



Health Canada says pesticide position remains unchanged despite WTO decision

By [Kelsey Johnson](#) | Jun 24, 2015 4:38 pm |



(AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall, File)

Health Canada says its position on popular herbicide 2,4-D has not changed, despite the chemical being classified a “possible carcinogen” by the World Health Organization’s cancer research agency earlier this week.

In an email Wednesday, a spokesperson for the department said Health Canada reviewed 2,4D in 2008 and concluded “the continued use of 2,4-D for both agricultural and residential use does not pose a health concern when used according to label directions.”

“This conclusion is not changed by the recent WHO (IARC) hazard classification, as pesticides are registered for use in Canada only if the level of exposure to Canadians does not cause any harmful effects, including cancer,” the department said.

Health Canada’s response comes just days after the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) said 2,4-D – the one of the world’s most widely used weed killers – should be classified as a “possibly carcinogenic to humans.”

Those findings were determined after a review of current scientific literature by 26 experts from 13 countries, the IARC said. The agency’s full findings were published Monday in the medical journal *The Lancet*.

The IARC conclusions have been heavily criticized by the North American biotech industry, which argues its findings do not coincide with other international research done on the herbicide.

“No other herbicide in the world has been more thoroughly studied than 2,4-D,” CropLife President Ted Menzies, a former Conservative MP, said in a statement Tuesday.

“Every health and safety regulator in the world, including Health Canada, has concluded that 2,4-D does not pose an unacceptable risk to human health.”

In use since the 1940s, 2,4-D is applied in more than 90 countries and has more than 100 label uses. In 2004 The Henry Ford organization in Michigan identified 2,4-D as one of the 75 most important innovations in the previous 75 years.