Glyphosate Found in the Majority of Oat-Based Products

Environmental Working Group (EWG) tested 45 products with conventionally grown oats and found glyphosate in 43 of them. They also tested 16 different products using organic oats. The products tested included breakfast cereals like lucky charms and cheerios, granola, and snack bars in addition to whole oats and instant oats. While the organic samples better,tter , five of the samples registered positive for glyphosate. Quaker Old Fashioned Oats, Quaker Simply Granola, Giant Instant Oatmeal, and Quaker Dinosaur Eggs Instant Oatmeal had particularly high levels of glyphosate. A glyphosate risk assessment found that children are likely to have the highest levels of dietary exposure to the chemical, and this study from EWG is a wake-up call. Alexis Temkin, Ph.D., a toxicologist and the author of the study, says,

> *Parents shouldn't worry about whether feeding their children healthy oat foods will also expose them to a chemical linked to cancer. The government must take steps to protect our most vulnerable populations…"*

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Glyphosate and Health

Roundup has been in all of the news lately, as a California jury recently ruled that the herbicide was the cause of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It makes sense that the legal victory came in the state of California, where glyphosate has been listed as a cause of cancer on their Proposition 65 list since July

of 2017. The court case will likely prove instrumental in the continued investigation of how Roundup impacts human health, but this far from the first time the herbicide has been linked to cancer. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified glyphosate as probably carcinogenic, or cancer-causing, in 2015, a categorization Monsanto (and now Bayer) has been vigorously arguing ever since. The herbicide has also been linked to a plethora of other health concerns like Alzheimer's, birth defects, respiratory illness, Parkinson's disease, reproductive issues, and several conditions linked gut disruption (obesity, Irritable Bowel Disease, Colitis, and Leaky Gut).

Over the Threshold

In 1985, the Environmental Protection Agency labeled glyphosate as a cancer risk. That categorization was reversed in 1991, and since then the government organization has become one of Monsanto's most important assets. The EPA has expressed nothing but support for the weed-killer since 1991. The agency disagreed with the IARC's findings, issuing a rebuttal a year later. Email correspondence between a high-ranking official at the EPA and Monsanto employees detailing the official's efforts to squash glyphosate investigations emerged in 2017. The EPA's has also imposed exceptionally lenient safety standards on glyphosate, as the federal agency's safe levels of exposure to the herbicide are 60 times higher than the state of California's.

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Collateral Damage

The EPA, especially considering the business-friendly, environmentally ambivalent Trump administration, is not likely to care about the damage glyphosate has and is doing. EWG

president Ken Cook says,

> *We will petition the Environmental Protection Agency to do its job and end uses of glyphosate that resulted in the contamination we report today…But we very much doubt our petition will be acted upon by President Trump's lawless EPA. So we're calling on the companies to make these iconic products with clean ingredients."*

It will be difficult. This study shows that even organic products can have glyphosate on them…because it's everywhere. Taking on the world's most-used herbicide is a daunting task, and consumer dollars will be a big part of how businesses choose to handle it.

Sources:

- *Glyphosate – It's What's for Breakfast: Study Finds Cancer-Causing Weedkiller in Popular Oatmeal, Cereals, and Snack Bars* – Alternet
- *Breakfast With a Dose of Roundup?* – Environmental Working Group
- *Widely used herbicide linked to cancer* – Nature.com
- *15 Health Problems Linked to Monsanto's Roundup* – EcoWatch
- *New Study Shows EPA 'Safe' Levels of Glyphosate Not Safe at All* – Care2
- *How Monsanto Captured the EPA (And Twisted Science) To Keep Glyphosate on the Market* – In These Times