

Legislative and regulatory news



European Union: Mancozeb ban, a victory for the environment and for health!

The toxicity of the fungicide Mancozeb has been known for decades, but it remains one of the most widely used pesticides in the European Union. It has already had its authorisation extended four times between 2013 and 2019. In its 2019 opinion, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) identified six "critical areas of concern", i.e. six reasons why mancozeb should not be authorized by the EU, including the fact that it is an endocrine disruptor, that it is classified as toxic to reproduction and that it poses high risks to birds, mammals, non-target arthropods and soil macro-organisms. According to EU rules, being toxic to reproduction and/or endocrine disrupting is sufficient to prohibit the use of the substance. The Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has classified Mancozeb as "toxic for reproduction, category 1B" (R1B) due to the severity of brain malformations observed in the offspring caused by its metabolite ETU. The classification of Mancozeb as a reprotoxic pesticide means, in accordance with European regulations, that all contact with humans is prohibited, which almost amounts to a ban on the product. The European Commission's proposal for the non-renewal of the authorization of Mancozeb, adopted by a qualified majority of Member States at the meeting of the EU Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOPAFF) on October 23, 2020, therefore represents a major victory for the environment and health. Mancozeb is the first pesticide banned in the EU because of its endocrine disrupting properties. This decision should therefore serve as a precedent for banning all endocrine disrupting pesticides.