



## **Pesticide newsletter**

**N°2 - March 2021**

### **Legal and regulatory news**



#### **Mexico bans glyphosate and GMO corn**

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, President of Mexico, has ordered a phase-out of glyphosate-based herbicides and a ban on the cultivation of genetically modified corn. This decision is pioneering in Latin America and beyond.

The Mexican government issued a decree on December 31, 2020, banning the use of glyphosate-based herbicides starting in 2024 in the name of the precautionary principle. This decision is linked to the classification of glyphosate as a "probable carcinogen" by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in March 2015. The decree states, "With the goal of achieving self-sufficiency and food sovereignty, our country must move towards the implementation of a sustainable and culturally appropriate system of agricultural production, through the use of agro ecological practices and inputs that are safe for human health, the country's bio-cultural diversity and the environment, as well as in accordance with the agricultural traditions of Mexico".

But 2024 is still a long way off. So far, pressure from the United States and Bayer, the largest exporter of glyphosate to Mexico, recently documented by the US-based Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), has not caused Mexico to reverse its decision, as was the case in Thailand. For the health of Mexicans and the preservation of their environment, it is important that Mexican authorities do not give in to the economic interests of agrochemicals.

The presidential decree also states that the authorities “will revoke and refrain from granting permits for the release of genetically modified corn seeds into the environment”. Transgenic corn crops have never been allowed in Mexico, but the president's decision clarifies the situation. In this country, the cultivation of corn, its place in the diet and the historical presence of this grain at the heart of Mexican culture make its protection particularly valuable. The Mexican government has also banned the import of genetically modified corn for both human and animal consumption. Imports of genetically modified corn will be gradually reduced until they are zero by 2024.

The purpose of these decisions is to contribute to food security and sovereignty, as well as to protect “indigenous corn, corn fields, bio-cultural wealth, agricultural communities, gastronomic heritage and the health of Mexicans.”

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