

GLP Facts & Fallacies Podcast and Video: Curing ‘incurable’ leukemia? Cowardly corporations; Glyphosate hasn’t tainted school lunches

A new gene-editing technique known as base editing may have helped doctor’s cure a young girl’s “incurable” cancer. Why are so many companies afraid to stand up to environmental groups that attack their products with scientific misinformation? Is your child’s school lunch tainted with harmful pesticides? There isn’t a shred of evidence behind that allegation.

Join geneticist Kevin Folta and GLP contributor Cameron English on episode 200 of Science Facts and Fallacies as they break down these latest news stories:

- [‘Zero detectable cancer cells’: Experimental CRISPR tool appears to cure 13-year-old’s ‘incurable’ leukemia](#)

T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia (T-ALL) is an especially aggressive form of cancer. It [progresses quickly](#), making the disease difficult to treat with standard therapies such as stem-cell transplants, radiation and chemotherapy. Fortunately, a novel gene therapy may give some patients and their doctors the upper hand they need to beat T-ALL. Using a relatively new gene-editing technique called [base editing](#), researchers engineered a young patient’s T-cells to target and attack the cancerous cells. This experimental treatment prevents the patient’s immune system from destroying the modified T-cells; it also keeps the cells from attacking each other. So far, the patient, named Alyssa, has responded well to the therapy. Her cancer has not returned six months after she received this CAR-T therapy. That’s a generally encouraging sign, but experts say the disease is more likely to return shortly after a seemingly successful treatment. The fact that it hasn’t *may* indicate that Alyssa’s cancer has been cured. Of course, only time will tell if her “incurable” disease has been cured.

- [Viewpoint: Tobacconization of corporations — How green activist groups delegitimize industries regardless of the benefits of their products](#)

Environmental activist groups have successfully shut many companies out of public discussions about the safety of their products. Using a carefully orchestrated approach employed successfully against tobacco companies in years past, so-called “green groups” have attacked the makers of pesticides, cell phones, GM crops, baby powder and many other useful consumer and industrial products. Oddly, many of the firms targeted in this way have refused to defend themselves in the public square, preferring to settle lawsuits out of court and keep their heads down, hoping the controversy will go away on its own. Does this passive strategy work, or does it actually encourage activists to behave more aggressively?

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- [Viewpoint: Glyphosate and other ‘toxic herbicides’ in school lunches? Food Chain Radio hosts disinformation specialist Zen Honeycutt](#)

Infamous anti-GMO activist Zen Honeycutt, founder of Moms Across America, appeared on Food Chain Radio recently to promote a host of falsehoods about the herbicide glyphosate. After linking the weedkiller to cancer, autism and other serious conditions it almost certainly doesn't cause, Honeycutt alleged that lunches served in America's public schools are tainted with the "toxic" pesticide. It's this sort of activism that unnecessarily alarms the public about safe and necessary crop-protection tools. Worst of all, it jeopardizes the well being of public school students, some of whom depend on school meals to get the nutrition they need.

Kevin M. Folta is a professor, keynote speaker and podcast host. Follow Professor Folta on Twitter [@kevinfolta](#)

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