

Scientific Reviews of Glyphosate's Cancer Risk Fail to Fully Disclose Monsanto's Role

Publisher Requests Corrections of Studies That Contradicted World Health Organization Findings

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The scientific journal Critical Reviews in Toxicology has [issued](#) a rare "Expression of Concern" and requested corrections to articles it published that failed to fully disclose Monsanto's role in reviews of glyphosate's cancer risks.

The journal said all five articles it published in a 2016 [supplemental issue](#) titled "An Independent Review of the Carcinogenic Potential of Glyphosate" failed to include an accurate disclosure of the pesticide-maker's involvement.

The five articles at issue were all highly critical of the 2015 [finding](#) by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer that glyphosate, the main ingredient in Roundup, is a probable human carcinogen.

"It's deplorable that Monsanto was the puppet master behind the supposedly 'independent' reviews of glyphosate's safety," said Nathan Donley, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "These papers were manufactured as a way to counteract the World Health Organization's findings on glyphosate's cancer risks. They could mislead the public in dangerous ways and should be completely retracted."

The documents revealing Monsanto's role in the reviews came to light during a trial that culminated last month when a jury [found](#) that exposure to glyphosate products was a "substantial" contributing factor to the terminal cancer of a California groundskeeper, who was subsequently awarded \$289 million in damages.

Those documents exposed that Monsanto improperly edited the articles and directly paid some of the authors a consulting fee for their work.

In an October 2017 [letter](#) to the publisher, the Center for Biological Diversity and three other national environmental health groups demanded the articles be retracted.

The [Declaration of Interest](#) statement that was originally published with the papers:

- Failed to disclose that at least two panelists who authored the review worked as consultants for, and were directly paid by, Monsanto for their work on the paper;

- Failed to disclose that at least one Monsanto employee extensively edited the manuscript and was adamant about retaining inflammatory language critical of the IARC assessment — against some of the authors' wishes; the disclosure falsely stated that no Monsanto employee reviewed the manuscript.

Additionally, multiple internal emails from Monsanto indicated the pesticide maker's willingness to ghostwrite or compile information for the authors of the reviews, dictate the scope of one of the reviews, and identify which scientists to engage or list as authors of the reviews.

In an email sent yesterday to the Center, a representative from the publisher of the articles, Taylor and Francis, wrote:

"We note that, despite requests for full disclosure, the original Acknowledgements and Declaration of Interest statements provided to the journal did not fully represent the involvement of Monsanto or its employees or contractors in the authorship of the articles."

Despite the misconduct that Taylor and Francis acknowledged in the Expression of Concern, the publisher has refused to issue a retraction for the papers, in contradiction to its own [Corrections Policy](#), and has allowed the title of the supplemental issue to retain the phrase "an independent review."

"This peek behind the Monsanto curtain raises serious questions about the safety of glyphosate," said Donley. "Monsanto's unethical behavior and the publisher's response undermine scientific integrity and ultimately public health."

Evidence continues to mount about the toxicity of glyphosate, not only to humans, but to the broader environment. Glyphosate was recently [found](#) to make honeybees more susceptible to infection from pathogens, implicating it as a contributing factor in worldwide bee declines.

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