

Letter to the APVMA

An open letter to the regulators of the 596 glyphosate-containing products registered in Australia – APVMA – Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority. April 3, 2019

As a concerned citizen and consumer of Australian foods and lover of our national parks, I would like to know your current position on the 596 glyphosate-containing products registered by you and being used in Australia today on food, verges, back yards, dog parks, playgrounds, national parks, state parks, council spaces and waterways.

I've read your October 2018 position statement but at the moment there is a deathly silence from you. My concern is in regard to the two court cases in the US where the judges are clearly talking about Monsanto's disregard for the health and safety of their flagship product – Roundup – and the active ingredient – glyphosate. The fact that they spent US\$17 million to discredit IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) should call your registering of all glyphosate-containing products into question.

Another court case started this week in the US for glyphosate's link to Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and there are 11,400 more waiting for their time in court. I understand the plight of all who use glyphosate and I understand that your annual budget sales rely heavily on the 596 products that contain glyphosate. Glyphosate is not a contact herbicide but rather a biochemical herbicide that has three patents:

1. chelating agent (pulls minerals out of systems including plants, animals and humans)
2. herbicide via shikimate pathway enzyme
3. antibiotic. Not only is our soil ecology being eroded but so is the microbiome of all humans who come in contact with this IARC probable carcinogen, and that would possibly include you, who now are in an agricultural landscape – Armidale NSW.

I've been a nutritionist for four decades and in the past 10 years I have witnessed untold ill health due to gut issues and chronic disease in our children, elderly and all the ones in between. In 1965, Australia's population had a 2% chronic disease rate across the board; now we have up to 48% of our children under the age of 15 with one or more chronic diseases and the figure as we get older multiplies.

I've asked how much is being sprayed on our country, but your accounting doesn't seem to break this down and for some reason I can't find out how much you make from the 596 products, as well as the amount of glyphosate-containing products that are being sold in Australia.

I believe by the Freedom of Information Act I should be able to get those figures and alert the Australian community. It is my duty as someone in the health field. I own a business and this business has many items; I know exactly how many items I have and how much income I get from each item weekly, monthly and annually. You are a government department, surely you must know this information. After all, you get money from the wholesale sales of all the products you register. Surely, like any business, you would want to know what your bestseller is. I would say the 596 glyphosate products might be your ticket to a great income.

As an informed citizen of Australia I request the following:

1. A statement from you on your new position about glyphosate and Roundup – April 2019
2. Information about how much is being sold in Australia per annum and how much income that is to APVMA. And please do not tell me that you do not separate your agricultural chemicals and veterinary medicines...that would just be an insult to my intelligence
3. I'd like to see a reduction in the amount of glyphosate sprayed at least in public places and on health-giving food (all food)

4. That all glyphosate-containing products registered in Australia have on their label that they are not to be used for desiccation of crops. (This is a start at least.)

In my opinion, the desiccation (drying before harvest) of crops (grain, legume and canola) with Roundup and glyphosate-containing products is a crime to human health. I also believe that all Roundup-ready GM foods should be reviewed for their health consequences for animals and humans. The fact that Dicamba and 2-4 D-ready GM crops are on the market is something to be very concerned about.

Starting is sometimes the hardest thing, but you are our regulatory body and I believe you have a responsibility to start changing what is happening across this great nation. It's time that Australia takes the lead and starts making headway on this enormous task. Alternatives are out there; they may not be as good as Roundup and glyphosate but at least they are not destructive to human, animal, insect, fungi, microbe and planet health.

Let's make Australia's health great again.

Cyndi O'Meara  
Nutritionist, Educator and Activist

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Since posting this, I have had a message back from APVMA letting me know the following: "I've been advised to say that inquiries about glyphosate at this time are being escalated to senior staff in our agency, so yes, the agency is taking glyphosate inquiries seriously."

So, make sure you copy and paste this letter, add your name to the bottom and send it to [clientservices@APVMA.gov.au](mailto:clientservices@APVMA.gov.au)