



Maryland Department of Agriculture

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Animal Industries and Consumer Services*

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Maryland Department of Agriculture

Legislative Comment

Date: February 3, 2021

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 472

SHORT TITLE: Agriculture - Use of Glyphosate - Prohibition

MDA POSITION: Oppose

House Bill 472 would enact a statewide ban on the use of glyphosate on or after October 1, 2022.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) is concerned that prohibition by legislation undermines the established regulatory authority of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and MDA. The U.S. EPA relies on a stringent, science-based review process to guide the registration and labelling of pesticide products, which MDA regulates and enforces at the state level.

The federal agency has the authority to cancel or change product registrations and labeling if a product is believed to pose a risk to humans, wildlife or the environment. In January 2020, EPA released a proposed interim decision which stated that EPA continues to find that there are no risks of concern to human health when glyphosate is used in accordance with its current label. EPA also found that glyphosate is unlikely to be a human carcinogen.

Glyphosate is one of the most widely used broad spectrum pesticides in Maryland. Prohibition of this pesticide would require many businesses to find alternative products that may be more expensive, less effective and potentially more toxic.

Products containing glyphosate are used regularly in no-till and minimum till farming practices, which are critical in the state's efforts to reduce soil erosion and runoff in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

These products are also widely used by lawn and landscape professionals; golf courses and country clubs; and managers of public and private rights-of-way. Prohibiting the use of glyphosate will have a significant impact on these businesses, which in turn may be passed onto the consumer.

Banning glyphosate will also have a negative impact on MDA's Noxious Weed Control program, and other weed control programs at the state and local level. Taking this widely used, effective tool out of the toolbox would lead to the unmitigated spread and infestation of noxious weeds, which poses a threat to Maryland agriculture and green spaces across the state.

If you have additional questions, please contact Cassie Shirk, Director of Legislation and Governmental Affairs, at cassie.shirk@maryland.gov or 410-841-5886.