

The case against Glyphosate ... again

We have been somewhat surprised by a recent [news article](#) which reports Glyphosate used in food production, is linked to rising cancer rates in the UK. Whilst this ill-informed protestation isn't exactly new, the brass neck of those asserting fiction as fact is truly astonishing.

Articles which are designed to shock and terrify through "click bait" headlines to generate dwell time for advertisers, rely on unattributed and unverified sound bites. Conspiracy loving activists adopt misinformation to promote their own agendas, they twist truths, convey emotion as science and remove all context from "official" comment. Rubbishing established fact and well researched science is not without wider social, health and economic consequence.

Proven over and over to be safe and effective!

Who makes the case for the negative consequence of vilifying a compound which has been proven over and over again to be both safe and effective in the control of weeds in both food production and around our wider environment?

No one can argue that chemical compounds used by humans to eradicate or control other living things, must be used correctly and in a specifically targeted way. We should all embrace efforts to ensure that the chemicals used in our food chain, or on our streets and parks are used by those who know what they are doing and who can be held accountable for their actions. Regulation on the sale and use of such chemicals should be under constant review, but by those who understand the science not those with an evangelical drive to ban everything at any cost.

Does Glyphosate used in food production cause cancer?

Well according to [Cancer Research UK](#), no, it does not. They also state very clearly that "*using weed killer when gardening does not increase cancer risk.*"

Furthermore, they highlight that governing bodies such as "*The Food Standards Agency monitors food safety within the UK. They make sure that the levels of pesticides in food in the UK are not harmful to human health.*" And that "*There can be small amounts of pesticides or herbicides on the surface of what we eat. But levels are low and do not increase the risk of cancer in people.*"

So, why would such a large, credible organisation, whose purpose is to help reduce cancer rates, by contributing millions of pounds to scientists, doctors, and nurses, provide such definitive statements which are contrary to those published in a click bait news article?

Why the continued unbalanced focus on Glyphosate?

Perhaps, Cancer Research UK is in step with current scientific thinking. Perhaps, they are not being paid off by big Agri, given they are a charity which promotes science. And perhaps, they are probably as credible as it is possible to be, in comparison to others who intentionally pick out snippets of quotes to draw a reader's intention.

At what point do rational people with balanced opinion and the ability to consider all the facts, call this stuff out? Single issue, conviction campaigners that tell lies and mask the truth are not ok and should not go unchallenged. People happily sit in the sun, collecting UV rays on their skin as they turn into crispy bacon, drinking alcohol and wouldn't have an issue consuming processed foods, all of which have had sufficient evidence to be **directly** linked to cancer in humans. Yet we see no articles challenging these other forms of carcinogen, so why is there such a condemning focus on Glyphosate?

The importance of industry standards

A simple question to ask any company you come across using herbicides; are you registered under the Official Controls (PPP) Regulations 2020? A question which soon begins to separate those who comply with industry best practices and current legislation, from the cowboys who are just "slinging a bit of herbicide about".

Amenity Forum members are committed to the promotion of best practice and promote and endorse those who use pesticides safely and sustainably. We have produced codes of practices, provided training, webinars and continue to invest in our members to ensure they understand the importance of safety when using any herbicide. Our Members across the wider urban environment are a key element leading to enhanced biodiversity in the amenity sector.

The conversation continues

Whilst the conversation on Glyphosate and its 'safeness' is probably far from over (especially to those who need a topic for a slow Wednesday article), until there is conclusive evidence that the active ingredient Glyphosate or other pesticides are a direct cause of any cancerous issues, we should continue to use these products, ensuring we implement integrated weed management strategies as appropriate and conduct any application in a safe, sustainable and controlled manner.