



August 26, 2020

Marvin Ellison
Lowe's Companies, Inc.
1000 Lowes Blvd.
 Mooresville, NC 28117

Dear Mr. Ellison,

On behalf of the 66 organizations below and our over 7.5 million members nationwide, we are writing to urge Lowe's to signal its continued dedication to protecting the health of people, pollinators and the planet by removing all products containing glyphosate from store shelves and online sales and by increasing offerings of organic and other safer alternatives. One of Lowe's competitors, Costco, has already taken these steps by discontinuing products containing glyphosate from all store locations worldwide.¹ B&Q, one of the largest improvement stores in the United Kingdom, announced a similar policy in May.²

Glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide Roundup®, was determined to be a probable human carcinogen by the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer and the California Office of Health Hazard Assessment.^{3,4}

In a series of high profile court cases, glyphosate exposure has been linked to non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in farmers, groundskeepers, and homeowners using the herbicide for lawn care.⁵ Juries in three lawsuits so far decided in favor of the plaintiffs, and in June, Bayer agreed to pay over \$10 billion to settle approximately 95,000 additional cases.⁶

In addition to cancer, exposure to glyphosate and the herbicide formulations it's found in has been associated with endocrine disruption, DNA damage, shortened pregnancy, reproductive harm, disruption of the gut microbiome, kidney toxicity, and fatty liver disease.^{7,8,9,10,11,12,13}

In the environment, glyphosate is a primary driver of the decimation of Monarch butterfly populations and has also been linked to bee declines. The use of glyphosate is devastating Monarch butterfly populations by destroying the milkweed plants their young depend on.^{14,15} Monarch populations have declined by 90 percent in the past two decades.¹⁶ Recent research has also shown that glyphosate can disrupt honeybee gut microbiomes, affect larval development, increase colony vulnerability to pathogen infestation, reduce productivity, and impair honeybee navigation, linking the herbicide to declines in bee populations.^{17,18,19,20} In addition, overuse of glyphosate has led to resistant "superweeds" on more than 60 million acres of U.S. farmland, with a resulting increase in toxic herbicides 2,4-D and dicamba.²¹

Home and garden stores can make a significant difference in reducing the use of this toxic product. Research shows that homeowners use up to 10 times more chemical pesticides per acre on their lawns than farmers use on crops.²²



Because Lowe's is a top company dedicated to meeting growing consumer demand for environmentally friendly garden products, we urge Lowe's to:

- Establish a time-bound commitment to eliminate all products containing glyphosate from stores and online sales;
- Increase offerings of organic approved products and other safer alternatives (see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of active²³ and inert²⁴ ingredients approved as minimum risk pesticides);
- Inventory and assess the toxicity of all pesticide products on offer with the aim of ensuring that eliminating glyphosate sales does not lead to increased sales of products with equal or greater toxicity (e.g. formulations with 2,4-D, dicamba, atrazine, etc.), and consequently set goals to decrease overall sales of toxic pesticide products; and
- Publicize progress toward these commitments to demonstrate that it has taken steps to protect pollinators and human health and will continue to do so.

These actions will build on Lowe's leadership on pesticides. We applaud Lowe's for its efforts to remove neonicotinoid products from its live plant offerings and store shelves.

Along with phasing out sales of glyphosate, **we urge Lowe's to ensure that its efforts to eliminate neonicotinoids from plants and products adequately addresses regrettable substitutes:** newly approved systemic pesticides with chemically similar active ingredients including sulfloxaflor and flupyradifurone²⁵ as well as all other pesticides of high concern for pollinators.²⁶ Committing to these actions would demonstrate Lowe's dedication to sustainability and protecting declining pollinator populations upon which our food supply and healthy ecosystems depend.

Given the widespread harm to human health, pollinators and the environment associated with glyphosate products, the responsible decision is to remove them from store shelves.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Abundance NC

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

All-Creatures.org

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments WEST

Anacostia Watershed Society

Asheville Alternatives to Pesticides

Because Health

Beyond Pesticides



Beyond Toxics
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Food Safety
Central Maryland Beekeepers Association
Common Table Creative
Community Action Works
Conservation Congress
Consumer Reports
Ecological Farming Association
Ecology Center
Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety
Family Farm Defenders
Farm Worker Ministry Northwest
Food & Water Action
Friends of the Bitterroot
Friends of the Earth
Global Justice Ecology Project
GMO Free USA
GMO Free Florida
Green America
Greenpeace US
Herbicide-Free Campus
Humming for Bees
Kid's Right to Know
Kiss the Ground



LEAD for Pollinators, Inc.

Lucky2BeMe

Mangrove Action Project

Maryland Pesticide Education Network

Mind the Store Campaign

Moms Across America

Moms Advocating Sustainability.org

Noah's Notes

Non Toxic Communities

Northeast Organic Farming Association (Interstate Council, NY, VT, NH, MA)

Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides

Occidental Arts and Ecology Center

Organic Consumers Association

Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association

People and Pollinators Action Network

Pesticide Action Network

Pollinator Project Rogue Valley

Raptors Are The Solution

Real Food Media

Safe Ag Safe Schools

Sierra Club

Save Our Sky Blue Waters

Story of Stuff Project

SumOfUs

Sustainable Farming Association

The Black Institute

Toxic Free NC



Wine & Water Watch

www.gmoscience.org

YardSmartMarin

Yellowstone to Uintas Connection

¹ Costco. Environmental Stewardship and Land Management. Online. <https://www.costco.com/sustainability-environment.html>

² Poulter, Sean. 2020. B&Q will stop selling weedkiller Roundup after cancer link discovered in the US. *The Daily Mail*. May 22. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8349041/B-Q-stop-selling-weedkiller-Roundup-cancer-link-discovered-US.html>

³ World Health Organization. 2016. International Agency for Research on Cancer. Monograph 112-10: Glyphosate. Retrieved from <https://monographs.iarc.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/mono112-10.pdf>

⁴ California Office of Health Hazard Assessment. 2018. Chemicals Listed Under Proposition 65: Glyphosate. Retrieved from <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/chemicals/glyphosate>

⁵ Baum, Hedlund, Aristei, Goldman. Monsanto Roundup Lawsuit. Online. <https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/toxic-tort-law/monsanto-roundup-lawsuit/>

⁶ Cohen, Patricia. 2020. Roundup Maker to Pay \$10 Billion to Settle Cancer Suits. *New York Times*. June 24. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/business/roundup-settlement-lawsuits.html>

⁷ Gasnier, C. *et al.* 2009. Glyphosate-based herbicides are toxic and endocrine disruptors in human cell lines. *Toxicology*. 262(3), pp.184-191.

⁸ Parvez, S., Gerona, R.R, *et al.* 2018. Glyphosate exposure in pregnancy and shortened gestational length: A prospective Indiana birth cohort study. *Environmental Health*. 17(1), p.23.

⁹ Woźniak, E., Sicińska, P., *et al.* 2018. The mechanism of DNA damage induced by Roundup 360 PLUS, glyphosate and AMPA in human peripheral blood mononuclear cells-genotoxic risk assessment. *Food and Chemical Toxicology*, 120, pp.510-522.

¹⁰ Nerozzi, C., Recuero, S., *et al.* 2020. Effects of Roundup and its main component, glyphosate, upon mammalian sperm function and survival. *Scientific Reports*, 10(1), pp.1-9.

¹¹ Samsel, A. and Seneff, S., 2013. Glyphosate's suppression of cytochrome P450 enzymes and amino acid biosynthesis by the gut microbiome: pathways to modern diseases. *Entropy*, 15(4), pp.1416-1463.

¹² Jayasumana, C., Gunatilake, S. and Senanayake, P., 2014. Glyphosate, hard water and nephrotoxic metals: are they the culprits behind the epidemic of chronic kidney disease of unknown etiology in Sri Lanka?. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 11(2), pp.2125-2147.

¹³ Mesnage, R., Renney, G., *et al.* 2017. Multiomics reveal non-alcoholic fatty liver disease in rats following chronic exposure to an ultra-low dose of Roundup herbicide. *Scientific reports*, 7, p.39328.

¹⁴ Perls, D., and Finck-Haynes, T. 2014. What the Monarchs are Telling Us. *Medium*. June 20. Online. <https://medium.com/foe-us-newsmagazine/what-the-monarchs-are-telling-us-8b20d8b8d467>

- ¹⁵ Thogmartin, W.E., Wiederholt, R., *et al.* 2017. Monarch butterfly population decline in North America: identifying the threatening processes. *Royal Society open science*, 4(9), p.170760.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Dai, P. *et al.* 2018. The herbicide glyphosate negatively affects midgut bacterial communities and survival of honey bee during larvae reared in vitro. *Journal of agricultural and food chemistry*. 66(29), pp.7786-7793.
- ¹⁸ Vázquez, D.E., Ilina, N., *et al.* 2018. Glyphosate affects the larval development of honey bees depending on the susceptibility of colonies. *PloS one*, 13(10), p.e0205074.
- ¹⁹ Balbuena, M.S., Tison, L., *et al.* 2015. Effects of sublethal doses of glyphosate on honeybee navigation. *Journal of Experimental Biology*, 218(17), pp.2799-2805.
- ²⁰ Paul, N. 2019. The Impacts of Glyphosate on Bumble Bee Productivity and Parasite Load. Masters Thesis. School of Biological Sciences. Queens University Belfast.
- ²¹ Mortensen, D. A., Egan, *et al.* (2012). Navigating a critical juncture for sustainable weed management. *BioScience*. 62(1), 75-84
- ²² U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Homeowner's Guide to Protecting Frogs: Lawn and Garden Care. Online. https://www.fws.gov/dpps/visualmedia/printingandpublishing/publications/2003_HomeownersGuidetoProtectingFrogs.pdf?referringSource=articleShare
- ²³ U.S. EPA. 2015. Active Ingredients Eligible for Minimum Risk Pesticide Products. December. <http://bit.ly/2znSuXN>.
- ²⁴ U.S. EPA. 2016. Inert Ingredients Eligible for FIFRA 25(b) Pesticide Products. November. <http://bit.ly/2ZyhdaC>.
- ²⁵ Gabbatiss, John. New 'Safe' Pesticides to Replace Banned Chemicals Still Hurt Bees, Scientists Say. *The Independent*. April 10. <http://bit.ly/2lWlX7Z>
- ²⁶ Friends of the Earth. 2020. Pesticides of High Concern for Pollinators. Developed by IPM Institute of North America. Online. https://1bps6437gg8c169i0y1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Pesticides-with-Pollinator-Toxicity_Final-4-2020.pdf