

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

A comparison of Analytica's tutin results over the years

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Tutin is a natural plant toxin which is covered by a Ministry of Primary Industries food standard issued in early 2016.

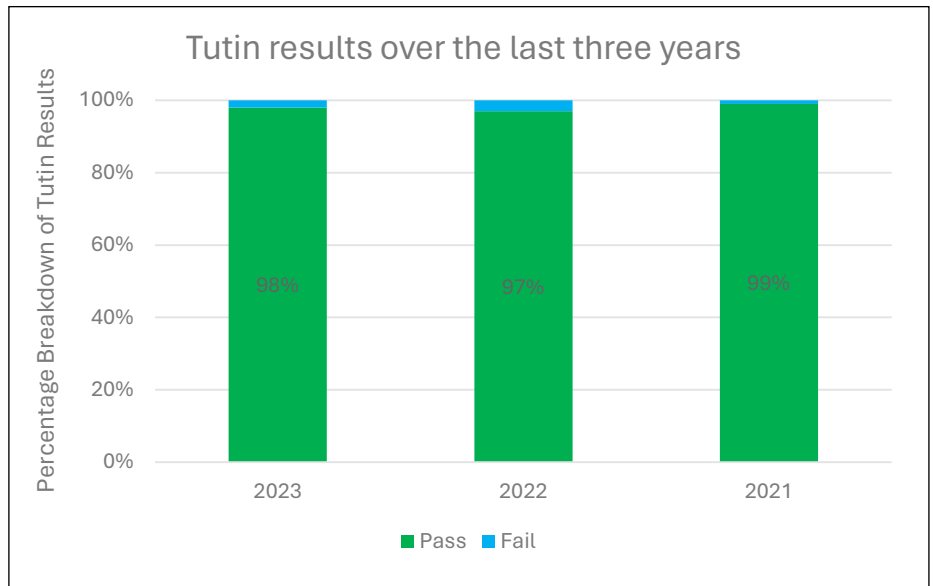
For anyone who has not read it, the document does a really good job of both explaining the significance of tutin from a food safety perspective and providing options for honey producers to ensure that honey they are producing is safe to eat. While a number of options are available to comply with the food standard, one of the most common is to test the honey for tutin.

Analytica tests honey for tutin using either composite or individual testing methods, as described below.

COMPOSITE TESTING

Up to 10 samples are accurately weighed and combined by an approved laboratory to make one composite sample, which is then analysed for tutin. The result of that test is the average of the samples that make up the composite.

- If the composite result is low, then none of the samples included in it will contain high enough amounts of tutin to present a problem. Therefore, all of those samples can be considered to comply with the requirements of the food standard.
- If the composite test result is high, then there is at least a chance that one of the samples included in it will exceed the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) of 0.7 mg/kg of tutin. Those



samples then need to be re-tested individually to work out which (if any) have residue levels above the MRL. Where there is a low risk of high concentrations of tutin being present in samples, composite testing is the cheapest option to comply with the requirements of the food standard for most producers.

INDIVIDUAL TESTING

Individual batch testing is recommended when you are in a high tutin risk environment like the Coromandel, the eastern Bay of Plenty, or Marlborough areas. We are also able to test the drippings of honeycomb for tutin!

WHAT HAVE THE TUTIN TESTING STATISTICS LOOKED LIKE OVER THE LAST FEW SEASONS?

It is very rare for honey results to be above the tutin MRL of 0.7mg/kg. This is mainly because the majority of our tutin tests are performed on finished product that are headed for export, so these clients are just 'ticking the box' required for export.

The majority of our tutin fails would be from the beekeepers located in the high-risk areas mentioned above. Interestingly, the highest tutin result we have seen from a honey sample during the 2022/23 season is 4.6mg/kg, which is over six times the MRL.

The New Zealand BeeKeeper goes online

The first fully online edition of *The New Zealand BeeKeeper* will be published this April.

The link will be e-mailed to all members.

If you would like to update your e-mail address, contact:
memberships@apinz.org.nz

