

Pesticides and Health E-News

A monthly news summary brought to you by the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) as part of the Sick of Pesticides Campaign



March 2010

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HEAL's Action on Pesticides

Week Without Pesticides

The 20th-30th March was International Week Without Pesticides. The campaign, which started in France four years ago, aims to raise awareness of the risks to health and the environment posed by pesticides and to highlight alternative solutions.

With the continuing success of the French campaign, this year the movement expanded across Europe and parts of Africa, highlighting the numerous alternatives to pesticide use.

French campaign - Coordinated by Action Citizen for Alternatives to Pesticides (ACAP), a network of 170 organisations coordinated by MDRGF, a HEAL member. Over 600 events took place over the ten days. This year, for the first time, all regions of France took part. The French campaign focused on pesticide use in gardens. Read more [here](#)

The EU campaign - HEAL member, Pesticide Action Network Europe organised a week-long exhibition in the European Economic and Social Committee showcasing alternatives to pesticide use and good practice examples. HEAL's [Sick of Pesticides](#) Campaign was featured in this exhibition, as well as the video clips with testimonies from farmers in France, who have serious health problems as a result of pesticide exposure. For more information on the week in Brussels click [here](#)

HEAL Sick of Pesticides campaign

Over the past six months or more, the creation of pesticide victims network has been featured in French newspapers, including several times in leading national newspaper, Le Monde, radio and television.

You can now find videos with testimonies from French farmers affected by pesticide exposure on the website www.victimtimes-pesticides.org. The site also features a video with English subtitles.

Further information on the French campaign will also be available in the forthcoming [Pesticide Exposure \(PEX\) Newsletter](#)

- **Don't forget! Our Sick of Pesticides campaign is expanding to Hungary, Belgium and the Netherlands.** We'll keep you posted on our progress, but for the most up-to-date information please visit the campaign website. www.pesticidescancer.eu As ever, please let us know if you're interested in working together with us.

Policy and science news

On 23rd February The European Parliament's Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) discussed the draft report on the EU Biocides law by rapporteur Christa Klass (PPE, Germany). In the debate, Members of the ENVI Committee stressed the need to improve the Commission proposal and the rapporteur's draft report to better protect health and the environment.

Prior to this discussion, HEAL together with the Pesticide Action Network and other partners, sent a letter to MEPs urging them to introduce changes to ensure the comprehensive phasing-out of hazardous substances, a low-risk approach without loopholes, the better protection of vulnerable groups, and other crucial issues. The ENVI Committee is scheduled to vote on the draft report at the end of April. Read the joint NGO letter [here](#).

UN experts call for two pesticides to join international trade watch list.

United Nations experts have recommended that two pesticides be added to a trade "watch list" under a UN-backed treaty aimed at helping poorer countries more effectively manage potentially harmful imported substances. Endosulfan and azinphos-methyl, each pose an unacceptably high risk to human health and the environment, according to the Chemical Review Committee (CRC) of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade. Read the full article [here](#).

Pesticide chlorpyrifos is linked to childhood developmental delays.

Exposure to the pesticide chlorpyrifos—which is banned for use in households in the US (but not in the EU) but is still widely used throughout the agricultural industry - is associated with early childhood developmental delays, according to a new study. Read more [here](#).

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info@env-health.org

Neurobehavioral Deficits and Increased Blood Pressure in School-Age Children Prenatally Exposed to Pesticides.

The long-term neurotoxicity risks caused by prenatal exposures to pesticides are unclear, but a previous pilot study of Ecuadorian school children suggested that blood pressure and visuospatial processing may be vulnerable. Read the full article [here](#)

Pesticides and your health - a family physician's perspective. Dr. Vakil of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, discusses the controversy surrounding pesticide use and human health. "If these chemicals are harmful, they should be banned; if they are safe they can be used widely and freely without restriction". Read more [here](#).

More info & articles on pesticides and health:

- [16 Cities Sue Manufacturer Of Atrazine Weed-Killer For Contaminating Drinking Water](#)
- [Parliament Magazine Article: MEP Corinne Lepage on MDRGF court case on Pesticides in Wine](#)
- [UNMC researchers say farm chemicals may pose cancer risk](#)
- [Under-active thyroid linked to pesticide exposure](#)
- [Panel has concerns over use of a pesticide in California](#)
- [Monsanto admits failure on Bt cotton](#) The ongoing debate on genetically engineered (GE) crops in India took a new turn when U.S. seed and pesticide firm Monsanto disclosed that the pink bollworm, a major cotton pest, has developed resistance to its Bt cotton, according to India Today.
- [Poisoned](#) A programme from Australian television highlighting the problems with pesticide use in Australia.

P.S. GM FOOD: Facts not crops. The European Commission has just approved growing genetically modified crops, putting the GM lobby's profits over public concerns - 60% of Europeans feel they need more information before growing foods that could threaten our health and environment. **Add your voice to the millions calling for a ban on GM foods until the research is completed. [Sign the petition & spread the word.](#)**

Sick of Pesticides Campaign is run by the Health and Environment Alliance, an NGO working at EU level to raise awareness of how environmental protection improves health. We achieve this by creating opportunities for better representation of citizens' and health experts' perspectives in the environment and health-related European policy-making. www.pesticidescancer.eu

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info@env-health.org



Health and Environment Alliance,
28 Boulevard Charlemagne,
Brussels. B1000.