



To Quaestors of the European, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Agriculture and Rural Development committee and Environment, Public Health and Food Safety committee.

CC-ed to the President of the European Parliament, leaders of the political groups and MEPs leading the negotiations for the Parliament on the EU Transparency register reform.

### **Sign-up letter asking for a comprehensive, transparent and efficient ban on Monsanto lobbying**

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

last month the European Parliament adopted the decision to remove the access badges of Monsanto lobbyists following the company's refusal to attend the public hearing "The Monsanto papers and glyphosate" co-organised by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI).

We warmly welcome this important decision from the Parliament. Monsanto's refusal to participate as well as its disregard for the Parliament's role in ensuring the credibility of the scientific advice of the EU agencies is just one step too far in what has been a long history of Monsanto actively seeking to influence the political process while avoiding public scrutiny.

However, the impact of the decision will depend on a comprehensive, transparent and effective implementation.

Monsanto is currently in the middle of a series of regulatory processes, including the renewal of the licence for glyphosate, the key ingredient in its record-selling pesticide Roundup. The firm also continues to lobby for the EU to relax its ban on genetically modified foods. It comes as no surprise that just last month, Commissioner Vestager announced that the Commission would investigate the proposed merger between Monsanto and Bayer, which academics and civil society campaigners argue will lead to excessive market concentration.

Monsanto's lobby goals are highly controversial and face increasing public opposition. Unsurprisingly, Monsanto has invested heavily in seeking to influence EU decision-making processes, yet the company only declares it spends between 300,000€ - 399,999€ lobbying the EU institutions in the past year and had only two lobbyists with EP badges.

But we know that Monsanto's voice extends far further than its declared lobby registration. The transparency register allows us to see that its interests are represented by an array of organisations, from lobby consultancies to trade associations. The lobby firms which declared Monsanto as a client in their last financial year include:

- Hume Brophy (paid between 100000-199999 by Monsanto)
- Interel European Affairs (paid between 10000-24999 € by Monsanto)
- Fleishman Hillard (paid between 700000-799999 € by Monsanto)
- Red Flag (100000-199999 € by Monsanto)

We also know that Monsanto's interests are represented by the following lobbying organisations and that these groups form part of its influencing strategies:

- European Seed Association
- European Crop Protection Association
- EuropaBio
- European Bio-stimulants Industry Council
- Glyphosate Task Force (run by Hume Brophy)

Further, Monsanto is a member of unregistered organisations working to influence the EU Institutions such as ILSI Europe, ILSI International and Croplife America and International.

In effect, to give real effect to the decision to restrict Monsanto's access to the European Parliament access should also be denied to all those seeking to lobby MEPs on behalf of Monsanto. In practice that would mean that MEPs refuse to meet with the above listed organizations if they seek to represent Monsanto or its interests.

We further note that some media reports have described the Parliament's decision as a "sort of ban", ineffective because Monsanto will still be able to enter the Parliament as a visitor.

**We urge you to publicly support a comprehensive and effective application of the ban on Monsanto lobbyists** which should encompass:

- refusal of meetings with organisations that seek to influence decision making processes on behalf of Monsanto
- exclusion of Monsanto representatives into the European Parliament building as guests

- refusal to attend lobby meetings with Monsanto off the premises of the European Parliament
- report and/or make public any attempts by Monsanto lobbyists, or third parties acting on behalf of Monsanto, to lobby MEPs following the ban

Your sincerely,



Friends of the Earth Europe



\*Sherpa

spinwatch  
Public Interest Investigations



vouliwatch

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