

IARC responds to Reuters article of 14 June 2017

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has noted the recent article from Reuters (published on 14 June 2017) on the subject of the carcinogenicity of glyphosate and the related contentious legal and regulatory context.

The IARC Secretariat was not informed about unpublished results from the Agricultural Health Study (AHS) about glyphosate. The IARC Working Group for Monographs Volume 112, which met in March 2015, did not consider unpublished results from the AHS, or from any other study.

In the section on [Data for the Monographs](#), the [Preamble](#) to the IARC Monographs notes, “*With regard to epidemiological studies, cancer bioassays, and mechanistic and other relevant data, only reports that have been published or accepted for publication in the openly available scientific literature are reviewed.*” The Preamble also states that “*Data from government agency reports that are publicly available are also considered.*” Consequently, the IARC Monograph on glyphosate only included studies and data meeting these criteria. As reported in the Reuters article, the update of the AHS analysis is still under way.

The IARC Monographs Programme does not base its evaluations on opinions presented in media reports. Instead, the Programme conducts evaluations of carcinogenicity based on the systematic assembly and review of all publicly available and pertinent scientific studies, by independent experts, free from vested interests.

The journal article by Tarone referenced in the Reuters article acknowledges that the author consulted with a lawyer representing Monsanto and that payment was received for that consultation. IARC scientists took note of the article and submitted a Letter to the Editor of that journal in December 2016. To date, this letter has not been published. However, the journal’s editors have indicated, most recently in correspondence dated 17 May 2017, that the article by Tarone will be corrected to report the author’s paid consultation with Monsanto as a conflict of interest. In addition, the journal editor indicated that the text of the published article itself will be changed and that the revised article will be characterized as an “opinion paper” rather than a “research paper”.

Further information about the IARC Monographs, including the correct classifications of glyphosate (Group 2A), red meat (Group 2A), and coffee (Group 3), can be found at monographs.iarc.fr.

IARC can re-evaluate substances when a significant body of new scientific data is published in the openly available scientific literature.