As glyphosate—cancer legal battle intensifies, Bayer faces questions whether it needs to split up to survive

The glyphosate lawsuits—and the political backlash—stem from a finding by a division of the World Health Organisation, which said in 2015 that the chemical was “probably carcinogenic”. The study, controversial among scientists, has dogged Bayer ever since it bought Monsanto, Roundup’s American inventor, in 2018. Bayer’s market capitalisation has nearly halved since the takeover, to €55.5bn ($62.4bn), a little less than the $63bn it paid for the American agrochemicals giant.

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Losing Roundup altogether would similarly hurt but not kill the German firm. The weedkiller accounts for 12-15% of sales at Bayer’s crop-business and perhaps €1bn, or around a quarter, of Bayer’s operating profit. Despite talk of prohibitions around the world, many farmers fear that losing Roundup will reduce their yields—and have made their concerns known to their political representatives.

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Some investors, including Elliott, a feisty American hedge fund, have called for the company to excise the toxic agribusiness from a healthy drugmaker (Bayer’s original operation). To reassure investors the company’s management is cutting 12,000 jobs and has considered selling its animal-health, sun-cream and foot-care businesses. But it has resisted a full split, having fought hard to combine the two firms.

Read full, original article: Glyphosate woes prompt calls to split up Bayer **(Behind Paywall)**