



TALKING POINTS

Regina

Ep.16: Caring for the Earth as Home to Our Food

The following provides additional information about glyphosate and the controversy surrounding the use of herbicides and their negative effects on humans and wildlife.

According to a July 3, 2021, article on www.theconversation.com titled, "While debate rages over glyphosate-based herbicides, farmers are spraying them all over the world," the fact is that cheap globalized manufacturing has resulted in glyphosate becoming pervasive on farmland worldwide – and in human bodies. Researchers have detected it in the urine of children in remote villages in Laos and babies in New York and Seattle.

The question of whether glyphosate causes cancer in humans has been hotly debated. In 2015 the International Agency for Research on Cancer, an agency of the World Health Organization, classified glyphosate as a probable human carcinogen. A 2019 study found that children who experienced prenatal exposure to glyphosate had a significantly higher risk of autism spectrum disorder than a control population.

Studies have found that glyphosate causes liver and kidney damage in rats and alters honey bees' gut microbiomes. Mice exposed to it have shown increased disease, obesity, and birth abnormalities three generations after the exposure. However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the European Food Safety Authority maintain that glyphosate is unlikely to cause cancer in humans and does not threaten human health when used according to the manufacturer's directions. But shouldn't we remember that when someone, or a business, has a financial stake in a product, it is easy for them to value the profits of shareholders over the health and safety of the general population. And lobbyists are paid by the manufacturers of glyphosate to influence law-makers about policy.

Which is why, instead of simply ignoring or dismissing the dangers, we should responsibly ask:

Why, in the past two years, have three U.S. juries awarded multimillion-dollar verdicts to plaintiffs who asserted that glyphosate gave them non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a cancer of the immune system?

Why were there 125,000 pending lawsuits, of which all but 30,000 have been settled?

Why is the company that produces the most popular herbicide now considering ending U.S. retail sales to reduce the risk of further lawsuits?

Actions you can take to help protect the health of your family and community:

Call your local park services to make sure they are not using glyphosate on park grass. If so, ask them to stop immediately.

Call your child's school and research what herbicides and pesticides they are using on your child's playground, and if they are using toxic chemicals, insist they change them.

Call your local representative or the EPA directly and tell them to stop using glyphosate in our food system, and specifically on oats as a desiccant.

Eat organic as much as possible: fruits, vegetables, nuts, and the wheat and oat products you feed your family. Make sure your food is farmed in organic ways.