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New study finds glyphosate not cancer-causing

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The group of 16 scientists, from Canada, the United States, Denmark, Brazil and the United Kingdom and other countries, decisively concluded that "glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans." | File photo

Yet another study is refuting the idea that glyphosate causes cancer.

In a [paper published online today in Critical Reviews in Toxicology](#), four independent panels of experts looked at the relevant research on glyphosate and whether it's carcinogenic.

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The authors bluntly rejected the findings of an International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) panel, which decided in March 2015 that glyphosate is probably carcinogenic to humans.

IARC is a division of the World Health Organization and its report had massive implications for public policy around glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup herbicide. This spring, the European Union came close to banning glyphosate. Several countries, such as France and the Netherlands, refused to support an extension of glyphosate’s registration in Europe.

After months of bickering, the European Commission granted an 18-month, temporary approval for the herbicide.

In North America, the IARC decision energized environmental groups and organic advocates, which lobbied the U.S. government to test foods for glyphosate residues. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which had not previously tested for glyphosate, relented in February and promised to monitor residues in corn, soybeans, milk, eggs and other food.

In response to the IARC report, Monsanto asked Intertek Scientific & Regulatory Consultancy to assemble four expert panels in the areas of exposure, epidemiology, cancer in experimental animals and genotoxicity, which is the study of cellular changes.

In the paper, the experts said:

- “Even when using worst-case assumptions, systemic exposures to applicators, bystanders, and the general public are very small.... There is an extremely large margin of safety from exposure to glyphosate via normal uses:” exposure experts
- “Glyphosate epidemiologic literature does not indicate a causal relationship between glyphosate exposure and NHL (non Hodgkin’s lymphoma):” the epidemiology panel
- The expert panel disagreed with the IARC report’s conclusion that there is sufficient evidence that glyphosate is carcinogenic for lab animals such as mice and rates.

- “Extensive reviews of the genotoxicity ... all support a conclusion that glyphosate is inherently not genotoxic:” the genotoxicity experts.

The conclusions of the 16 member panel support the findings of agencies around the world. Health Canada, the European Food Safety Authority and a joint WHO and United Nations Food and Agriculture panel published similar scientific reviews in 2015 and 2016. All of the organizations reported that glyphosate is not carcinogenic for humans.

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