EU Regulators Begin Review of Draft Assessment of Glyphosate

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The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have received a draft assessment of glyphosate carried out by four European Union (EU) member states and have begun to consider the findings. According to ECHA’s June 15, 2021, press release, the national authorities of France, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Sweden -- known as the Assessment Group of Glyphosate (AGG) -- examined all the evidence submitted by the companies that are seeking renewed approval to market the glyphosate in the EU. Glyphosate is currently authorized for use in the EU until December 2022.

ECHA and EFSA will organize parallel consultations on the draft report. These will be open to the public and will be held in the first week of September 2021. According to ECHA, the consultations are the first step in the assessments. ECHA’s Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) will review the classification of glyphosate under the Classification, Labeling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation. ECHA notes that
chemical classification is based solely on the hazardous properties of a substance and does not consider the likelihood of exposure. Exposure is considered as part of the risk assessment process led by EFSA.

Glyphosate currently has a harmonized classification as causing serious eye damage and as toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects, prior to and following ECHA’s 2017 assessment. ECHA states that no classification for germ cell mutagenicity, carcinogenicity, or reproductive toxicity was warranted. The AGG proposal does not foresee a change to the existing classification.

Once ECHA adopts its opinion on the classification of glyphosate, EFSA will prepare a final peer review and publish its conclusions, expected in late 2022. Based on this risk assessment, the European Commission (EC) will decide whether to renew glyphosate.

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