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## Think Twice Before Using Roundup on Your Garden This Summer (/full-blog/2012/07/think-twice-before-using-roundup-on.html)

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By: Arthur Cook, Staff Member

Summer means family barbeques, celebrations surrounding flags, our fathers, and at least a dozen weddings. Summer also means lawn care. Committing herbicide against the ever-encroaching weed terror sends many to their local lawn and garden centers. Glyphosate, the most widely used herbicide in the United States, is featured in many popular weed killing products like Roundup.[1] Roundup is particularly popular with farmers. Glyphosate is non-selective in that it kills all vegetation except genetically modified plants marketed as "Roundup Ready." [2] Roundup is manufactured by everybody's favorite shady conglomerate, Monsanto.[3]

What most people do not consider when purchasing and applying Roundup is the relationship between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and their lawns. As you read this, the EPA is in the process of finishing its data-gathering for the first comprehensive review of Roundup in thirty years.[4] Some studies indicate levels of Glyphosate have risen in food sources over the last few years.[5] This is particularly concerning because Glyphosate has low, but not the lowest, level of toxicity.[6]

Additionally, a surfactant non-active ingredient in Roundup, polyethoxylated tallowamine (POEA), has recently come under fire for posing greater dangers to humans than Glyphosate. In one study from the University of Caen, researchers determined the chemical was more deadly to human embryonic, placental, and umbilical cord cells than the herbicide itself. [7] Additionally, POEA is not subject to EPA regulation. [8]

Some governments have already moved to curb the influence of Roundup. For example, the province of Ontario in Canada has a comprehensive ban on all non-essential weed killers, including Roundup.[9] Ontario defines "non-essential" as uses for purposes that include a concern for public safety.[10] Other locales, such as Boulder, Colorado, have entirely moved away from using Roundup in public places.[11] As the EPA concludes its study, the effects of Roundup will be more closely scrutinized for the potential for danger to humans. In the meantime, consider pulling those pesky weeds yourself.

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[1] *Glyphosate Technical Fact Sheet*, NATIONAL PESTICIDE INFORMATION, <http://water.epa.gov/drink/contaminants/basicinformation/historical/upload/Archived-Technical-Fact-Sheet-on-Glyphosate.pdf>.

[2] *Herbicide Tolerance and GM Crops*, GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL, (June 30, 2011), <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/publications/reports/Herbicide-tolerance-and-GM-crops/>.

[3] *Id.*

[4] Carey Gillam, *Cancer Cause or Crop Aid? Herbicide Faces Big Test*, REUTERS, (Apr. 8, 2011, 12:14 PM), <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/04/08/us-glyphosate-epa-idUSTRE7374WX20110408..>

[5] *Agronomic and Environmental Impacts of the Commercial Cultivation of Glyphosate Tolerant Soybean in the USA*, CENTRUM VOOR LANDBOUW EN MILIEU, [http://www.sbcbiotech.nl/page/downloads/Agronomic\\_and\\_environmental\\_impacts\\_GT\\_soybean\\_SBC\\_\\_CLM\\_July\\_2001.pdf](http://www.sbcbiotech.nl/page/downloads/Agronomic_and_environmental_impacts_GT_soybean_SBC__CLM_July_2001.pdf).

[6] *R.E.D. FACTS: Glyphosate*, EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/REDs/factsheets/0178fact.pdf>.

[7] Crystal Gammon and ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS, *Weed-Whacking Herbicide Proves Deadly to Human Cells*, SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, (June 23, 2009), <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=weed-whacking-herbicide-p>.

[8] *Id.*

[9] Mary Agnes Welch, *Province's Chemical Dependency*, WINNIPEG FREE PRESS, (May 22, 2012), (<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/provinces-chemical-dependency-152469985.html>).

[10] *Id.*

[11] Heather Urie, *Boulder City Manager Pulls Roundup Weedkiller in Public Places*, DAILY CAMERA, (May 1, 2011), [http://www.dailycamera.com/ci\\_17960073](http://www.dailycamera.com/ci_17960073).

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