

Provisional assessment of glyphosate contents in beer

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According to media reports, in a recent study beer samples were analysed for glyphosate residues. Neither the original study nor sufficient methodical information on the analytical method and sampling procedure were provided to the BfR. From a scientific point of view, glyphosate residues in beer are plausible and to be expected in principle, since glyphosate-containing plant protection products are authorized for uses in cereals.

Residues in beer are allowed up to the maximum residue levels for the cereals used with consideration of appropriate processing factors. In Germany, however, for the approved late applications of glyphosate which are leading to residues a label restrictions normally set excluding the use in cereals for brewing purposes.

Apart from that even the highest contents published by the media (30 micrograms per litre) are so low that the estimated intake for an adult (60 kg bodyweight) would be more than 1000 times lower than the currently estimated amount that can be ingested daily over a lifetime (ADI, acceptable daily intake) or during one day (ARfD, acute reference dose) without appreciable health risk. In order to ingest quantities of glyphosate that would pose a health risk, an adult would have to drink roughly 1000 litres of beer during one day. According to the current state of knowledge, glyphosate contents of 30 micrograms per litre beer do not pose a health risk.

Further information available on the BfR website under the heading “Glyphosate”:

Published BfR documents on glyphosate

http://www.bfr.bund.de/en/a-z_index/glyphosate-193962.html