



# GLYPHOSATE FACT SHEET



**Crop Protection**  
Association

***This fact sheet has been issued by the Crop Protection Association.***

A sub-committee of the World Health Organisation, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has recently classified the active ingredient glyphosate as ‘probably’ carcinogenic to humans. The Common Sense Gardening Group, which is part of the Crop Protection Association and represents manufacturers of garden care chemicals, has prepared the following Q&A document to support retailers in dealing with customer enquiries.

**Q: I heard in the press that glyphosate causes cancer, is that true?**

A: No, glyphosate does not cause cancer. Numerous health assessments conducted by public authorities over the last 40 years have consistently concluded that glyphosate does not pose any unacceptable risk to human health.

**Q: But didn’t the World Health Organisation (WHO) say it did?**

A: No, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is one of the many groups affiliated to WHO and it claims that glyphosate is “probably” carcinogenic to humans. Interestingly, three other reports from WHO affiliated groups have determined that glyphosate is not carcinogenic.

**Q: So why did IARC say glyphosate causes cancer?**

A: Unfortunately, IARC has yet to publish full details of the study so it’s unclear how it arrived at that conclusion. It looks like it has used a limited set of data, as a wealth of studies carried out over the last 40 years have shown glyphosate to be safe.

For context, IARC has made similar assessments of items such as coffee, mobile phones, pickled vegetables and aloe vera, products we are quite capable of using in our day-to-day lives while managing any risk. Glyphosate is no different.

**Q: Why does the Common Sense Gardening Group disagree with IARC?**

A: Active ingredients like glyphosate are routinely assessed to ensure that they are still safe to use. As recently as last year, the German Government (who were carrying out the routine assessment on behalf of the whole EU) found no evidence that glyphosate causes cancer.

In light of the IARC report, the German government said they were “surprised” by IARC’s findings, which appear to be based on a “more or less arbitrary selection of studies”. The German government reaffirmed their opinion that “glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans”.

**Q: What about other countries?**

A: The USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all agree with the EU – that glyphosate is safe when used according to the instructions on the label.

**Q: I heard that glyphosate is banned in France and Holland?**

A: This is untrue: glyphosate is not banned in any EU country and is available at many garden retail outlets. In France the French Ecology Minister, Ségolène Royal, is suggesting that all pesticides should be placed behind locked shelves so that consumers have to ask to be served by an adviser.

It is important to note that glyphosate is amongst the most thoroughly tested weed killers on the market. Numerous health assessments conducted by public authorities over the last 40 years have consistently concluded that glyphosate does not pose an unacceptable risk to public health.

Human health and the responsible use of garden care chemicals is, and must always be, the highest priority. As an industry we take pride in the detailed submissions we provide to regulators and the extreme rigour with which our products are assessed. Gardeners and the general public should rest assured that these products are safe and effective when used according to the instructions on the label.

To find out more information about glyphosate visit: [www.glyphosate.eu](http://www.glyphosate.eu)