

Dear Sir or Madam,

As a citizen of the European Union, I would like to draw your attention to endocrine disrupting pesticides which are used today to grow most of the food products sold in the European Union, regardless of their harmful effects, and present as well in many other consumer products. I'm deeply worried that these chemicals are still unrestricted and I am asking you to ban them immediately and to set very strict criteria to prevent the marketing of any endocrine disrupting pesticide in the future.

The current European situation cannot last any longer. A recent publication by PAN Europe (Pesticide Action Network)<sup>1</sup> actually shows that European food items could be contaminated by up to 30 different endocrine disrupting pesticides. This means that consumers are exposed to such pesticides on a daily basis, in some cases accumulating the residues from about 20 different pesticides. This is a major health risk. Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) are indeed capable to « disrupt » the hormonal system, which is responsible for the good development of all vital organs. These chemicals have been linked to serious hormone-related diseases like breast and prostate cancer, sexual malformations and brain damage, loss of motility, memory, etc<sup>2</sup>. For the unborn and children, the health risks could be irreversible. They are the most vulnerable group and should in fact never be exposed at all to this type of pesticides, not even at very low doses<sup>3</sup>.

Yet, the European legislation on EDCs oversees all these dangers, by ignoring low-dose effects and the combined effects of chemical mixtures (the « cocktail effects ») despite a large body of scientific evidence<sup>4</sup>. In other words, Commission fails to consider current scientific knowledge and to ensure harmful effects on humans are prevented, disobeying to EU fundamental rules<sup>5</sup>. While the rules state that pesticides with endocrine disrupting properties should be banned, in practice they are still being allowed on the market.

**Given the health concerns over EDCs, I demand that you take action to ban all pesticides with serious evidence of endocrine disrupting properties from open literature and allow only pesticides which have been evaluated against strict criteria such as testing at low doses and at vulnerable periods of life.**

Alternatives to pesticides *do* exist today, and they are realistic: selling organic food, or promoting eco-friendly practices like Integrated Pest Management (IPM) are part of them<sup>6</sup>. A good start would be to systematically propose organic lettuces, tomatoes, cucumbers, apples and leeks at more attractive prices. Pesticides have become a major source of concern for European consumers who are more and more aware of their harmful effects<sup>7</sup>. Now is time for

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<sup>1</sup> Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN-Europe) is an European network of associations working to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides and promote sustainable alternatives in agriculture. PAN-Europe is coordinated from its main office in Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> See state-of-the-art report by Prof. Kortenkamp, appointed by the European Union : « State-of-the-art assessment fo endocrine disruptors », 2012.

<sup>3</sup> See Vandenberg/Soto/Heindel/VomSaal ao. (Endocrine Reviews, June 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Regulation 1107/2009, art.4.1, approval criteria.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, go to : <http://www.pan-europe.info/Campaigns/IPEurope.html>

<sup>7</sup> According to the 2010 EU Eurobarometer on risk perception related to food, pesticides residues in fruits, vegetables or cereals are the main concern of European citizens regarding food safety.

UE politicians and decision makers to open the way for a new type of agriculture, more respectful of both consumers and the environment.

I hope to hear back from you soon,

Best regards,