

20th May, 2015 – Press Release

For Immediate Release

Name: The BUZZ responds to the announcement that the importation of 'Roundup' has been suspended

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The BUZZ formed in 2013 as a group of interested people, under the auspices of BEST (Bermuda Environmental Sustainability Taskforce), concerned about the decline in bee populations, both locally and globally. While it's clear that there are a number of threats to the health of bees and other pollinators, significant among the concerns is the impact of the many and varied chemicals used in the environment, especially pesticides.

We wish, therefore, to acknowledge the significant step announced recently by the Minister for Health, Seniors and the Environment, in suspending the importation of the very toxic pesticide 'Roundup' into Bermuda. We commend Minister Atherden's commitment to "promoting safe practices as part of our stewardship of Bermuda's delicate environment", and to recognizing that more work must be done post-haste to draft and implement the regulations to support The Pesticides Safety Act passed in 2009... some 6 years ago now!

We are concerned that only one product containing the active ingredient of glyphosate was named in this announcement. There is another product with the active ingredient of 'glyphosate' that is used extensively in Bermuda that goes by the brand name of 'Rodeo', and so it would be helpful if that, and any other product containing glyphosate, that would also be subject to this suspension, be officially named so that we can be fully informed.

What the public may not be aware of is that it is often not the active ingredient which has the greatest toxicity in a pesticide's formulation, but also the inert 'ingredients, called 'adjuvants' (which include 'surfactants' that help the spray stick to the foliage), that are even more toxic than the active ingredient, but not included on the label nor tested. See more information at these links:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15862083>

<http://www.greenmedinfo.com/blog/roundup-herbicide-125-times-more-toxic-regulators-say>

We are encouraged that the Minister intends to assemble a stakeholder group and we would welcome being included. The use (and overuse) of pesticides (herbicides/fungicides/insecticides) is serious business in respect of individual and environmental health. It requires us to be informed and cautious. We have extracted some information on pesticides from the book Common-Sense Pest Control and we will post it, along with relevant articles, on the Bermuda Bees website www.bermudabees.weebly.com