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News | 21.03.2016

We need to see the evidence on glyphosate

Greens/EFA demand to see the secret studies used to justify glyphosate's safety

You may have been following the recent discussions on whether or not the EU will renew approval of the controversial toxic substance glyphosate, which is used as an herbicide (for example in Monsanto's Round-Up and other products). The licence for its use in the EU expires at the end of June, giving the European Commission a perfect opportunity to review the facts and decide whether or not to ban it.

The Greens/EFA group has started a campaign highlighting the [main reasons that glyphosate should be banned](#). For a whole series of health and environmental reasons we believe that this substance should be kept off our plates and out of our fields. The substance is so widely used that it has been found in [human urine](#) and [mothers' breast milk](#).

But the lack of transparency around the assessment process for reviewing the impacts of glyphosate has raised serious questions and doubts. Especially because the EU Food and Safety Authority (EFSA) has stated that glyphosate is "probably not carcinogenic" in humans. This directly contradicts the conclusions of the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) which concluded in March 2015 that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic".

To get to the bottom of this, the Greens/EFA group has submitted a freedom of information request to the EU Food and Safety Authority. To explain the discrepancy between their results and the results of the World Health Organisation (WHO), EFSA say they based their assessment on scientific evidence that the WHO did not possess. But [they are refusing](#) to give anyone access to that evidence.

While the assessment by the WHO's IARC is relatively transparent, research by the NGO Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) has revealed that 80% of the national experts involved in the EU's assessment of glyphosate have refused to have their names [disclosed](#) to the public. This makes it impossible to assess whether or not they may have potential conflicts of interest that could explain the discrepancies in the findings.

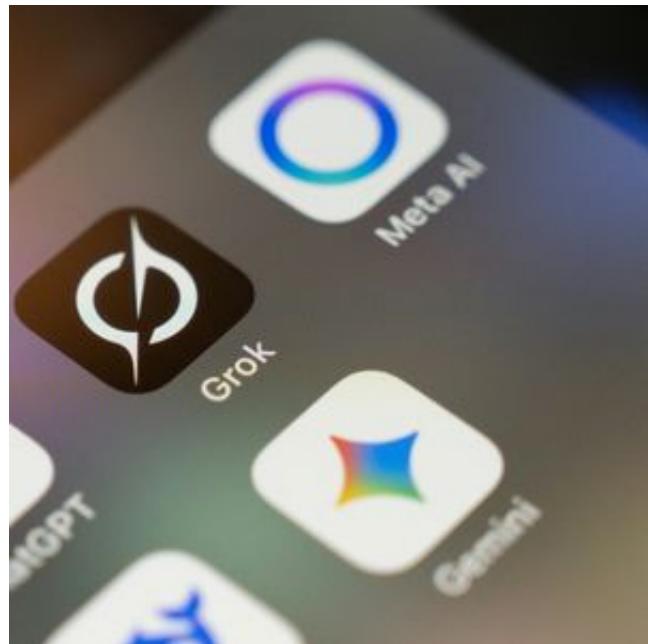
Now that the freedom of information request has been sent, EFSA has until 11 April to respond. If they do not provide the information, we will either submit a complaint to the European Ombudsman or take a case before the European Court of Justice. If you want to follow the request and receive updates on it, click on the widget below.

We are hopeful that the request will be successful, because Health Commissioner Andriukaitis in the Agriculture Committee of the European Parliament last week promised that "I will ask the industry to publish their raw data as well". Andriukaitis even mentioned he was looking at "how to change our assessment system to be more transparent" including "disclosing industry studies".

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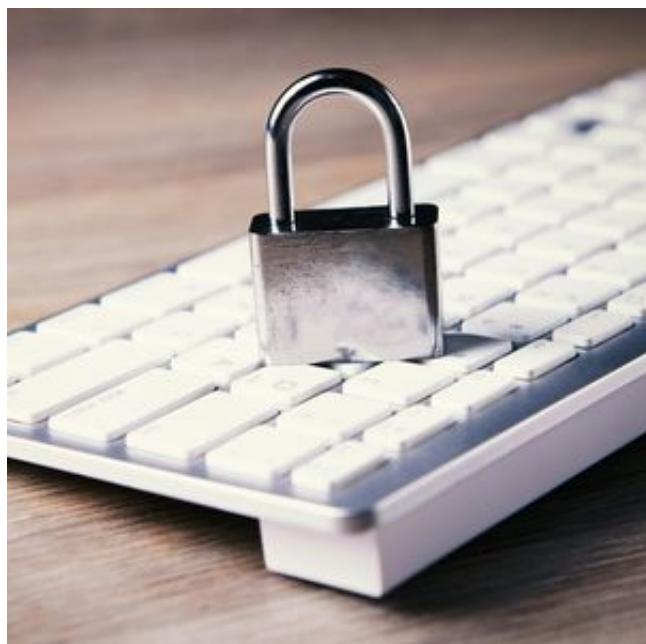


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