Viewpoint: Why a glyphosate ban would lead to use of ineffective and more toxic alternatives

A complete ban on the use of glyphosate in agriculture in the short term will lead to farmers more frequently using other pesticides and also non-chemical alternatives that, on balance, are not necessarily better for humans, the environment, soil life and the climate. This is what agronomist field researchers from Wageningen University & Research warn in a memorandum prepared at the request of the Dutch parliament’s committee on Agriculture, Nature & Food Quality.

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The main message of the prepared memorandum is: glyphosate scores better from an agricultural point of view and in terms of feasibility of investments in money and manpower than the current alternatives. In addition, many of the existing chemical alternatives to glyphosate are not necessarily better for humans and the environment. Moreover, many of the current non-chemical alternatives (e.g. ploughing) are more unfavourable to soil life and climate change mitigation.

In their note, the experts emphasise that they are not advocating the widespread use of glyphosate, but that they fear that banning the herbicide completely in the short term may not necessarily be an improvement. Their expectation is that growers will initially switch to other existing chemical alternatives, which are agriculturally less effective and will therefore be used more intensively.

This is an excerpt. Read the original post here