

Anti-pesticide group deplorably exploits tragedy in India to promote their agenda

By ACSH Staff — July 23, 2013



[1]Last week, 25 children in India died and many others

sickened as a result of organophosphate pesticide poisoning which contaminated the children's school lunches. It is suspected that the rice or cooking oil used to prepare the food contained lethal levels of the neurotoxin. This is even more of a tragedy given that this school lunch program was developed by the government in an effort to confront the malnutrition problem in India, which affects half of all Indian children.

Sadly, but not unexpectedly, anti-chemical scare groups have wasted no time in turning this tragedy into an [excuse to attack](#) [2] our own use in the United States of certain organophosphate pesticides on agricultural crops. One anti-pesticide scare group in particular, calling themselves *Beyond Pesticides*, had the temerity to cite a 2012 study in which authors claimed to have found that long-term, low-dose exposure to this class of chemicals can result in adverse effects on neurological and cognitive functions. They also cite other studies claiming links to ADHD, reduced IQs, and Alzheimer's Disease. Furthermore, they go on to claim that these chemicals may be harmful in some way to the environment.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross had this to say. This is an especially disgusting example of the depths to which certain anti-chemical groups will stoop to scare consumers and promote their chemophobic agenda. The pesticides used agriculturally in the United States including organophosphates are stringently tested, approved for use and regulated by the EPA. And even if the so-called studies which alleged to link OPs to subtle neurocognitive impairments were valid which they are not those exposures would bear absolutely no relationship to the criminally-negligent contamination which killed those Indian children. Exploitation of such a horrendous tragedy should be roundly condemned by any responsible scientist, and any responsible journalist.

Dr. Bloom adds, If ever there was a perfect example of the dose make the poison, this is it. Yes, organophosphates absolutely do have acute toxicological effects when consumed in large quantities just as what happened in India. But, this does not imply anything about chronic exposure to minute quantities of the chemicals a fundamental flaw in reasoning that is exploited by certain groups with agendas. The two scenarios are entirely different.

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