



BACKGROUND FOR MEDIA

Health Canada's glyphosate re-evaluation & the Monsanto Papers

Tainted science used to justify continued use of pesticide linked to cancer
'Monsanto papers' suggest some studies Canada used to evaluate the cancer risk of glyphosate have undisclosed conflicts of interest

Groups reveal preliminary evidence that Health Canada used scientific papers ghost-written by Monsanto in its 2017 re-evaluation of glyphosate. These scientific papers have been manipulated by Monsanto to downplay the cancer risk of glyphosate.

This is the tip of the iceberg -- we expect that more evidence will be uncovered about Monsanto's influence over science, Health Canada and other regulators.

GLYPHOSATE IN CANADA

- [Glyphosate is the most-used pesticide in Canada and around the world](#). Use around the world increased nearly 15 fold since 1996 when glyphosate-resistant crops were introduced on the market. Never in history has a pesticide been so widely used.
- Glyphosate is mainly used in Canadian agriculture on glyphosate-resistant corn, soy, canola, and also as a pre-harvest application on crops like wheat, oats, barley, and pulses like chickpeas.
- Health Canada concluded a re-evaluation of glyphosate that took 7 years, and decided in April 2017 to continue registration of glyphosate for another 15 years with few additional risk mitigation strategies proposed.
- Équiterre and partners (Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defence Canada, and Prevent Cancer Now), submitted [Notices of Objection](#) to the Minister of Health in response to the re-evaluation decision in July 2017. The Notices of Objection, filed under section 35(2) of the Pest Control Products Act, explain on scientific grounds why the re-evaluation was flawed. The central arguments of Équiterre and partners Notices of Objection are summarized in the [letter to the Minister \(october 29, 2018\)](#). The Notices of Objection calls on the Minister to trigger an independent panel of scientists to review the re-evaluation of glyphosate to determine whether or not glyphosate poses unacceptable risks to health and the environment. Several other groups including Canadian researchers, health and environmental groups also submitted additional Notices of Objection in July 2017.

- At the time the organizations filed the Notices of Objection, only some Monsanto Papers had been released publically.
- By October 2018, the Minister of Health has yet to respond to any of the Notices of Objection.

GLYPHOSATE TRIALS IN USA

- There are over 500 lawsuits pending against Monsanto Company in US District court in San Francisco, filed by individuals alleging that exposure to Roundup (glyphosate-based pesticide) caused them to develop non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and that Monsanto covered up the risks.
- There are over 8000 plaintiffs making similar claims against Monsanto in state courts. The first trial, Johnson v. Monsanto Company, concluded on August 10 2018 (details referred to in letter to Minister)
- As part of the pre-trial process, internal Monsanto records and communications (emails and text messages), reports, studies and other memoranda have been released publicly. These pre-trial discovery documents -- known as the "Monsanto Papers"-- reveal that Monsanto has ghost-written science and engaged in significant public relations campaigns in order to protect the reputation of its glyphosate-based pesticides and downplay the cancer risks.

MONSANTO PAPERS IN HEALTH CANADA'S EVALUATION

- Ecojustice, on behalf of Équiterre and Notice of Objection partners, has conducted a preliminary review of the materials contained in the Monsanto Papers and the materials relied upon by Health Canada in its re-evaluation of glyphosate.
- The PMRA used multiple scientific papers ghost written by Monsanto to downplay the cancer risk of glyphosate in its cancer risk assessment. Several of these papers were published directly after the WHO's IARC classification of glyphosate as a "probable human carcinogen" in 2015.
- Monsanto is intentionally covering up conflicts of interests by lying about the authorship of these papers on the cancer risk of glyphosate. Transparency and disclosure of all authors and their conflicts of interest are central tenets of scientific ethics and science-based decision making. **The use of these ghost-written papers calls into question the credibility of Health Canada's risk assessment.**
- Monsanto developed and implemented a significant public relations strategy in order to respond to IARC's cancer classification of glyphosate. Monsanto assigned 20 employees to prepare for IARC's classification on glyphosate, with the purpose to "neutralize impact", "establish public perspective on IARC", "regulator outreach", "ensure MON (Monsanto) POV (point of view)" and "engage industry associations" in "outrage". Within, a Monsanto employee is assigned to "Inform ongoing activities for

regulator outreach” including in Canada.

- Furthermore, emails between Monsanto employees, including from Monsanto Canada, discuss collaboration with industry associations including Croplife Canada, “to capture the attention of the federal government and encourage an approach to motivate IARC to make adjustments to their current inappropriate practices.” Monsanto emails regarding IARC follow up, detail a number of goals including “invalidate relevance of IARC”.
- Evidence revealed in the Johnson v. Monsanto Company court case describe “collusion” between Monsanto and the US EPA officials in the review of glyphosate. According to the re-evaluation decision, the PMRA and the US EPA collaborated on the PMRA’S re-evaluation of glyphosate.
- The use of this tainted science in Health Canada’s re-evaluation of glyphosate raises serious concerns about the integrity of the pesticide regulatory system in Canada. With this revelation, **Canadians cannot be confident that Health Canada’s re-evaluation of glyphosate is rigorous, and that glyphosate does not pose unacceptable risks to our health or the environment.**
- The Minister of Health should establish an independent review panel under Section 35(3) of the Pest Control Products Act, with robust public participation, to investigate whether the re-evaluation decision is sound. Public confidence in the regulation of pesticides in Canada and sound science-based decision making depends on this.

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