

Press Release

Main Messages for all POs:

- Chlorpyrifos is a highly hazardous pesticide known to damage children's brains. There is no safe level of exposure to chlorpyrifos.
- Chlorpyrifos is banned or strictly regulated in dozens of countries, yet it is still widely used in Armenia. Our people and our food and farms deserve the same protections from this toxic chemical that other countries have.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chlorpyrifos, a Highly Hazardous Pesticide, is Banned in 39 Countries but Still Widely Used in Armenia

October 10, 2024, Yerevan. Rural Sustainable Development Agricultural Foundation and Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment NGO calls on government leaders to ban the toxic chemicals and move towards safer food and farming.

The Roundtable discussion took place in Aarhus Center in Yerevan on October 10, 2024 organized by the Rural Sustainable Development Agricultural Foundation together with AWHHE NGO. Among the attendees of the Roundtable discussion were the representatives of the relevant Ministries (Health, Environment, Economy - department of agriculture) and relevant authorities, Academy, NGOs. Opening of the event was done by Svetlana Abrahamyan, Executive Director of the Rural Sustainable Development Agricultural Foundation.

Ms. Alexandryan, the Focal point of the Stockholm Convention and legal adviser to the Minister of Environment delivered a welcoming speech, mentioning the importance of current discussion related to the scale of alarming HHPs issue.

Dr. Manvelyan, President of AWHHE NGO introduced the information on Global Alliance on HHPs and the situation with HHPs in Armenia, mentioning that more than 60% pesticides imported and allowed for the usage in country belong to HHPs. She mentioned that the high level of oncological diseases with high probability were linked to uncontrolled usage of toxic pesticides, belonging to carcinogens.

She mentioned that there is an increase in the volume of chemical products imported into the country from China often without passing proper quality control.

Ms. Knarik Grigoryan, expert on environmental health gave some information on the situation with the usage of chlorpyrifos, acetochlor and lambda-cyhalothrin. Particular

attention was given to chlorpyrifos which is banned or strictly regulated in 39 countries. It was banned across Europe in 2020 due to evidence that it can cause brain damage in children and harm fetal brain development.

She mentioned that the long term scientific investigations demonstrated that the highly hazardous pesticide chlorpyrifos was still widely used in Armenia. Impacts on the brain connected to chlorpyrifos have been found at the lowest detectable dose, so the evidence shows that there is no safe level of exposure. The same alarming situation is with other HHPs in Armenia.

“Safer alternatives to chlorpyrifos including ecological farming practices without pesticides are already being used around the world. This pesticide poses unreasonable dangers to our children, to farmers and farm workers, and to our rural communities and we should not tolerate its use any longer.”

After presentations the participants discussed the suggested recommendations and made a decision to introduce the recommendations to the relevant ministries.

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