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124 Organizations Demand Home Depot, Lowe's Immediately Pull Cancer-Linked Weedkiller

Groups Demand Action After Bayer Announced Glyphosate Will Remain in Roundup Until 2023

By Friends of the Earth
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*124 consumer, health and environmental groups sent letters today calling on **Lowe's** **(NYSE: LOW)** and **Home Depot** **(NASDQ: HD)** to immediately end the sale of Roundup following Bayer's recent decision to remove cancer-causing glyphosate from weedkiller Roundup by 2023 for the U.S. consumer market. Urging that the health of people and pollinators can't wait, the groups contend that unless major home and garden retailers act now, consumers will continue to use and be exposed to glyphosate via Roundup for the next two years.*

The main chemical ingredient in Roundup — glyphosate — is the most widely used pesticide in the world. Glyphosate is a probable human carcinogen. Research has linked glyphosate to high rates of kidney disease in farming communities and to shortened pregnancy in a cohort of women in the Midwest. Animal studies and bioassays also link it to endocrine disruption, DNA damage, decreased sperm function, disruption of the gut microbiome, and fatty liver disease.

Friends of the Earth and allies have been campaigning for Home Depot and Lowe's to end sales of Roundup and other glyphosate-based weedkillers based on science linking the chemical to cancer and other serious health concerns, as well as threats to pollinators and endangered species.

The groups are also pushing Lowe's and Home Depot to not supply Bayer's reformulated Roundup products once they are available in 2023 unless they are truly safe for people and pollinators. A recent analysis showed that half of all herbicides offered by these retail giants contain highly hazardous ingredients, highlighting the need for truly safe alternatives. In a process known as "regrettable substitution," the replacements for high-profile chemicals of concern like glyphosate are often as toxic as the original chemicals.

Bayer's decision is a response to years-long court battles the company inherited after acquiring Roundup manufacturer Monsanto in 2018. In a series of high-profile court cases,

glyphosate exposure has been linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in farmers, groundskeepers, and homeowners using the herbicide for lawn care.

However, Bayer's decision only applies to consumer markets – the company will continue selling glyphosate-based formulas for agricultural and professional use.

> "Despite Bayer's decision, the battle against glyphosate is far from over — massive amounts of this toxic chemical will continue to be bought and sprayed in our yards, communities and farms. Retailers and regulators must act now to protect people and the planet from this cancer-linked weedkiller," said **Paolo Mutia, food and agriculture campaigner for Friends of the Earth.**
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> "It is great news that after years of public outcry, Bayer is finally going to stop selling cancer-linked glyphosate products in U.S. home and garden stores. But we need to get these dangerous products off of shelves now, not in two years," said **Lacey Kohlmoos, U.S. campaign manager for SumOfUs**. "Lowe's and Home Depot need to show that they care about their customers' health by ending all sales of Roundup and other glyphosate products immediately."

According to **Akayla Bracey, science and regulatory manager for Beyond Pesticides, "**People generally aren't aware that the pesticides widely available in garden retailers like Home Depot and Lowe's are a threat to health and the environment, and that there are safer products that are available and used in organic land management."

> "Home Depot and Lowe's need to take action for human and environmental health and immediately end the sale of Roundup and all other pesticides and herbicides with toxic chemicals," said **Todd Larsen, executive co-director for Green America**. "When people go to big box stores looking for weedkiller, they don't realize the chemicals they are purchasing are harming them and pollinators. It's up to retailers to sell only products that are safe to use, and as the largest Do It Yourself stores in the U.S., Home Depot and Lowe's need to be leaders in selling only the safest products."
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> "In light of Bayer's announcement, Home Depot and Lowe's have no reason to wait until 2023 to end the sales of Roundup and other toxic glyphosate-based herbicides," **said Rebecca Spector, west coast director for the Center for Food Safety.** "It's time for these major retailers to demonstrate bold leadership that prioritizes environmental stewardship and human health over short-term profits resulting from continued sales of these harmful products. Our pollinators cannot wait two more years, and as consumers, we deserve better, now."
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> "We will not accept the continued sale of glyphosate; it wreaks havoc on both environmental and human health," said **Rose Williamson president for Herbicide Free Campus Loyola Marymount University.** "It should no longer be sold on Lowe's and Home Depot shelves starting today, rather than waiting until 2023."
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> "This is a win against the toxic chemical market; we the people hold the power and, with this news, we are more motivated than ever to continue working with our campuses to eliminate synthetic herbicide use," said **Christie Jones, a student activist with Herbicide-Free Campus at Emory University.**

Glyphosate is also linked to environmental damage. The EPA warms that glyphosate can

injure or kill 93% of U.S. endangered species. It is a primary driver of the decimation of monarch butterfly populations because it destroys the milkweed plants their young depend on. Recent research has also shown that glyphosate can disrupt honeybee gut microbiomes, affect larval development, increase colony vulnerability to pathogen infestation, reduce productivity, and impair honeybee navigation, linking the herbicide to declines in bee populations.

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