

EU offers temporary approval of weedkiller glyphosate (Update)

June 29 2016



Members of Avaaz civic organization hold up protest signs on May 18, 2016 in Brussels, in demonstration against the European Commissions' plans to relicense glyphosate, the controversial carcinogenic weed-killer

The European Commission on Wednesday extended approval of the weedkiller glyphosate in Europe for up to 18 months amid disagreements over whether the chemical could cause cancer.

The EU's 28 member states are bitterly divided on the dangers of

glyphosate, one of the world's most popular weedkillers first used in the Monsanto herbicide Roundup.

Last month, EU national regulators delayed their decision on rolling over the approval of glyphosate for nine years after failing to find the necessary majority.

Among major EU member states, France and Italy oppose re-approving glyphosate, while Germany has so far abstained from making a clear decision.

Left with the indecision of the member states, the commission will now extend the existing approval until conclusions from scientific research by the EU becomes available by December 31, 2017 at the latest.

"After EU Member States failed to take responsibility for the decision on glyphosate extension, Commission decided to extend the approval of glyphosate for a limited period of time," said Enrico Brivio, Commission Spokesperson for Health and Food Safety.

Opponents to glyphosate, led by Greenpeace, point to research from the World Health Organisation that concludes the chemical may be carcinogenic and are calling for the ingredient's outright ban.

In May, a review carried out by experts from both the WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization said "glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans from exposure through the diet."

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