



Farmers must take lead on issues instead of deflecting criticisms

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The announcements coming from environmental and health organizations about various chemicals used by farmers are starting to resemble a prosaic call-and-response refrain.

That is, a warning is issued that something is bad for you, and various groups, including some farm organizations and those representing the manufacturers of the compounds, respond with more context that sometimes isn't offered with the original warning.

To some, that response is welcome clarification, but to those not so close to the world of agriculture, it sounds like a "yes, but..." to which they might roll their eyes.

However, there is potential for political and regulatory fallout that can affect the way farmers work because of the credibility the general public tends to give the World Health Organization — in the case of glyphosate and now 2,4-D — and Ontario environmental commissioner Gord Miller, who asserted the dangers of neonicotinoids.

In March, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is the WHO's cancer research arm, labelled glyphosate "probably carcinogenic," placing it in the 2A category.

However, one had to peruse the "2A" class to find that such a warning was also applied to sunflower seeds, applesauce, caffeic acid — which is found in coffee — and shift work, which disrupts the circadian rhythm.

And despite Health Canada's contention that glyphosate is not a risk to human health when it's used properly, there was the Canadian environmental law lobbyist Ecojustice pumping out a story on its blog headlined, "Time to get glyphosate off our shelves and out of our fields."

We have seen how quickly these warnings can spawn political action.

In October, Miller published a report that recommended phasing out neonicotinoid insecticides, which he said was a bigger threat than DDT, after Ontario bee farmers complained of increased bee deaths.

By December, the province had announced an 80 percent reduction in the number of acres that will be permitted to be treated with neonicotinoids by 2017.

It was popular politically. Polls there showed a vast majority in Ontario thought something had to be done, despite the lack of clear evidence that neonics are the problem in bee deaths.

Now, the IARC has declared that the herbicide 2,4-D is "possibly carcinogenic to humans," which is worthy of designation in the 2B category, suggesting limited evidence of cancer causing in humans and not sufficient evidence of contribution to cancer in experimental animals.

The IARC makes no requirements about the use of these chemicals, so what's a farmer to do? The manufacturers insist glyphosate and 2,4-D are safe so long as they are used as directed. Many farmers have used them for decades.

What use is the "possibly" or "probably" designation without regulation? And what regulation can be based on those two words, given that restrictions will dramatically affect the way most farmers operate?

On top of this, these warnings are based on laboratory environments, rather than focusing on how the chemicals are actually used.

Still, the call and response is getting louder. Farmers need to take the lead.

We have argued previously in this space that farmers need to be judicious in the use of glyphosate, and so it is with 2,4-D.

Sooner or later, more politicians will face their own call and response — that is, the public demands action and politicians respond. When that happens, farmers must be able to demonstrate that they have already answered the call.

NORAHG RESPONDS AGAINST ONTARIO'S #@!!% FANATICAL PROHIBITION — IT MUST BE CHALLENGED AND STOPPED THROUGH LITIGATION !

EVERYONE must demand that Ontario's reckless & fanatical prohibition be stopped, forever, INCLUDING Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) trade association ! Clearly, OFA operates in favour of the vested interests of anti-pesticide & environmental-terrorist organizations. In essence, OFA has betrayed the agriculture industry ! All agricultural trade associations must strike back against fanatical prohibition. This #@!!% ban nonsense must be challenged and stopped ! There is now no other recourse but litigation in order to stop prohibition. CropLife Canada, Grain Farmers of Ontario, and all agricultural businesses, must sue the neonicotinoid-hating fanatics' brains out ! They must litigate, litigate, and litigate. They must stop Ontario's reckless & fanatical prohibition, whatever the cost may be ! Any business owner in Ontario who does not bother to strike back against prohibition is a pitiful fool and an idiot, and does not deserve a career, or a business, or any success in the agriculture industry. For more information about LITIGATION, go to The Pesticide Truths Web-Site ... <http://wp.me/p1jq40-7Ub>

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