

# Big news (not): Atrazine never caused cancer, and it still doesn't

By ACSH Staff — June 9, 2011

Atrazine, the herbicide most responsible for the well being of the cornfields across so much of the U.S. countryside, has once again been [deemed a non-threat to human health](#) [1]. Most recently, the respected ongoing Agricultural Health Study (AHS) found no link between exposure to atrazine and overall cancer risk. The new research, published in the typically chemophobic, anti-pesticide journal, *Environmental Health Perspectives*, draws on the AHS's prospective cohort of over 57,000 licensed pesticide applicators (and their families) and is an extension of an earlier AHS analysis of cancer risk among self-reported atrazine users with six years of follow-up. Among the over 36,000 applicators who reported using atrazine, just over 3,000 had developed cancer which amounts to no increase in overall cancer risk between users in the highest exposure compared to the lowest exposure categories.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross observed that he had not even been aware that atrazine was accused of being a carcinogen except in the fairly laughable President's Cancer Panel Report of 2009. The discredited but sensationalized research of University of California at Berkeley biologist Tyrone Hayes has probably been most responsible for introducing any doubts about the herbicide; his research over the past decade alleged that atrazine caused hermaphroditism in frogs, but these results have been largely dismissed by the scientific community. No atrazine risk has ever been found, says Dr. Ross. He continues, noting that the herbicide is one of the most important, beneficial pesticides around. It has no adverse effect on any living thing, save weeds.

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[1] <http://ehp03.niehs.nih.gov/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1289%2Fehp.1103561>