

Czech Republic to restrict use of glyphosate weedkiller

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Glyphosate was introduced under the brand name RoundUp

The Czech Republic will limit the use of substances containing the controversial glyphosate weedkiller as of next year, the agriculture ministry said on Monday.

Glyphosate was introduced in 1974 by US agro-giant Monsanto under the brand-name Roundup. Earlier this year, Monsanto was wholly acquired by German behemoth Bayer.

A World Health Organization study has found that glyphosate probably causes cancer but studies conducted since have disagreed.

The Czech Republic will ban the blanket use of glyphosate as a weedkiller and as a drying agent to accelerate plant maturation, the ministry said in a statement.

"These substances will only be employed in cases when no other efficient method can be used," Agriculture Minister Miroslav Toman said.

The ministry also said glyphosate use in the Czech Republic had dropped from 935,000 litres in 2013 to 750,000 litres last year.

The European Union decided last year to extend a licence for the herbicide by five years until 2022, with 18 of the bloc's 28 member states voting in favour, including the Czech Republic and Germany.

But the EU has allowed its members to decide whether to impose restrictions on the substance at the national level.

Environmental campaigners like Greenpeace have been calling for an outright ban in Europe for [glyphosate](#) but Monsanto long insisted the herbicide meets EU licencing standards.

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