

Glyphosate disinformation: French activists use fake ‘glyphosate detection tests’ in campaign to turn public against safe weedkiller

The [first article](#) on this blog devoted to glyphosate deciphered the political issues surrounding the reauthorization of this herbicide in the European Union. The [second](#) showed the manipulations surrounding claims about its carcinogenicity. The present gives the floor to Michel Vaudour, farmer and head of the file for the FNSEA CVL, and JeanYves Chauveau of the agricultural weekly Terre de Touraine, key figures of the [collective](#) entitled [Notrefuturdansleschamps](#) which refuted a campaign which claims glyphosate contaminates the entire French population.

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[Jean-Yves Chauveau:] Opponents needed a tool that would strike public opinion. Monica Kruger, an activist and director of the private veterinary testing laboratory Biocheck, was aware of a test sold by the company Abraxis. It warns of the potential presence of glyphosate in water or urine. It uses the inexpensive, antibody-based ELISA method. But other, unknown molecules react and produce false positives (“background noise”).

...

Beyond that, to distinguish between “background noise” and glyphosate: “presence to be checked by a confirmation technique” (the reliable method is chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry). By following this protocol, the final measurement in Europeans simply indicates traces in 15 to 25% of cases, with values close to the detection limit. It wasn’t enough to create an anxiety-provoking campaign.

However, in 2014, [Monica] Kruger allowed herself to lower the threshold for urine to that of water (8 times lower) and to transform the alert tool into a direct quantification tool. To validate the maneuver, she published a “study” in a scientific journal selecting 13 values out of more than 400. Biocheck takes the legal precaution of indicating that the procedure is “*nicht adkrediertes*” (not accredited) at the bottom of its analyses.

This allowed them to show 99.6% positive results in 2016 in a campaign of 2000 analyses via organic stores.

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[Michel Vaudour:] The naïve agricultural world did not imagine that the opponents could have built a campaign by knowingly relying on a misguided measurement protocol. It was only after Envoy Spécial that the first two counter-tests were carried out at Limoges University Hospital in the spring of 2019. As a result, there was no trace of glyphosate in the urine. The choice was then made to carry out cross-tests, Elisa and Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry at Labocéa in Brest or at the Limoges University

Hospital... These tests were carried out by the FNSEA network and the local press did not investigate. In Tours we opened the counter-tests to parliamentarians, journalists and in January 2020, with the eyes of experts to understand. CG departmental officials refused to participate. The same refusal applies to a conference with a toxicologist from the University Hospital.

[Editor's Note: This article has been translated from French and edited for clarity.]

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)