

## Pesticides are Killing the Earth and Farmers Too

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### Introduction

Farmers are called those who do farming work. They are also known as 'agriculturists' and 'farmers'. They produce food items for everyone else. It also includes growing various crops, planting trees in orchards, taking care of chickens or other such animals and raising them. A farmer can either be the owner of the farm or can be a laborer hired by the owner of that agricultural land. In places with a good economy, the farmer is the owner of the field and his workers or laborers working in it. However till then only he was the farmer, who grew crops in the field and took care of animals, fish etc, and raised them.

### Occupational hazards and dangers from pesticide substances

There are many dangers in agricultural work. Farmers cultivating in these have to face many dangerous creatures in the field. There is a great danger of being bitten by scorpions, ants, bees etc. while working in the field. Farmers have to work with very heavy and big machines, they are also prone to injury and death.

### Danger from the use of deadly insecticides

Due to the use of excessive amount of insect material in agriculture, the danger is increasing day by day. Due to the use of the substance, the parts of a pesticide also go away in the crops, due to which the immunity of man has also been reduced, so by banning the deadly pesticide addition, farming should be started in a natural way which is completely safe. And the purity of the crop is also maintained, to maintain the immunity of the human being, poison-free grain crop should be consumed.

A report has found that the use of more and more pesticides around the world is giving fatal consequences for man and nature. Despite all the efforts, the use of pesticides is increasing. According to a new report by environmental groups in Germany, the increasing use of pesticides is at the heart of environmental damage around the world.

Susan Hoffmann's, an agricultural engineer from the Pesticide Action Network,



Germany, was instrumental in developing the Pesticide Atlas report. He says, "When you deal with agriculture, health, species loss and water pollution, you face this issue everywhere.

The report was published this week in Berlin along with the associated Heinrich Boel Foundation, the German branch of environmental group Friends of the Earth and the international monthly newspaper Le Mond Diplomatique. The 50 pages of the report detail the harmful effects of the billion-dollar pesticide business. "We encounter pesticides everywhere," says Hoffmans, even if we don't live on the edge of a farm.

### **Farmers are often affected by this poison**

According to a recent research report published in the journal Public Health, 385 million people in the agriculture sector fall ill every year due to the pungent poisoning of pesticides. This poison causes symptoms ranging from feeling weak in farm workers and farmers to headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, skin rashes, nervous system problems and unconsciousness. In severe cases the heart, lungs or kidneys get damaged. According to the research report, about 11,000 people working in the agricultural sector die every year due to this pungent poison. These figures do not count suicide deaths related to pesticides.

Agricultural workers and small farmers in the Global South, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania are particularly affected by pesticide poisoning. According to the research report, about 256 million farmers are affected in Asia, 116 million in Africa and about 12.30 million farmers in Latin America. In Europe, this figure is less than 1.6 million.

"We see that 44 percent of all workers worldwide are poisoned at least once," says Hoffmans. And in some countries the number is much higher. For example, 83 percent of farms in Burkina Faso. Workers get sick at least once because of pesticides. She says that these figures are only of acute ie deadly poison. According to them, the extent to which their effect is there, there is a risk of greater risk in the future which lead to serious diseases.

The Atlas Global South sheds light on several reasons for the large increase in the number of poisonings in the region. First, there are a lot of dangerous insecticides sprayed, including some that are banned in Europe. In addition, many small farmers there do not wear protective clothing and are less aware of the dangers.

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Hoffmans says, "In some cases, traders simply sell pesticides packed in small plastic bags or bottles—without labels, safety instructions, and any warnings. Then there are always people who are unintentionally poisoned because of the wrong use of the pesticide." is used or someone picks up the bottle thinking it might contain soda. According to the atlas, less than 30 percent of smallholder farmers in Ghana wear gloves, goggles and mouth or nose protection when using pesticides. In Ethiopia, only 7 percent of farmers are aware of the warning to wash hands after using pesticides.

### **Pesticides also increase the risk of cancer**

Pesticides can be spread by air for hundreds of kilometres and are found in rivers and groundwater. They can kill insects, birds and aquatic animals and their remains are often found in food. The most notorious of this is the weed killer glyphosate, which is the most commonly used insecticide. In 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified glyphosate as "potentially carcinogenic". A 2019 scientific study conducted by the University of Washington found that glyphosate may increase the risk of malignant lymph node tumors known as non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Pesticides have also been linked to asthma, allergies, obesity and endocrine gland disorders, as well as miscarriages and other diseases, especially in polluted areas. "Studies also show an association of pesticides with Parkinson's disease, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer," says Hoffmans.

### **Profits more important than health protection**

There is a lot of profit in the sale of pesticides. According to Atlas, the four largest



producers - Syngenta, Bayer, BASF and Corteva - generated sales of 31 billion euros in the year 2020. In recent years, global pesticide sales have increased by an average of 4 percent annually. Companies do not pay for damages to health and the environment until they are taken to court. A quarter of a million people in the US who had sprayed the insecticide Roundup with the active ingredient glyphosate and became seriously ill sued the Bayer company. The company has already made payments to some people and has set aside around 10 billion euros in Bayer's balance sheet to cover the loss. Despite these cases, Bayer and other companies continue to sell highly toxic pesticides. These also include pesticides that are banned in the European Union for being dangerous. Currently, pesticide manufacturers are seeking a new authorization for glyphosate in the European Union that is banned until 2024.

### **Movement for Agricultural Revolution**

Environmental groups are pushing to move away from chemical pesticides. The 30 authors of the atlas are writing articles to highlight policies that can lessen their impact. Hoffmans says, "Sri Lanka has saved nearly ten thousand lives by banning dangerous pesticides in the past two decades. Even in India, some areas there already practice completely or largely pesticide-free farming. Other people in the area are also encouraged by this, According to a survey conducted in Germany for Atlas, most children aged 16 to 29 want agriculture that conserves water, soil and insects, produces more without genetic engineering and pesticides, and uses natural pest control. The survey found that 63 per cent people preferred a ban on all pesticides by 2035 and farmers supported the emphasis on eco-friendly produce. The demand was rejected by 11 per cent of those surveyed.

### **keep these things in mind**

While using insecticide, it should be seen that there is no leakage in the equipment. Never attempt to draw the solution by touching the pesticide equipment. Liquid insecticides should be carefully poured into the equipment and care should be taken that it does not enter any part of the body. If this happens then immediately wash several times with clean water. The suitable time for spraying insecticides is morning or evening. While using it, keep in mind that the surrounding wind is not blowing fast.

### **Precautions after pesticide use**

The remaining pesticide should be stored safely. Keep its chemicals out of reach of

children, old people and animals. Empty cans of insecticides should not be used for any other use. They should be broken and buried in the soil. After spraying insecticide, no human or animal should be allowed in the sprayed field.

#### **What to do if exposed to insecticide**

If someone has ingested insecticide or has accidentally gone into the mouth, then a glass of lukewarm water mixed with two teaspoons of salt should vomit or dissolve soap in lukewarm water. If a person has inhaled insecticide, he should be immediately taken to an open place and body clothes should be loosened. If there is a problem in breathing, then by lying on the stomach, spread his arms in front and press the person's back with light strokes and artificial respiration should also be given etc .

