

EFFAT

European Federation of
Food, Agriculture, and Tourism Trade Unions

EFFAT demands a BAN on Glyphosate

18th Seminar on workers' protection & chemicals



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What is Glyphosate?

- Glyphosate is the most widely used herbicide active ingredient in Europe and worldwide. It was introduced to the market in 1974 by Monsanto.
- Today, it is produced by close to 100 manufacturers worldwide, about half of which are located in China.
- Overall, sales of glyphosate represent 33% of total herbicide sales in the EU 28+3.
- Glyphosate is a non-selective herbicide that destroys all plants present on the land. It eliminates or minimises the need to use ploughing machines ("zero tillage" farming).
- Glyphosate is used to suppress plants (weeds) on land and to keep agricultural and horticultural land, as well as transport routes (especially railway tracks), free of vegetation.
- Glyphosate is widely used in annual cropping systems, on perennial crops and grasslands



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Risks associated with the use of glyphosate

In 2015, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans"; equivalent to a category 1B (presumed) carcinogen in the EU classification system.

Other studies followed (non exhaustive):

1. Zhang et al, Exposure to glyphosate-based herbicides and risk for non-Hodgkin lymphoma: A meta-analysis and supporting evidence. *Mutat Res.* 2019 Jul - Sep; 781:186-206. doi: 10.1016/j.mrrev.2019.02.001.
2. Maria E Leon et al. Pesticide use and risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoid malignancies in agricultural cohorts from France, Norway and the USA: a pooled analysis from the AGRICOH consortium. *Int J Epidemiol.* 2019 Oct 1;48(5):1519-1535. doi: 10.1093/ije/dyz017
3. Portier, C.J. A comprehensive analysis of the animal carcinogenicity data for glyphosate from chronic exposure rodent carcinogenicity studies. *Environ Health* 19, 18 (2020).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-020-00574-1>
4. Denis D. Weisenburger. A Review and Update with Perspective of Evidence that the Herbicide Glyphosate (Roundup) is a Cause of Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. *Clinical Lymphoma, Myeloma and Leukemia*, 2021, Vol. 21, No. 9, 621–630. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clml.2021.04.007>
5. Glyphosate damages blood-testis barrier via NOX1-triggered oxidative stress in rats: Long-term exposure as a potential risk for male reproductive health, January 2022
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412021006632>



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HEAL Report reveals shortcomings in ECHA's recent assessment

- HEAL reveals that the cancer studies submitted by the pesticide companies as part of their application to renew glyphosate's EU license for 15 years, clearly indicate its potential to cause cancer.
- Animals exposed to glyphosate developed tumours with significantly higher incidences as compared to their unexposed control group, an effect considered as evidence of carcinogenicity by both international and European guidelines.
- Yet, the EU risk assessors have dismissed **all the tumours findings from their analysis, concluding that they all occurred by chance and that none of them was actually related to glyphosate exposure.**



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CANCER ANIMAL STUDIES 6 RAT AND 5 MOUSE STUDIES



IN 10 OUT OF 11 STUDIES ANIMALS DEVELOP TUMOURS

in five rat and five mouse studies



HISTORICAL CONTROL DATA (HCD)

In three mouse and four rat studies, the tumours are supported by HCD



DOSE-RESPONSE INCREASE

in three mouse and one rat study the number of tumours increased as the glyphosate dose increased



MULTI-SITE TUMOURS

In two rat and three mouse studies, animals developed two or three different types of tumours



TUMOURS IN FEMALES

Females also developed tumours in one rat study and one mouse study





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EFFAT demands on glyphosate

1. Glyphosate must be immediately banned in the EU

- The protection of farm workers' health and safety and jobs is EFFAT's top priority.
- Sufficient evidence exists on the risks related to the use of glyphosate for workers, human health and biodiversity.
- EFSA and ECHA assessments must be reliable
- The protection of agricultural workers' H&S must be considered as priority. The use of PPE should not be given a prominent role
- The precautionary principle should guide EFSA and ECHA assessments.



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2. A more sustainable agriculture model with the promotion of non - chemical alternatives

- Alternatives to the use of glyphosate and other harmful chemicals already exist and must be further promoted.
- This includes agronomic practices, mechanical and biological weed control, animal grazing and natural herbicides.
- Glyphosate must not be replaced by other hazardous chemicals. COMM and MS must strengthen investments in research and development of sustainable pest management and non-chemical alternatives.
- Tackling unbalances and concentration of power across food chain.



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3. Just Transition measures for agri workers

We need a governance of the transition with Just transition measures:

- **Rigorous socio-economic impact assessments at NUTS 3 level:** potential job losses, job creation and skills
- **Investments in research and development of pest management and non-chemical alternatives.**
- **Resources** for farmers to conduct the transition but not at all costs (social conditionalities)
- **Full involvement of trade unions** (at each level)
- **An EU framework to manage restructurings:** information, consultation, outplacement and forced redundancies *as extrema ratio*
- **Upskilling, reskilling and vocational training**
- **Social protection** for workers and their families



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4 A global approach towards a more sustainable agriculture

- Acting solely at a European level will not be sufficient to protect consumers' health, safeguard our ecosystems and biodiversity.
- On the contrary, it may affect jobs and the competitiveness of the EU agriculture sector.
- Harmful pesticides already banned in the EU should not be produced and exported by European agro-chemical companies.
- Foodstuff produced using pesticides banned in Europe should not enter the EU market.
- We need a different approach to Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). Agriculture and food require specific attention in the negotiation of FTAs.



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5. Occupational cancers caused by glyphosate-based herbicides must be recognized and compensated

- Workers with high exposure to glyphosate-based herbicides have a higher risk of developing non-Hodgkin Lymphoma and blood cancers.
- Exposed workers with this type of cancer should be entitled to have their disease recognized as occupational and must be entitled to be adequately compensated in all EU member States.
- EFFAT demands easier complaint mechanisms for agricultural workers and official documentation reporting the kind of pesticide used during the work activity
- SUR may be an opportunity to push for these demands

Stay in touch!

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