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Scientists find no evidence glyphosate causes cancer

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Sixteen experts from Canada, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom and elsewhere reviewed scientific literature on glyphosate and cancer. In a report released this morning, the panel said there's no evidence that glyphosate causes cancer. | File photo

A panel of epidemiologists and toxicologists says the World Health Organization is wrong about glyphosate.

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“None of the results from a very large database, using different methodologies, provides evidence of, or a potential mechanism for, human carcinogenesis.”

Glyphosate is the most popular herbicide in the world. It is the active ingredient in Roundup, a Monsanto product.

The panel's conclusion that glyphosate is safe contradicts a World Health Organization report released earlier this year.

In March, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a panel of global experts, reviewed scientific studies on glyphosate and determined the herbicide probably causes cancer in humans.

The IARC finding was a surprise because glyphosate is known for being one of the safest and most studied pesticides in the world. Toxicologists and epidemiologists criticized the IARC conclusions, many arguing that IARC didn't properly account for real world exposures to glyphosate.

The expert panel, which included University of Guelph toxicologist Keith Solomon, also said IARC relied too heavily on studies of questionable merit.

“IARC's equivalent working groups' reviews suffered from significant weaknesses such as: selectivity in the choice of data reviewed, failure to use all relevant biologic information to evaluate relationship to treatment in animal bioassays, and failure to use weight-of-evidence evaluations using all available data and appropriate weighting,” the panel said.

Intertek Scientific & Regulatory Consultancy recruited the 16 experts to participate in the panel. In July, Monsanto asked Intertek to assemble the panel to review the IARC findings.

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