

Mexico still allows the use of pesticides with carcinogenic effects.

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The use of agricultural chemicals or pesticides containing chemical substances in Mexico have increased in recent years. However, there are no rules to control the use of the active substances that have carcinogenic effects and affect the endocrine system, metabolism system and nervous system. To be precise, 140 active substances banned in many countries still being used in Mexico. This is because of the lack of knowledge of relevant staffs and users. In addition, there has been no revision and amendment of the list of prohibited active substances to be conformity with international regulations, such as the Rotterdam Convention and Stockholm Convention in terms of regulations on disposal or restrictions on the use of various toxins.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has reported that the average of pesticides usage (fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides) for farming in Mexico between 2009 and 2010 was at 4.55 tons per 1,000 hectares. The number was even higher in 2013, with the use of 37,455 tons of insecticides, 31,195 tons of herbicides and 42,233 tons of fungicides.

Omar Arellano, a researcher from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), said that the current situation of the use of agricultural chemicals in Mexico is without control. Because there is no examination of the use of various chemicals, specially pesticides. And there is still no clear regulation for highly dangerous chemicals. In addition, users can still purchase these chemicals without control, causing both environmental and health problems.

However, Victor Villalobos, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (SADER), recently confirmed that he will enforce the good agricultural practices, focusing on the use of

organic fertilizers, and will not support the use of genetically modified seeds, which is the cultivation that use pesticides the most. In addition, the current government has committed that they will follow all measures as determined by the agreements of the FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) that Mexico has joined. So, this could be a measure that can help reduce the use of agricultural chemicals.

Chemicals and their effects

Currently, Mexico still allows the use of 173 types of highly dangerous pesticides, most of them (111 types) are prohibited from being used in many countries because they may pollute air, water, soil and affect human and animal hygiene. In addition, there are 29 types that are not in the same level of toxicity, but also have been banned in many countries

The most commonly used chemicals in Mexico are Endosulfan, Methyl Parathion, Methamidophos, Chlorpyrifos, Atrazine and Glyphosate. Most of them are pesticides with highly danger, except Glyphosate, whose degree of toxicity is still not clear.

Endosulfan: Mexico's National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) reported that this type of herbicide is banned in 75 countries and is restricted by the Stockholm Convention. But Mexico allows the use of it for cultivation of 20 plants, such as corn, cotton, beans, vegetables and coffee

Methyl Parathion: This insecticide is prohibited in 59 countries, but is used for cotton, onions, peanuts, beans, tomatoes, corn and wheat in Mexico.

Methamidophos: is a pesticide that has been banned in 49 countries and the Rotterdam Convention states that it is extremely dangerous. But in Mexico it is allowed to be used for cultivation of chia, tomatoes, cucumbers, papaya, chili, watermelon, soybeans, cotton, cabbage, eggplant, tobacco, broccoli and melon.

Atrazine: an herbicide that affects endocrine system, causing hormonal imbalances. It is also designated as a carcinogenic substance in the third group by the Ospar Convention. In Mexico, it is used to cultivate apples, sugar cane and corn.

Glyphosate: Although not yet designated as a highly dangerous compound, the WHO considers it potentially carcinogenic. This type of herbicide is used to grow corn, cotton and soybean with genetic modification to increase durability. It is also used in the cultivation of sorghum, avocado, lemon, orange, mandarin and tangerine orange. It is the most commonly used herbicide in Mexico.

The use of these chemicals is dangerous to farmers and rural people directly. It also creates indirect risks of disease in the cardiovascular system, nervous system and metabolic system to organic and genetically modified food consumers, which cause various type of illness, such as diabetes.

Reducing the use of pesticides can happen when the government improves regulations, review various agricultural promotion measures that recommend the use of these highly dangerous chemicals, and considers returning to the traditional farming that is more environmentally friendly.

Source: <https://plumaslibres.com.mx/2019/03/22/para-la-agricultura-en-mexico-se-usan-111-plagicidas-prohibidos-en-otros-paises-por-cancerigenos/>

Thailand Office of Agricultural Affairs, Los Angeles

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