



**Pesticide  
Action  
Network**  
Europe

# Press >>>>>>> Release <<<<<<<<

Brussels, 2 May 2019

## **Pesticide intoxication in Brazil and EU's double standards**

On 7<sup>th</sup> May in Berlin a gathering of leading scientists in toxicology and pesticides will come together to review the important recent research from Brazilian scientists and make connections between the commercial European export of chemicals banned in Europe due to health risk and their use in record levels in Brazilian food, grain and energy production.

The event titled 'Pesticides, Poisoning and the Politics of Agrichemicals' will feature official Brazilian figures that show that one person dies every two and half days from direct intoxication from agricultural chemicals with alarming incidences among the youngest or the population.

Professor Larissa Mies Bombardi from University of Sao Paulo who will launch the 'Atlas of Agrochemicals and Connections between Brazil and EU' state that, *"Our health ministry shows that 343 babies from 0 to 12 months were intoxicated between year 2007 and 2014. What is of even greater concern is that for each case reported there are 50 more that go unreported. This means that in this period we probably had about 17,000 babies intoxicated"*.

According to Brian Wynne of the European Network of Scientists for Social and Environmental Responsibility, *"the fact that Europe permits European-based companies to sell agricultural chemicals to Brazil that are used in dangerous, sometimes lethal quantities makes this a public issue for Europe and not just Brazil. Furthermore, the reliance of European countries on the sunlight, land and labour of Brazil for goods such as soya, sugar, maize, coffee and orange juice means European citizens may unknowingly be consuming EU banned chemicals in their foods that are being produced in conditions that are dangerous to Brazilian workers and their families"*.

Even though EU has the most stringent pesticide authorisation system in the world, it still takes decades to identify certain pesticides as toxic and withdraw them from the market. Glyphosate which has been identified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer as probably carcinogenic to humans is still authorised in the EU. This chemical amounts to more than one third of the total pesticides used in Brazil. As Angeliki Lysimachou of Pesticide Action Network Europe comments, *"Even when a pesticide is finally identified as highly hazardous in Europe, European pesticide industry can continue selling its products outside EU to countries where children, women and men are suffering from its use and Europe may continue to import food commodities from these countries. This double standard in pesticide trade is unacceptable"*.

While the European Union cannot dictate to Brazil over national legislation, the issues being raised by these scientists illustrate the contradiction in regulation of pesticides between these two regions and the clear need for more effective communication between policy makers in Europe and their counterparts across the Atlantic. The organisers of the event that is being supported by

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the University of Strathclyde Business School, UK, invite members of the public, policy makers, industrial and non-governmental organisations to join this discussion on the particular challenges being raised and how responsibility can be shared in addressing them.

ENDS

Professor Larissa Mies Bombardi of University of Sao Paulo will be available for interview  
Contact: phone/whatsapp 005511992828399; email: [larissab@usp.br](mailto:larissab@usp.br)

The 'Atlas of Agrotoxins in Brazil and Connection with the European Union' is available on:  
<http://www.livrosabertos.sibi.usp.br/portaldelivrosUSP/catalog/book/352>

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