



Grain Millers, Inc., announces policy regarding the use of glyphosate on oats

On April 20th, 2015, Grain Millers, Inc., announced that, as of harvest 2015, they would no longer be buying any oats or oat products that had been treated with the herbicide glyphosate. The press release is below:

“Grain Millers, Inc. Glyphosate on Oats Policy

This communication is to serve as official notification that, as of harvest 2015, Grain Millers, Inc. will no longer accept any oats and/or oat products which have been treated with **glyphosate**. This change is driven by functional performance attributes of finished products manufactured from oats known to have been treated with glyphosate and by customer demand. This policy does not suggest any health or food safety concerns as reviewed and regulated by both the US FDA and/or CFIA/Health Canada.

For further information, please contact Cullen Harder at 952-983-1301 and/or Terry Tyson at 306—783-2931.”

Recently, glyphosate has been in the news because the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a branch of the World Health Organization (WHO), declared that it is “probably carcinogenic”, although other groups are disputing this. This declaration, however, was not a factor in Grain Millers’ decision to impose the ban on glyphosate-treated oats.

Glyphosate is sometimes used as a pre-harvest treatment in oats. It eliminates weeds, and also hastens the drying of the crop, including secondary tillers. According to Grain Millers, however, if applied too early, which is not uncommon, it also reduces the quality of the grain, resulting in chalky, brittle flakes and lower beta glucan levels. The company came to this conclusion after conducting multiple, controlled, mill test runs. They also conducted trials involving varied timing of glyphosate application. The effects on starch maturity and beta glucan levels were then analyzed.

Further complicating matters is the fact that the groat damage is subtle and not readily evident during grain grading. In addition, residue levels do not fluctuate predictably in accordance with the timing of glyphosate application. These factors prevent adequate control measures from being implemented “at the pit”, which influenced Grain Millers’ decision to enact the policy.

-Charlene Wight, 20 May 2015