

BfR-contribution to the EU-approval process of glyphosate is finalised

BfR recommends the consideration of the Report of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in the EU-Approval process

BfR Communication No 008/2015 from 2 April 2015

In February 2015, a revised health risk assessment report on glyphosate prepared by the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) was discussed at the expert meeting of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Subsequently, the report was again amended by the BfR. This revision comprised additional evaluation tables as well as additional amendments for more clarification on some factual matters. On 1 April 2015 the BfR sent this supplemented and revised version of the report to the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) for forwarding to the EFSA. Thus BfR's contribution in the context of the EU-approval process was finalized.

Therefore, BfR will not intervene in the ongoing assessment process, which is under the direction of EFSA, by submitting any further comments on the subject. Henceforth, Germany has equal participatory involvement with the other EU-Member States in the finalization of an assessment done by the EU procedure.

Furthermore, BfR has submitted together with the revised assessment report, a preliminary evaluation of the assessment by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) of the World Health Organisation (WHO) concerning the potential cancer-causing effects of glyphosate.

In BfR's opinion it would be inexpedient if BfR as the composer of the assessment report on glyphosate would comment on the IARC Monograph. Instead, all EU-Member States should be involved in this action. BfR recommends that EFSA or the EU-Commission carries out a detailed assessment of the IARC Monograph in the near future.

In BfR's opinion, as soon as it is available, the complete IARC Monograph should be examined by a European expert panel under the direction of EFSA and the results should be incorporated into the EU-wide revised assessment of the active substance. In addition, the European Chemical Agency (ECHA), which is ultimately the competent authority for the legal classification of the substance glyphosate, should be involved in the very early stages of discussions.

The BfR recommends emphatically that all those involved in the assessment of glyphosate, WHO panels, IARC and JMPR (Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues), as well as the competent EU-authorities EFSA and ECHA, should discuss the current disputable issues, with the aim of resolving the discrepancies, before the EU-Commission makes a decision on the further approval of glyphosate.

Link to BfR-report:

Does glyphosate cause cancer? http://vm-webextern7r-master.bfr.bund.de/cm/349/does-glyphosate-cause-cancer.pdf