



PRESS RELEASE

Scientists say regulation of glyphosate weed killer is “out of date”

Brussels, 17 February 2016 - Fourteen expert scientists have today published a “Consensus Statement of Concern” about glyphosate, a chemical herbicide that is widely used in agriculture, public spaces and private gardens in Europe. It is the active ingredient in the most widely-used herbicides, such as the one commonly known as “Roundup”.

The Statement is entitled “Concerns over use of glyphosate-based herbicides and risks associated with exposures: a consensus statement”. (1) It is published in the journal *Environmental Health* online.

The authors point out that “Regulatory estimates of tolerable daily intakes for glyphosate in the United States and European Union are based on outdated science”. They call for a thorough toxicological examination of glyphosate-based herbicides that focuses on endocrine disruption, as well as cancer, reproduction and other outcomes of concern.

In early 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) of the World Health Organization (WHO) concluded that glyphosate is a probable human carcinogen. (2)

Genon Jensen, Executive Director of the Health and Environment Alliance, said *“This Statement provides further confirmation that glyphosate should not be re-authorized at EU level. We are contacting national cancer societies in Europe about this latest statement and will again encourage them to tell their governments to say no to glyphosate both at EU and national level.”*

François Veillerette, spokesman of Générations Futures and HEAL member adds *“The French government has a unique occasion of showing its commitment to a sound management of pesticides by asking the EU not to re-authorise glyphosate for another 15 years!”*

The Statement notes that since the late 1970s, the volume of glyphosate-based herbicides applied has increased approximately 100-fold, including new uses prior to harvest that can lead to high dietary exposures. The science is showing that glyphosate remains longer in soil and water than has been previously recognised. Human exposures are rising, the scientists say.

The IARC made the statement on glyphosate as a probable cause of cancer in relation, for example, to Non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Like in the US (1), cases of Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (all types) have risen rapidly in developed countries. (3) For example, they have more than doubled (153% increase) in Great Britain since the late-1970s. (3)

HEAL is currently urging cancer societies to call upon their governments to:

- 1) Oppose the renewal of the EU authorisation of glyphosate in early March, and
- 2) Take national measures to significantly reduce people's exposures to glyphosate, such as banning formulations of herbicides that contain glyphosate at national level.

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Notes for journalists

1. Environmental Health, Concerns over use of glyphosate-based herbicides and risks associated with exposures: a consensus statement is available online:

<http://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-016-0117-0>

2. <http://monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Monographs/vol112/index.php>

3. Cancer Research UK website, Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma (C82-C85), European Age-Standardised Incidence Rates, Great Britain, 1979-2012

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/non-hodgkin-lymphoma-incidence-statistics#heading-Two>

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