

# Munch ON THIS



## RoundUp

By Marcia Rae  
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As much as I debunked “organic” as being co-opted by big business in last week’s column, at least when produce is organic, we know it is not awash in glyphosate and the “inert” solvents and surfactants that increase mobility of the “active” ingredient and more direct access to plant cells.

Glyphosate is the main ingredient in RoundUp and other herbicides. New studies by French researchers show that glyphosate-based herbicides are toxic to human reproductive cells at the low levels allowed by the US Environmental Protection Agency. RoundUp could cause DNA damage, endocrine disruption, and cell death. *(from Toxicology Journal)*

According to retired Purdue professor Don Huber:

- “Glyphosate does not break down in the soil. After it is sprayed on plants, it eventually gets to the soil where it remains indefinitely.
- Glyphosate kills many types of soil microbes, including the ones that make micronutrients plant-available.
- Glyphosate strongly chelates, or ties up, micronutrients in the soil, including copper, iron, magnesium, manganese, nickel, and zinc.
- Glyphosate also chelates with gypsum (calcium sulfate).
- Phosphate makes glyphosate active again in the soil.” *(from Acres Magazine)*

Glyphosate is itself a problem, but the inert ingredients are anything but benign. Not only do they amplify the effects of glyphosate, but glyphosate also amplifies the effects of the surfactants. These inert ingredients are not subject to testing or disclosure.

The potential real-life risks from this are infertility, low sperm count, and prostate and testicular cancer. But, “Symptoms could be so subtle, they would be easy to overlook,” says Theo Colborn, president of The Endocrine Disruption Exchange. “Timing is of critical importance. If a pregnant woman were exposed early in gestation, it looks like these herbicides could have an effect during the sexual differentiation stage.” *(from Mother Earth News)*

Most industrially produced food that contains corn or soy was sprayed with glyphosate herbicide. In response to petitions from Monsanto, the EPA has approved up to a 20-fold increase in the legal residue limits for food crops. What I know, though, is that most small, local farmers produce food that is free of RoundUp and other herbicides and pesticides. They farm this way because they care about the environment and the food they produce and eat. If you want to stay away from chemical-laced food, get your food from local family-owned farms. Get to know your farmer. Know your food. Whether this food is officially “organic” or not, it will be safe.

Munch on This – Know your farmer. Know your food. Why not? You can find RoundUp free food at [WillametteLocalFoods.com](http://WillametteLocalFoods.com).

PS – As though spraying food with herbicide is not bad enough, what about non-food crops? How much RoundUp is being sprayed on grass seed fields and along ditches that feed into our water system? This past summer was the first summer that field-burning was banned in the Willamette Valley. How much more RoundUp are local farmers spraying on fields to take the place of the field burning? Is this use of RoundUp regulated at all? What are the effects in terms of cancer and reproductive disorders to the residents of our small community surrounded by grass seed fields? These seem like reasonable questions to ask.

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