

Information and material in support of ban on glyphosate.

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The European Parliament voted in 2017 to phase out glyphosate in Europe by 2022 but the European Commission still hasn't reached a decision. France, Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands have already decided to ban or phase out glyphosate. The UN International Agency for Research on Cancer has said that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic". A number of county councils in the UK have banned or decided to phase out glyphosate on council land (Manchester, Hampshire, Norwich, Wirral, Richmond, Trafford).

(1) From the [War on Wildlife Project](#)

EPA Finds Glyphosate Is Likely to Injure or Kill 93% of Endangered Species

15 December, 2020, by Charlie Moores

First registered for use in the U.S. in 1974, Glyphosate is one of the most widely used herbicides in the United States and one of the world's most widely-used plant killers (Monsanto's Roundup which uses glyphosate is found in garden sheds around the world). It's used on about 298 million acres (121 million ha) of agricultural cropland every year in the US. Brazil, which under Jair Bolsonaro has seen an explosion in pesticide use and subsequent mass die-offs of bees, has approved 87 products containing glyphosate since September 2016, including eight in 2020 alone.

In 2018 environmental campaigner Erin Brockovich wrote a damning article in The Guardian, 'The weedkiller in our food is killing us', which stated that Glyphosate "is now an ingredient in more than 750 products...For more than a generation, Americans have been using Roundup and other glyphosate-based chemicals to improve agricultural yields, manage forests, ripen fruit and kill the dandelions sprouting from our front lawns." She went on to say that high levels of Glyphosate residues are found in "almonds, carrots, quinoa, soy products, vegetable oil, corn and corn oil, canola seeds used in canola oil, beets and beet sugar, sweet potatoes...".

In 2015, The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified glyphosate as “probably carcinogenic to humans”. In May 2019, a California court awarded more than \$2bn to a couple who said the weed killer caused their cancer – a claim denied by the manufacturer Bayer, which faces other lawsuits. The National Farmers Union here in the UK lobbies hard for its continued use, despite plants developing resistance (the overwhelming majority of corn and soybean plants in the US are now Roundup-resistant) and its potential harm to people.

Now the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whose mission is to protect human health and the environment – despite being stuffed with Trump appointees bent on dismantling protection from everything to migrating birds, wolves, and wildernesses in favour of energy companies and intensive agriculture – has reported that glyphosate is “likely to injure or kill 93% of the plants and animals protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)”. The ESA is one of the most popular and effective environmental laws ever enacted in the US. Designed to prevent extinctions, in the four decades since the Act became law, 99% of species protected under it have survived (though again Trump’s efforts to smash the ESA have weakened the protections given to a whole tranche of species).

For the EPA to declare that a single ingredient is likely to ‘injure or kill’ almost every single one of the plants and animals protected under the ESA (a total of 1,676 endangered species) is huge. In a world where the survival of species, biodiversity, and entire ecosystems actually mattered, it should mean that glyphosate would be taken off the shelves immediately. Of course, in a world where short-term profit and the influence of industry lobbyists demonstrably matters more than, for example, climate and the long-term survival of life on earth, it’s doubtful that anything will be done....

(2) from the Guardian (2018)

[Monsanto's global weedkiller harms honeybees, research finds](#)

Damian Carrington Environment editor, 24 Sep 2018

The world's most used weedkiller damages the beneficial bacteria in the guts of honeybees and makes them more prone to deadly infections, new research has found. Previous studies have shown that pesticides such as neonicotinoids cause harm to bees, whose pollination is vital to about three-quarters of all food crops. Glyphosate, manufactured by Monsanto, targets an enzyme only found in plants and bacteria. However, the new study shows that glyphosate damages the microbiota that honeybees need to grow and to fight off pathogens. The findings show glyphosate, the most used agricultural chemical ever, may be contributing to the global decline in bees, along with the loss of habitat.

"We demonstrated that the abundances of dominant gut microbiota species are decreased in bees exposed to glyphosate at concentrations documented in the environment," said Erick Motta and colleagues from University of Texas at Austin in their new paper. They found that young worker bees exposed to glyphosate exposure died more often when later exposed to a common bacterium.

Other research, from China and published in July, showed that honeybee larvae grew more slowly and died more often when exposed to glyphosate. An earlier study, in 2015, showed the exposure of adult bees to the herbicide at levels found in fields "impairs the cognitive capacities needed for a successful return to the hive".

"The biggest impact of glyphosate on bees is the destruction of the wildflowers on which they depend," said Matt Sharlow, at conservation group Buglife. "Evidence to date suggests direct toxicity to bees is fairly low, however the new study clearly demonstrates that pesticide use can have significant unintended consequences."

Prof Dave Goulson, at the University of Sussex, said: "It now seems that we have to add glyphosate to the list of problems that bees face. This study is also further evidence that the landscape-scale application of large quantities of pesticides has negative consequences that are often hard to predict."

However, Oliver Jones, a chemist at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, said: "To my mind the doses of glyphosate used were rather high. The paper shows only that glyphosate can potentially interfere with the bacteria in the bee gut, not that it actually does so in the environment."

A spokesman for Monsanto said: "Claims that glyphosate has a negative impact on honey bees are simply not true. No large-scale study has found any link between

glyphosate and the decline of the honeybee population. More than 40 years of robust, independent scientific evidence shows that it poses no unreasonable risk for humans, animal, and the environment generally.”

The new research, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, found that some of the key beneficial bacteria in bees’ guts have the enzyme that is targeted by glyphosate. It also found that the ability of newly emerged worker bees to develop a normal gut biome was hampered by glyphosate exposure.

Harm to gut bacteria by glyphosate exposure has also been shown in a pilot study in rats. “Gut bacteria play a vital role in maintaining good health, in organisms as diverse as bees and humans,” said Goulson. “The finding that these bacteria are sensitive to the most widely used pesticide in the world is thus concerning.”

People are known to widely consume glyphosate residues in food - such as children’s breakfast cereal - but the health impact is controversial. In August a US court ordered Monsanto to pay \$289m in damages after a jury ruled that the weedkiller caused a terminally ill man’s cancer. The company filed papers to dismiss the case on 19 September.

The weedkiller, sold as Roundup, won a shortened five-year lease in the EU in 2017. In 2015, the World Health Organisation’s cancer agency, the IARC, declared glyphosate “probably carcinogenic to humans,” although several international agencies subsequently came to opposite conclusions. Monsanto insists glyphosate is safe.