# WHO's IARC's new target: Red meat, which may be classified, along with glyphosate, as carcinogen

In March, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) [made headlines](#) [when it declared](#) that glyphosate, one of the world's most commonly used herbicides, "[probably](#)" causes cancer in humans.

But in October, the organization is expected to issue a report on a much bigger target: meat. And the industry is bracing for the worst.

"It's our 12-alarm fire, because if they determine that red and processed meat causes cancer—and I think that they will—that moniker will stick around for years," Betsy Booren, vice president for scientific affairs at the North American Meat Institute, said at a recent conference, trade publication [Meatingplace reported](#). "It could take decades and billions of dollars to change that," she added.

Eating too much red meat has been linked to health problems including [shorter lifespans](#), [heart disease](#), and [various kinds of cancer](#). In April 2014, the [IARC cited studies](#) linking red and processed meats to colorectal, esophageal, lung, and pancreatic cancer, and called determining the connection a "high priority." Since then, the organization has been collecting information to make their final determination.

The IARC classifies substances on a scale of 1 ("carcinogenic to humans") to 4 ("probably not carcinogenic to humans"). Booren said a 2B designation, or possibly carcinogenic to humans, would be "a win for our industry." Glyphosate was classified as a 2A, probably carcinogenic to humans.

There are many substances used in daily life that get a 2A or 2B classification, including chemicals used to fry foods and even coffee. But what really matters for anything classified as potentially or probably carcinogenic are amounts.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post:** [The World Health Organization is expected to say red meat is linked to cancer](#)