substances / contaminants present in the environment (4)

(1) Reasoned opinion on the joint review of maximum residue levels (MRLs) for fosetyl, disodium phosphonate and potassium phosphonates according to Articles 12 and 43 of Regulation (EC) No 396/2005, EFSA 2022

(2) Risk for public health related to the presence of chlorate in food, EFSA 2015

(3) Evaluation of monitoring data on residues of didecyldimethylammonium chloride (DDAC) and benzalkonium chloride (BAC), EFSA 2013

(4) The 2018 European Union report on pesticides residues in food, EFSA



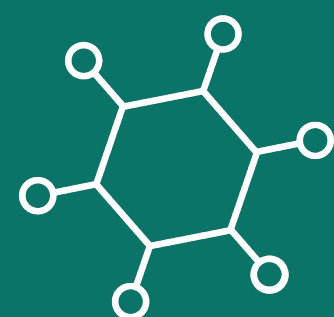
# THE CHALLENGES



The rise in the number of contamination in organics, linked to an increasingly polluted environment



The burden of proof falling on the organic operator leads to a multiplication of analysis at every step of the organic supply chain



The complexity to determine the most likely origin of the non-authorized substance when it may differ sources, as it happens in the majority of cases



The burden, delay and cost borne by the organic operator for each investigation to determine the source of the non-authorized substance, also when it is technically unavoidable and beyond his responsibility

**What does it represent for a company? Evidence from an operator.**



Disruption of the supply chain

## WHAT WE NEED



### **More feet on the ground, not more machines in laboratories**



A comprehensive, harmonised anti-fraud strategy that combines all risk & control tools to protect organic integrity

- Based on a public-private cooperation to establish an efficient system
- Making use of organic companies' technical acumen.



Applicable in third countries like in the EU, in a non discriminatory manner

- + capacity building in countries of origin to increase audits & control quality



### **Avoid operators leaving the organic sector**

In Q3 2023, a stock-taking exercise on the implementation of Art 29, bringing together authorities and stakeholders.



# THANK YOU

**Any question to be sent to  
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