5.1.2.e Woo

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Bericht uit de Agrow:

The French food safety agency, the Anses, is calling for applications to conduct several toxicological studies to improve knowledge of the carcinogenic potential of the herbicide, glyphosate. The results of these studies will be taken into account in the next EU re-evaluation of glyphosate, the agency says.

France is part of a group of rapporteur member states, also including Hungary, Netherlands and Sweden, which will be conducting the next EU reassessment of glyphosate. The European Commission proposed in April that the next EU assessment of the active ingredient be handled by a group of EU member states, rather than the usual system of two countries acting as rapporteur and co-rapporteur. That was because no individual member state volunteered to take on the "expected very large application dossier and the related high workload".

Considerable controversy surrounded the five-year renewal of glyphosate's EU approval in 2017. Rapporteur Germany and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) came under sustained criticism from environmentalist groups because they disagreed with the UN WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer's conclusion that glyphosate was probably carcinogenic. The renewal process for glyphosate must begin in December 2019, which is three years before the current expiry date.

In its call, the Anses has asked for studies in three areas:

1. In vitro tests to study the effects on human and animal cells that could be related to cellular stress following exposure to glyphosate. These tests could identify the molecular pathways involved in the cellular response. Their results will help interpret the other recommended tests and explain the conflicting results observed in the literature.

2. An in vivo comet assay in rats and mice (stomach, intestine, liver, kidney and pancreas), coupled with a micronucleus assay. These tests should clarify the genotoxic potential of glyphosate. The results will complement other studies already available, including those conducted by the US National Toxicology Program.

3. A cell transformation assay coupled with the "Transformics" method. These tests could identify in vitro glyphosate's possible carcinogenic modes and mechanisms of action.

The studies will have to be conducted by independent research teams under strict conditions of experimentation and traceability. At the end of the selection process, an agreement will be signed between the Anses and the selected candidate or candidates.

The results of the studies must be available within 18 months, at the end of 2021 at the latest, for submission in the context of glyphosate's re-evaluation.

Consortia and research teams that would like to consult the specifications of the call can do so on the French public procurement platform.
Applications need to be submitted by October 15th.