

Former New Zealand EPA chief scientist says agrochemicals help ‘provide safe and affordable food’

The US Department of Agriculture has calculated that pesticides have become less toxic, more potent (leading to lower application rates), and less persistent in the environment since the 1960s.

...

Just as with pharmaceuticals and medical devices, pesticides need to be well-regulated and monitored.

This is particularly important for the people who have the most direct contact with the chemicals, such as farmers.

It is therefore reassuring to farmers and agricultural workers that health surveys continue to reveal they have lower rates of cancer than the general population.

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New products for New Zealand must go through further evaluation to comply with the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act (Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)) and the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act (MPI)).

Three years of testing and trials over multiple seasons and in different regions of the country are required before chemicals are approved for use.

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The evaluations provide reassurance and results from the Total Diet Study (MPI) indicate that the current approval process is sufficient to ensure human safety.

The latest report (2018) states that “The food New Zealanders eat has a high level of safety in regard to chemical hazards” and “exposure to agricultural chemicals and contaminants from food remains low.”

Agri-chemicals, when used as directed, assist with providing safe and affordable food.

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