

Pesticide newsletter

N°4 - July 2021

Legislative News



First step in the renewal process of the EU authorization of glyphosate

The European authorization for glyphosate, laboriously obtained by the European Commission in December 2017, is valid for only five years and expires at the end of 2022. As part of the authorization renewal process, the four rapporteur Member States in charge of re-evaluating the risks associated with glyphosate (France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Sweden) submitted the draft of their [report](#) to the European authorities on June 15, 2021. According to its conclusions, glyphosate is not carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic. The rapporteurs also exclude the risk of glyphosate being an endocrine disruptor. No toxicological properties would justify its exclusion from the market. The group also concluded that there was no chronic or acute risk to consumers from the treatment of agricultural crops with glyphosate and residues in foodstuffs.

The report's findings pleased pesticide manufacturers, who were quick to praise the study's scientific rigor. A Bayer spokesman [said](#) the report was "*based on one of the largest and most comprehensive scientific records ever compiled for a pesticide product.*" On the other hand, environmental groups are concerned by the conclusions of the four rapporteurs and point out that the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) had already concluded in 2015 that glyphosate is a probable carcinogen.

In addition, a new [study](#) about the genotoxic properties of glyphosate by two researchers from the Cancer Institute in Vienna, Austria, shows that the vast majority of scientific studies submitted by industry for the 2017 glyphosate authorization application do not meet modern international standards of scientific rigor and do not include the types of tests most likely to detect cancer risks. Finally, an INSERM collective expertise "[Pesticides et effets sur la santé](#)" (Pesticides and health effects) concludes that there is an increased risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL) with a medium presumption of a link for glyphosate. Other excess risks are evoked for multiple myeloma and leukemia.

It is now up to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to examine the dossier. Their conclusions are expected in spring 2022. Then the European Commission will have to propose to the Member States whether or not to renew the authorization of this herbicide in the European Union in December 2022.

EFSA has been widely criticized for its bias in favor of the agrochemical industry and the conflicts of interest of the members of its evaluation committees. Our partner, Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe, released a [report](#) on June 7, 2021 that examines the approval process of 12 allegedly genotoxic pesticides evaluated by EFSA since 2006 and shows that the agency ignored recognized cancer risks and circumvented the 2009 regulations to give the green light to these 12 pesticides.

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