

MX glyphosate

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More detailed readout from the Canadian Embassy via Bayer on SEMARNAT's meeting with ag attaches last Thurs than received from FAS.

From: Stephanie Murphy <Exemption 6 [REDACTED]@bayer.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 11:09 AM
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Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Mexico

Below is a summary of the meeting prepared by the Canadian Embassy that my colleagues in Mexico just sent.

Informative session by SEMARNAT about the restrictions on the glyphosate herbicide

On February 12, 2020 Post attended an informative session organized by Mexico's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), to explain the situation with respect to the glyphosate herbicide. Representatives from diplomatic missions, and officials from other Mexican government departments, including: Agriculture (SADER), Economy (ECONOMIA) and Health (COFEPRIS/SALUD), were invited to attend the session. Following is a summary of the main points raised at the session:

- SEMARNAT noted that Mexico's Secretary of Environment, Victor Manuel Toledo, is a strong supporter of agro-ecology and one of its priorities is the reduction of pesticide use that could be harmful for the environment and health.
- SEMARNAT claims to have scientific evidence about the dangerous effects of glyphosate, and also plans to conduct a study particular for Mexico, with assistance from international organizations.
- SEMARNAT noted that based on existing evidence and on a recommendation from the National Commission of Human Rights (CNDH), the Mexican government has been

taking actions to restrict the use of highly dangerous pesticides, such as the Decree published in November 2019 that prohibited imports of 12 pesticides considered as highly dangerous, and to suspend issuing authorizations for imports of glyphosate based on the precautionary principle. SEMARNAT noted that these actions also consider an upcoming gradual prohibition in the usage of glyphosate in Mexico, as in the case of other countries.

- SEMARNAT is working interdepartmentally with other departments like agriculture (SADER), Health (SALUD/COFEPRIS) and Economy (ECONOMIA) to announce publicly in the coming days how glyphosate usage would be gradually prohibited to reach a full prohibition in 3 or 4 years. SEMARNAT anticipates that some usage prohibitions would be placed immediately, but in the case of agriculture the usage would be gradually prohibited. According to SEMARNAT, this transition period to a full prohibition would help to identify alternatives for the use of glyphosate in agriculture.
- SEMARNAT mentioned that the measures established would be informed to trading partners through the WTO.
- According to SEMARNAT, this is a clear message about the policies that the current Administration plans to follow in terms of transitioning to an agro-ecological production system in Mexico by replacing pesticide use with the development of other type of farming such as the small-scale agriculture systems called "milpas"; as well as the protection of bio-culturalism, under which native groups protect their crops in an organic manner avoiding the use of pesticides. SEMARNAT acknowledges that these policies will not please everyone (especially those using pesticides), but noted that they are favouring the protection of health/environment over economic aspects. SEMARNAT says it is prepared to defend this position even at courts if necessary.
- SEMARNAT believes that a black market for pesticides could still exist with or without a restriction on glyphosate. SEMARNAT also noted that Mexico has resources in place to monitor illegal imports of glyphosate at the Mexican points of entry, and mentioned that in 2019 more authorizations for imports of glyphosate were requested (51,500 tonnes) than what actually was imported (22,000 tonnes), mostly from China.
- When asked if future measures could be imposed related to traces of glyphosate in agri-food products imported into Mexico once the full prohibition is in force, SEMARNAT noted that this would have to be analyzed with other departments like SADER, when the time comes.
- SEMARNAT welcomed any experiences and research about glyphosate from other countries, which could help in the policies being implemented on this matter.