Monsanto Might Be in Big Trouble

Monsanto is currently embroiled in a lawsuit from farmers claiming that glyphosate caused their non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, contradicting the EPA's finding that the chemical is "…not likely to be carcinogenic to humans." On Tuesday, documents from the case were unsealed, including an internal email exchange at Monsanto that implies they wrote portions of EPA studies on the herbicide. According to one email, "…we would be keeping the cost down by us doing the writing and they would just edit & sign their names so to speak…" Another email specifically mentions portions of studies that would be ghostwritten by Monsanto employees, as opposed to regulatory agencies.

Suspect Everyone

Federal judge Vince Chhabria, who is based in Northern California and is overseeing the litigation against the company, has indicated that, "My reaction is when you consider the relevance of the EPA's reports, and you consider their relevance to this litigation, it seems appropriate to take Jess Rowland's deposition…" Previous documents released in the case included a letter from a long-time EPA employee, alleging that Rowland and other colleagues played "political, conniving games with the science to favor the registrants." Other emails directly from Rowland indicated that he would quash another assessment of glyphosate from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, among other things. Rowland's testimony will be key for the plaintiff, as his time as the chair of the Cancer Assessment Review Committee coincides with the release of the EPA memo that disputes the World Health Organization's classification of glyphosate as probably carcinogenic. A subpoena will likely be necessary to interview Rowland, as he

has declined a previous, voluntary request.

The EPA is also concerned about their standing in this lawsuit. Raven M. Norris, the attorney representing them this case, stated, “The agency has legitimate concerns about being pulled into private litigation…They want to be able to maintain their impartiality.” If the already released documents are any indication, impartiality is already off the table. They are left fighting for plausible deniability.

Monsanto has maintained its defense of glyphosate, and Bill Heydens, one of the alleged ghostwriters, has given sworn testimony about his original emails, claiming, “It was things like editing relatively minor things, editing for formatting, just for clarity, really just for overall readability to make it easier for people to read in a more organized fashion…”. Rowland will hopefully provide the other side of that conversation, but it is likely his testimony will protect the company.

A Vulnerable Position for the Agricultural Giant

Complaints and studies against Monsanto and glyphosate have been piling up for quite some time now. While the WHO has reclassified the chemical after extensive research, the U.S. regulators have lagged behind with a different script. The EPA may be able to claim that they were unaware of this manipulation, though plaintiff attorneys have suggested that the EPA “may be unaware of Monsanto’s deceptive authorship practices.” But there really isn’t a good position here. If Rowland implicates Monsanto and saves the EPA, Monsanto’s $66 million dollar merger with Bayer might be in jeopardy. If Rowland follows the money (history indicates probably) or martyrs himself, the EPA looks incompetent. For the rest of us, we’ll get a better picture of who is pulling the strings when this case is decided.

Recommended Reading:

- *Understanding and Detoxifying Genetically Modified Foods*
- *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases*
- *Scientists Against GMOs – Hear From Those Who Have Done the Research*
- *Why Anti-Vaxxers Don't Vaccinate*
- *Vaccines, Retroviruses, DNA, and the Discovery That Destroyed Judy Mikovits' Career*
- *How To Detoxify and Heal From Vaccinations – For Adults and Children*
- *Doctors Against Vaccines – Hear From Those Who Have Done the Research*

Sources:

- *Monsanto Cancer Suits Turn to EPA Deputy's 'Suspicious' Role* – Bloomberg Business
- *EPA Official Accused of Helping Monsanto `Kill' Cancer Study* – Bloomberg Business
- *Monsanto Accused of Ghostwriting Papers on Roundup Cancer Risk* – Yahoo! Finance
- *Lawsuit Alleges That Monsanto Influenced the EPA's Classification of Glyphosate* – Organic Lifestyle Magazine