

We say no to Glyphosate

Glyphosate, better known as "Round up", first commercial name, is a chemical, is the most powerful total herbicide invented by man. It is an amino acid, analogous to glycine, malefic brother of the amino acids that constitute the basis of life, that is, DNA and today allows, to increase the doses of fertilizer necessary to have useful quantities for the productive efficiency of the company

In recent days, concealed in the media by the Italian budgetary manoeuvring and the flashes of war which are its background, the debate on glyphosate or glyphosate, as is commonly written, has continued in the Community institutions. This is the debate on the renewal of the ten-year authorisation for its use which expires at the end of this year and which, if authorised by the EU, will, in addition to prolonging the life of a highly toxic product, give further scope for wide-ranging research: for example, for its transfer and use in the construction of mutant plants, whatever the genetic transfer system used to obtain them.

That the Glyphosate was toxic, he ruled, also judicially, on August 11, 2018 a judgment of the court of San Francisco, USA, where the former gardener Dewayne Johnson (the first accuser among more than 4,000 US citizens who denounced Monsanto, the manufacturer) was compensated with 289 million dollars (negotiable, according to US laws, but not less than tens of millions of compensation) from the company, bought in the same year by the other chemical multinational, Bayer, from Germany. The reason is that he was not informed about the dangers of his commitment and used it without this information, contracting non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (LNH), after a banal accident that caused him direct contact with the product and cancer, arrived then in few years to the 4 the stadium.

What is the Glyphosate? Better known as "Round up", the first commercial name, it is a chemical, the most powerful total herbicide invented by man, patented and put on sale in the USA since 1974 and arrived some years later in Europe. At the time of its arrival the qualities, also toxicological, were remarkable compared to the other pesticides used in agriculture, because they were devoid of acute toxicity (it could be used without special skills and did not have the image of the skull on the label, as it was for many other pesticides), easily soluble and washable in water (which made it particularly effective in the soil on bulbs, rhizomes, taps after a rain, contrary to other pesticides, and, apparently, can be eliminated by the human organism through the kidneys), effective on most herbs.

But his qualities were also his "defects", cleverly hidden by the Monsanto that produced him. Unlike all previous herbicides, it was not a "foreign" chemical compound for cells or easily detectable (as was the case for all compounds such as DDT, which contained the infamous "benzene ring", not degradable and therefore accumulated in organisms).

Glyphosate is an amino acid, analogous to glycine, the malefic brother of the amino acids that form the basis of life, that is, DNA. In fact, it works more and more in the time after the distribution: absorbed by the plant, it affects the reproductive organs, up to cause their death.

But there is no big difference between animal and plant cells, so it is toxic because of its easy dilution in water, killing aquatic organisms and soil microflora. In short, to remove some weeds (considered such only for market issues), it destroys the fundamental system of fertility and life.

Why a chemical created in 1950, but forgotten by the Swiss discoverers, and "rediscovered" in 1970 by the American company committed to finding effective chemical agents to use in the war in Vietnam, continues today to have such an importance to defend its use?

An employment that in the meantime has become global, discovering all the negative aspects through hundreds of scientific studies. Because a product capable of entering the heart of "cellular memory", in the storage of life's information, has proved to be fundamental to initiate mutations guided and under patent. The first transgenic soybean created had induced in its genetic memory resistance to the substance, an antidote that was triggered when it came into contact with it. It was the dream of all those who would love to control life: the end of complexity, no side effects, resisted only the plant with the antidote and all the others disappeared as if by miracle from the cultivated field. Too bad that nature is wiser than the sorcerer's apprentices and what we have induced with hard work and huge expenses in soy (to the unique advantage of the multinational patent), the spontaneous plants have done it on their own, finding solutions of resistance that in thirty years of use of transgenic soybean, have transformed the "miraculous" soybean into a seed that has problems like others, in a soybean market in crisis because of many other problems (some aggravated by the use of a product that reduces soil fertility).

Glyphosate today is used as parsley in the kitchen and allows, through the apparent "cleaning" of the soil that garden owners and growers really like, to increase the doses of fertilizer needed to have useful quantities for the company's production efficiency. It is a vicious circle in which those who have reduced farmers to "market androids" wallow.

At the beginning I mentioned two factors (economy and war) that obscured the discussion on the authorisation to be renewed in the EU: are the reasons that push governments and associations to support the use of the product until the decency does not make it absolutely unrepresentable, as was the case for DDT. Bayer will certainly not want to lose money for an investment made in the USA, buying the Monsanto that "exploded in his hands"; the agricultural associations, also Italian, which have so far built and made profits on the system of agro-

industrial chain would lose a convenient seat from which to earn with little effort; governments would have a huge problem, given that the residues of the product have been found, for example, in almost all types of pasta.

To refuse authorisation for employment now that, in competition with Russia, an important place for the EU in the world wheat market is looming, with affiliation and then Ukraine's entry into the EU itself, would be the condemnation of that community ruling class that made the market and profit the purpose of its affirmation.

The Ukrainian wheat, certainly with residues, as it would be marketable, when instead the reconstruction should provide for the maximization of production and profit? Away from the rhetoric of defending the nation, these reasons weigh much more on the EU's support for the war in Ukraine.

Glyphosate well represents the claim of man master of nature: an old product, to be eliminated. Its defenders, often uncertain as the Italian rulers who behind abstaining from its ban mask the desire to defend the product without compromising, can not see beyond their specific interest. They make war on the advancing new, they think that it is always possible to oppose nature, without foreseeing its effects.

We say no to Glyphosate! Not because of obscurantist principles, but because we think that nature and its properties should be studied to be followed, through the wise use of a science called agroecology.

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