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Greens/EFA MEPs to face Monsanto, Cheminova and the EU Food Safety Authority in Court

Glyphosate transparency

A public hearing will be held before the European Court of Justice in a case brought by 4 Greens/EFA MEPs against EFSA (the EU Food Safety Authority) for its refusal to provide the public with access to crucial studies regarding the impacts of glyphosate on human health. EFSA is supported in the court case by Monsanto and by Cheminova, whose lawyers will also speak at the hearing in Luxembourg. The hearing will take place on the 13th September at 14:30 and is open to anyone who wishes to attend.

These studies were conducted on rats and mice by companies like Monsanto and Cheminova and they were submitted to EFSA as part of the approval process for glyphosate – a process which has attracted much criticism (not least from the European Parliament) and which is now the subject of an in-depth investigation by a special inquiry committee set up by the European Parliament to assess the weaknesses of the approval system and propose specific reforms.

One of the main problems with the approval system is that **there is an inherent conflict of interests in the fact that the same companies with an interest in selling their products are the ones that are also responsible for doing the scientific studies to prove that their products are safe**. If these studies are never made public, there is no way that we can be sure that the science behind the studies is actually correct. And that is what the Greens/EFA v. EFSA, Monsanto and Cheminova court case is all about.

Glyphosate is so widely used that traces of it can be found in our wine, beer, food and yes – even in our pee. Just last week, a court in the USA ordered Monsanto to pay 289 million US Dollars in damages to a groundskeeper, who accused Monsanto of causing him to develop a type of cancer called non-Hodgkin's lymphoma as a result of his use of the glyphosate-based product, RoundUp.

A similar court case, launched in the USA by thousands of farmers accusing Monsanto's RoundUp of causing them cancer, is still ongoing; but the world was shocked by the documents made public through that case – now known as the #MonsantoPapers. The Monsanto Papers revelations showed how Monsanto had tried to rig scientific studies and manipulate regulators into approving their glyphosate based products, including by ghost-writing studies and then convincing academics to sign their names as authors. Watch our mini-documentary about it below.

We believe that scientific studies used to evaluate the effects of pesticides should always be public, as a matter of principle. But EFSA, Monsanto and Cheminova clearly disagree. They argue that the commercial

interests of the companies would be damaged if the studies were published; and they claim that there is no public interest in the studies that could override this damage – in a nutshell, their argument is that commercial interests are more important that the public's right to know about the (health) impacts of glyphosate.

They also claim that the glyphosate studies cannot be classified as emissions into the environment because the doses used in the studies are "unrealistic". They use this argument because the international and EU laws on access to environmental information would force them to publish the studies even if commercial interests might be harmed. We argue that glyphosate is by its very nature an emission into the environment and that, therefore, studies that are used as part of the regulatory process to approve the substance on the market should also count as environmental information.

We will be sure to keep you updated, so watch this space for more, and if you can't make it to Luxembourg in person, then **please join us via facebook live on the 13th September at 17:00**.

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Attached documents

Press briefing - transparency of glyphosate before ECJ September 2018.pdf

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