



European experts say glyphosate cancer warning not grounded in science

Ian Johnston | July 21, 2015 | Independent

It is described as the world's safest pesticide, used so pervasively that it shows up in human breast milk and urine. For years, regulators believed glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup and other weed killers, poses little or no risk to human health despite small traces being found in bread and other foods.

However, after world-leading experts at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) concluded that it is "probably" carcinogenic, an almighty row has erupted involving multinational corporations, scientists, bakers, brewers and farmers – leaving consumers struggling to work out if they are in danger.

The UK Soil Association – champions of organic agriculture – has called for its use on wheat just before harvesting to be outlawed in accordance with the "precautionary principle" – better safe than sorry. However, few of the experts contacted by *The Independent* said they were planning to give up their daily bread for fear they might get cancer and European regulators have reacted with scepticism to the IARC's findings.

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, which leads on the chemical within the EU, said over 30 studies had concluded there was "no validated or significant relationship" between glyphosate and cancer among humans.

But Dr Kurt Straif, head of the IARC's monographs section stressed the expert group had found "strong evidence" that glyphosate is 'genotoxic', meaning it damages DNA, a precursor of cancer.

"I think with the genotoxicity, it is probably not a good idea... to have glyphosate residues in food or using glyphosate for food production, but this is my personal opinion, nothing that is a conclusion of the [IARC] monograph."

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Glyphosate: Scientists urge caution over experts' claims pesticide is 'probably' carcinogenic](#)