

Communication 12/2026

26 February 2026

Dr Vera Ritz appointed head of the Pesticides Safety Department

The Pesticides Safety Department at the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) has a new head: Dr Vera Ritz succeeds Dr Tewes Tralau, who took up the post of BfR Vice-President in March 2025. Dr. Ritz is a biologist specialising in molecular genetics, pharmacology and toxicology and has been working at the BfR since 2006. She initially worked as a Scientific Officer in the department and, in 2014, took over as head of the newly established "Steering and Overall Assessment - Biocides" unit. Since 2019, she has also been Deputy Head of Department.

The department's core tasks include health protection and the prevention of possible harmful effects of pesticides, i.e. biocides and PPPs, on humans and animals. The health risk assessments carried out on substances and formulated products form the basis for regulations and risk management measures in national, European and global regulatory approval, authorisation and evaluation procedures.

Dr. Ritz completed her academic training in Kassel, Bonn and Göttingen. After completing her doctorate, she began her professional career at a sequencing and DNA service company in Göttingen and London. Following a postdoctoral position at the University of Göttingen, she continued her career at the BfR.

Dr Ritz has many years of experience working in national and European Committees, in working groups of the European Commission and the European Council, and in OECD working groups dealing with scientific and regulatory issues relating to the risk assessment of biocides and plant protection products (PPP). In the Society of Toxicology, she is involved in the working groups on regulatory toxicology and endocrine-disrupting substances. She is the chair of the BfR Commission on PPPs and Biocidal Products and participates in PARC (Partnership for the Assessment of Risks from Chemicals) and EFSA research projects. In addition, she is involved in the training and advanced education of young scientists and researchers: she is a course leader in the Society for Toxicology's specialist toxicology

training programme and a lecturer at the Technical University of Berlin and the University of Potsdam.

The department's remit includes the health risk assessment of PPPs and biocides. The department's work essentially involves determining the inherent toxic properties of pesticides and their dose-response relationships, classification and labelling of pesticide substances and products, and deriving toxicological limit values as well as maximum residue levels (MRLs). In addition, analytical monitoring methods are reviewed and regulatory testing and assessment strategies and technical guidelines are developed and refined.

Furthermore, the department provides expert advice to the Federal Government on national and European legislation on pesticide substances, product authorisation and the use of PPPs and biocides.



About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (BMLEH). It protects people's health preventively in the fields of public health and veterinary public health. The BfR provides advice to the Federal Government as well as the Federal States ('Laender') on questions related to food, feed, chemical and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics closely related to its assessment tasks.

This text version is a translation of the original German text which is the only legally binding version.

Legal notice

Publisher:

German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment

Max-Dohrn-Straße 8-10

10589 Berlin, Germany

T +49 30 18412-0

F +49 30 18412-99099

bfr@bfr.bund.de

bfr.bund.de/en

Institution under public law

Represented by the President Professor Dr Dr Dr h. c. Andreas Hensel

Supervisory Authority: Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity

VAT ID No. DE 165 893 448

Responsible according to the German Press Law: Dr Suzan Fiack



valid for texts produced by the BfR

images/photos/graphics are excluded unless otherwise indicated

BfR | Identifying Risks –
Protecting Health