

# INDUSTRY TASK FORCE II ON 2,4-D RESEARCH DATA

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## NEWS RELEASE

### 2,4-D ACCEPTABLE FOR CONTINUED USE ON LAWNS AND TURF IN CANADA

**OTTAWA, February 21** – Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has concluded that “the use of 2,4-D and its end-use products to treat lawns and turf does not entail an unacceptable risk of harm to human health or the environment.” After examining the combined risk from exposure through food and residential uses, the PMRA also determined the potential exposure for children and adults contacting treated residential lawns and golf courses was within acceptable standards.

These are the findings in the draft health and environmental risk assessments for the herbicide 2,4-D released today by the PMRA for public comment.

“The PMRA’s assessment of scientific data base reinforces a growing number of regulatory decisions and expert reviews that conclude the use of 2,4-D, while protecting food production and the environment, does not present a risk to human health”, stated Larry Hammond, Technical Chair of the Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data. “The PMRA’s findings bolster the earlier decisions of authorities such as the World Health Organization, European Commission, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and recent studies by the U.S. National Cancer Institute.”

The PMRA also released key elements of a report by an independent expert Science Advisory Panel. Comprised of five well-regarded experts, the Science Advisory Panel concurred with the general thrust of the PMRA evaluation.

The publication of the Proposed Acceptability for Continuing Registration document begins the public comment stage of the PMRA’s re-evaluation program of 2,4-D. Copies of the re-evaluation document and notice of the public comment period may be obtained at:

<http://www.pmra-arla.gc.ca/english/consum/2,4-D-e.html>

## **BACKGROUND**

### **About 2,4-D**

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Since being first registered in Canada in 1946, the herbicide 2,4-D has become one of the most widely used agricultural herbicides in this country and worldwide. It is used on many crops such as wheat, barley, corn, rice, pasture, soybeans, potatoes, sugar cane, pome fruits, stone fruits and nuts. It is also a component of herbicides used to protect turf grass from weeds and environmentally sensitive areas from invasive species. An economic evaluation by Agriculture Canada in 1988 concluded that the net increase in grain value to farmers, once herbicide and application costs were factored in, was \$176 million annually.

The original patent on 2,4-D was issued in 1945 to Dr. Franklin D. Jones, a plant physiologist. Dr. Jones was working with the naturally occurring plant auxin, indole acetic acid (IAA). IAA is present in all plant matter and humans consume it daily whenever fruit, vegetables and cereals are consumed. In an effort to work with a more chemically stable, auxin-like compound, Dr. Jones included 2,4-D, an analog of IAA, in his experiments.

In 2004, The Henry Ford in Dearborn, Michigan identified 2,4-D as one of the 75 most important innovations in the previous 75 years. Few scientific innovations have done as much to increase food production throughout the world.

### **About the Task Force**

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The Industry Task Force II on 2,4-D Research Data is organized to provide funding for some 300 Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) research studies required to respond to the PMRA pesticide re-evaluation program. The 2,4-D Task Force is made up of those companies owning the technical registrations on the active ingredient in 2,4-D herbicides. They are Dow AgroSciences (U.S.), Nufarm, Ltd. (Australia) and Agro-Gor Corp., a U.S. corporation jointly owned by Atanor, S.A. (Argentina) and PBI Gordon Corp. (U.S.).

Additional information may be obtained at [www.24d.org](http://www.24d.org) or email: [info@24d.org](mailto:info@24d.org).

## Summary of Expert Panel Reviews and Regulatory Decisions Pertaining to the Herbicide 2,4-D

As the expert review of 2,4-D prepared for the BC Ministry of Forests states in the first sentence, “**2,4-D is possibly the most extensively researched of all pesticides, and the data have been examined by an unusual number of advisory committees and work groups.**”<sup>1</sup> Listed below are most of these expert reviews – all have concluded that 2,4-D does not present a human health risk when used according to label directions.

Year	Regulatory Decision/Expert Panel Review
1987	Expert Panel on the Carcinogenicity of 2,4-D Ontario Ministry of the Environment
1987	Council for Agricultural Science and Technology Perspectives on the Safety of 2,4-D
1990	Harvard University, School of Public Health Weight of the Evidence on the Human Carcinogenicity of 2,4-D (Ibrahim)
1991	Exposure Studies in the use of pesticides in the home garden and for landscape pest control, Ontario Ministry of the Environment (Solomon)
1992	Comprehensive Review of the Herbicide 2,4-D Journal of the American College of Toxicology, vol. II, No. 5 (Munro)
1994	United States Environmental Protection Agency SAB/SAP Special Joint Committee on the Carcinogenicity of 2,4-D
1996	World Health Organization/Food and Agricultural Organization Review of 2,4-D (toxicology)
1996	U.S. Department of Agriculture/NAPIAP Report on 2,4-D University of Minnesota, School of Public Health (Johnson)
1997	National Cancer Institute of Canada, Report of a Panel on the Relationship between Public Exposure to Pesticides and Cancer (Ritter)
1997	IARC sponsored review, Cancer mortality in workers exposed to phenoxy herbicides (Kogevinas)
1997	National Cancer Institute Mortality Study of ChemLawn Employees (Zahm)
1997	United States Environmental Protection Agency Carcinogenicity Peer Review of 2,4-D (4 <sup>th</sup> review)
2000	Cornell University, Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors in New York State. Critical Evaluation of Cancer Risk from 2,4-D (Gandhi)
2000	New Zealand Pesticides Board Report of the Pesticides Board Expert Panel on 2,4-D
2001	European Commission, Health & Consumer Protection Directorate-General Review Report on 2,4-D
2001	Handbook of Pesticide Toxicology Chapter 72 Phenoxy Herbicides (Munro)
2001	University of Michigan School of Public Health Department of Environmental Health Sciences (Garabrant)
2001	State of Washington, Herbicide Risk Assessment for the Aquatic Plant Management, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement: 2,4-D
2003	National Cancer Institute review of Nebraska, Iowa & Minnesota and Kansas farmers (De Roos)
2003	World Health Organization, Drinking Water Guidelines (2,4-D)
2003	National Cancer Institute, Agricultural Health Study Use of Agricultural Pesticides and Prostate Cancer Risk (Alavanja)
2003	BC Ministry of Forests, Forest Protection Branch Evaluation of Risk to Workers using 2,4-D Formulations (Dost)
2004	U.S. EPA Human Health Effects Division review of epidemiology published since 1997 review committee: “... <b>there is no additional evidence that would implicate 2,4-D as a cause of cancer.</b> ”

<sup>1</sup> Source: [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/pubs/dost\\_papers/5-Dost-24D.pdf](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/pubs/dost_papers/5-Dost-24D.pdf)