Greens/EFA

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Study | 09.03.2023

Weed Management: Alternatives to the Use of Glyphosate

A Greens/EFA report commissioned to Pesticide Action Network Europe

PRESENTATION

The EU authorisation renewal of the herbicide active substance glyphosate is coming up. In the previous renewal decision in 2018, it was renewed for only 5 years rather than 10, due to massive citizen concern and doubts about its safety. This means the authorisation should have ended at the end of 2022, but an extension was granted for gathering evidence of ecotoxicological impacts.

The Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategy announced aspirational targets of 50% reduction in the “use and risk” of chemical pesticides in the EU. Glyphosate based herbicides are the most widely used herbicide globally and in the EU. The use of glyphosate-based herbicides globally is increasing strongly while in Europe sales and use remains high especially in larger agricultural member states of the EU, and FADN data shows farmers’ spending on pesticides generally is increasing. To achieve the targets, these EU trends must be reversed.

This report outlines the wide range of non-chemical alternatives to herbicides that are already available and used by organic farmers and those practising integrated weed management (IWM). It highlights the critical need for mainstream farmers and growers to make much wider use of these tools, and the need to expand and improve current non-chemical tools, while also developing novel approaches. Using glyphosate-based herbicides as a reference, the current analysis presents a wide variety of weed management approaches that achieve highly effective weed control without the use of herbicides.

The main findings include:

- Large scale herbicide reduction, as a part of the EU effort toward pesticide use reduction targets, can be achieved. It is technically feasible and already in play; mainstreaming is needed.
- The vast majority of weeds do not harm the yield and these Aliae Plantae are beneficial to agroecosystems and food security; not systematically destroying them would prevent waste of money and resources and help reverse the biodiversity crash.
- EU and member state funding is available to support farmers in transitioning, but much depends on member states offering that support, as well as on the advice given, including concerning grants available, and finally on uptake by farmers.

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- DOWNLOAD THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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- **(DE)** DOWNLOAD DER ZUSAMMENFASSUNG
- **(IT)** SCARICARE IL DOCUMENTO DI SITENSI IN ITALIANO
- **(PL)** POBIERZ PODSUMOWANIE DLA DECYDENTÓW PO POLSKU
- **(ES)** DESCARGA LA SÍNTESIS DEL ESTUDIO

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Attached documents

Study - Weed Management: Alternatives to the Use of Glypohosate
Executive summary - Weed Management. Alternatives to the Use of Glyphosate
Résumé analytique FR - Étude Alternatives aux herbicides
Kurzfassung DE - Studie Alternative zu Herbiziden
Documento di sintesi - alternative agli erbicidi: agricoltura senza glifosato
Podsumowanie dla decydentów - alternatywy dla herbicydów - rolnictwo bez glifosatu
Síntesis - Estudio Alternativas a los herbicidas

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