



By Fred Searle

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## Report raises new glyphosate fears

People with high exposure to chemical significantly more likely to develop non-Hodgkin lymphoma, researchers find

**P**eople with high exposure to glyphosate are 41 per cent more likely to develop a type of cancer called non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), new research has found.

Scientists at the University of Washington said their findings support “a compelling link” between exposures to glyphosate-based herbicides, such as the world’s most popular weedkiller Roundup, and an increased risk of NHL.

The research goes against assurances of the weedkiller’s safety from the US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA), however regulators in a number of countries are considering limiting the use of glyphosate in farming.

The Guardian reported that Monsanto and its German owner Bayer are facing more than 9,000 lawsuits in the US brought by people with NHL who think Monsanto’s glyphosate-based herbicides are to blame for their condition.

A spokesperson from Bayer/Monsanto

said the study was “flawed” and contradicted extensive science from regulators, including the European Food Safety Authorities (EFSA), the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), the EPA and Health Canada.

Sarah Mukherjee, chief executive of the UK Crop Protection Agency (CPA), added that the debate around glyphosate’s safety was more about politics and activism than science.

But Rob Percival, head of policy for food and health at the Soil Association, said: “This research is further proof that the government needs to support farmers to end reliance on potentially harmful chemicals.

“In the same week that pesticides have been linked to devastating losses of insect life, this study highlights that the weedkiller glyphosate also poses a threat to human health.”

He added: “Pesticide use in the UK has increased markedly over the past few

decades, with farmers given little support to innovate and transition to more agroecological systems and practices, such as agroforestry and organic farming.

“By using ecosystem services first and chemicals last we can produce plentiful, healthy food while supporting wildlife – with much reduced reliance on pesticides.

“The Agriculture Bill is the perfect moment to rethink our food and farming system. The government should use it to help farmers get off the pesticides treadmill, with legally binding targets for reduced pesticide use, and farm payments supporting agroecological approaches.”

For the study, the researchers examined epidemiological studies published between 2001 and 2018, focusing on research in humans, but also considering evidence from laboratory animals.



Monsanto's Roundup weedkiller Photo: Mike Mozart