

BUSINESS

Angry French farmers block Champs-Elysees in pesticide protest

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PARIS

Angry French farmers are blocking Paris' famed Champs-Elysees in a protest against the government's agricultural policy.

Sections of the normally pristine avenue were smothered in straw as about a hundred demonstrators brandished placards such as "Macron is killing farmers" and stopped morning traffic from passing Friday along the busy artery.

The farmers are angry, among other things, about President Emmanuel Macron's government's proposal to ban a controversial pesticide called glyphosate. The pesticide is thought to be carcinogenic.

To appease the demonstration, French Ecology Minister Nicolas Hulot came to speak to protesters and hear their complaints, while a farmers' delegation was received at the presidential Elysee Palace.

Regarding the pesticide ban, the Elysee's office said that "we're going to make the transition in a progressive manner — and methodically, not overnight."

Dozens of armed police have been deployed to the scene and put up metal barriers to contain the protest.