

Erin Brockovich: We Are Being 'Slowly Poisoned To Death' By

Monsanto



Erin Brockovich, the environmental consumer advocate, took to the *Guardian* to proclaim, “The weedkiller in our food is killing us.”¹ She has vowed to bring down this global industry behemoth to help save both our collective health and the planet’s.

Ms. Brockovich is speaking about glyphosate, the herbicidal ingredient in Monsanto’s Roundup, one of the most widely used agricultural chemicals in the U.S. In no uncertain terms, reflecting on a recent jury award of \$289 million (later reduced to \$78 million) to Dewayne Johnson, a school groundskeeper dying of cancer, Brockovich states:

“Growing research suggests that glyphosate causes a form of cancer called non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, with which Johnson was diagnosed in 2014.

At least three studies, in the US, Canada, and Sweden, have linked glyphosate exposure to the disease, and, in 2015, the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer found glyphosate to be a “probable” cause of cancer in humans. California’s state environmental protection agency has also declared it a probable carcinogen.”¹

For readers who don’t know, Erin Brockovich emerged as a powerful consumer advocate from her role as a legal assistant at a law firm that she helped take on Pacific Gas and Electric in the 1990s as being responsible for a cluster of illnesses due to the presence of hexavalent

chromium in the groundwater of the town of Hinkley, California. The chromium was used to prevent corrosion in a natural gas pipeline. A class-action lawsuit against PG&E was settled for \$333 million awarded to 600 people.²

Recently, in *The Guardian* Erin Brockovich [wrote](#):

“On a recent Saturday afternoon, in an estuary near Tampa Bay, Florida, I watched airboats move up and down the river banks, spraying massive plumes of weedkiller on to the vegetation. The state of Florida was trying to control and kill off scores of plant species.

Nearby, children were lying out in the sun, though they knew better than to swim in the water, which has recently been blooming with toxic algae. Mists of weedkiller drifted downwind toward them.”

Ms. Brockovich connects the dots to alert us to the special danger glyphosate poses for our children *while they are at school*. Writing for *Time* magazine, she said:³

“Since genetically modified crops are married to the chemicals sprayed on them, their consumption poses an overwhelming array of potential risks. According to a 2012 study published in *Environmental Sciences Europe*, GMO herbicide-tolerant crops have led to a 527 million pound increase⁴ in herbicide use in the U.S. between 1996 and 2011.

The World Health Organization recently concluded that glyphosate, the main ingredient in the most-used herbicide on GMOs, is “probably carcinogenic to humans.”⁵

One study found glyphosate in 60% to 100% of the rain water⁶ in some agricultural areas. More than 3,200 elementary schools⁷ are within 1,000 feet of genetically modified corn or soybean fields—what will be the effects of these toxic chemicals on children?”³



Roundup in Breakfast Cereal

Recently, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) released a report **finding Roundup in every sample they tested of oat-based cereal and other oat-based food marketed to children**. Out of 28 samples tested, glyphosate was found in all 28, with 26 of the samples being above EWG's health benchmark of 160 parts per billion (PPB). All of the products were made with conventionally grown oats.⁸ You can read the glyphosate levels found in General Mills' Cheerios and Quaker brand products [here](#).

EWG's president, Ken Cook, asked "How many bowls of cereal and oatmeal have American kids eaten that came with a dose of weed killer? That's a question only General Mills, PepsiCo [owner of Quaker] and other food companies can answer.

But if those companies would just switch to oats that aren't sprayed with glyphosate, parents wouldn't have to wonder if their kids' breakfasts contained a chemical linked to cancer. Glyphosate and other cancer-causing chemicals simply don't belong in children's food, period."⁸

Roundup In Pet Foods

In a plea to alert more people about how Roundup has entered the food supply, Brockovich took to her Facebook [page](#) stating, "If I can't get your attention...Maybe Fido here will..." She went on to describe a study by researchers at Cornell University who bought an assortment of 18 different dog and cat foods at local stores and found all 18 had detectable levels of glyphosate.⁹

In response to questions about how Roundup ends up in pet food, Dr. Alan Hay, associate professor of microbiology at Cornell said, "We know that glyphosate is only certified for spraying on crops, and it does not bio-accumulate in animals, so we would not expect it to come from feed animals that are the main protein sources in some of the products. Our evidence suggests that it's coming from plant material."¹⁰

While none of the pet foods had levels above what the EPA allows for humans, this is still alarming in the wake of the WHO's statement that glyphosate is 'probably carcinogenic to humans' and the California jury's multi-million dollar award to a cancer patient. One product tested even stated on the bag that it was certified GMO-free.¹⁰

What Can You Do?

If you share Ms. Brockovich's indignation that "We are being 'slowly poisoned to death' by Monsanto,"¹¹ she advises, "We need to petition our legislators, exercise our right to vote, rally our communities, lobby for what we believe in, and most importantly, understand that it's the health and welfare of our families that is at stake."¹

You can also educate yourself about what glyphosate really is and why the actual product Roundup has never been tested as well as the powerful lobby that continues to allow for its sale:

On an everyday level, when it comes to protecting the health of our families (two-legged and four-legged), results of a study of almost 70,000 people followed over 4 years in France found that those who ate mostly organic foods were 25% less likely to develop cancer.¹² Among those consuming the highest amount of organics in their diets, the most significantly lower cancer risks were found for non-Hodgkin lymphoma, all lymphomas, and postmenopausal breast cancer.¹³

While more research is needed to understand all of the underlying factors behind this reduced risk, there is certainly good motivation to choose organics whenever possible.

Thank you for reading our article. If you have any thoughts on Roundup and other herbicides and pesticides and the unchecked spraying of these poisons, please comment on our Facebook page and share your thoughts.

References

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⁵International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). [IARC Monographs Volume 112: evaluation of five organophosphate insecticides and herbicides](#). 20 March 2015. World Health Organization.

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⁹Zhao J et al. [Detection of glyphosate residues in companion animal feeds.](#) *Environmental Pollution*. 2018; 243(Part B): 1113-1118.

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¹¹NOW Report. [Erin Brockovich: We Are Being 'Slowly Poisoned To Death' By Monsanto.](#) 9 December 2018. *NOW News*.

¹²Baudry J et al. [Association of Frequency of Organic Food Consumption with Cancer Risk: Findings From the NutriNet-Santé Prospective Cohort Study.](#) *JAMA Internal Medicine*. 2018;178(12):1597-1606.

¹³EWG. [Massive Study Finds Eating Organic Slashes Cancer Risks.](#) Press Release. 22 October 2018.