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EPA Denies Hazardous Pesticide Use on 3 Million Acres of Texas Cotton Fields

**Environmental Group Applauds Agency for Rejecting Emergency Propazine Use,
Reminds Agency of Foreseeable Dangers of Toxic Treadmill Agriculture**

Washington D.C., July 23, 2014 - In a letter to the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) denied the state's emergency exemption application for the use of propazine on cotton crops claimed to be facing an urgent, non-routine emergency condition from glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth.

Despite finding that the TDA presented facts meeting the criteria for potential significant economic harm under the emergency exemption standards, EPA cited drinking water and other environmental hazard concerns as the reason for the denial.

"While we disagree with the EPA that this meets any of the criteria for emergency exemption, we applaud the EPA for putting the health of people and the environment first and upholding the health and environmental standards under the law," says Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides, which filed comments opposing emergency status for propazine use.

Propazine is a toxic herbicide in the triazine class of chemicals that has been linked to developmental and reproductive toxicity. The triazines are highly soluble in water and are the most frequently detected pesticides found at concentrations at or above one or more benchmarks in over half of sites sampled. Allowing propazine use on over 3 million acres of cotton in Texas would undoubtedly have increased increase propazine movement into waterways, potentially threatening the safety of Texas' surface and drinking water.

"This is not an emergency because the weed resistance is predictable since it has been known for many years that GMO cotton sprayed with glyphosate would create resistant superweeds," notes Feldman. "It is an abuse of the law for EPA to prop up failed GMO cropping systems with toxic chemicals when viable alternatives, like organic growing methods, exist."

Glyphosate-resistant weeds, like Palmer amaranth, have ballooned in recent years due to the expansion of Roundup® Ready crops, including soybeans, corn, and cotton. Increased selection pressure from widespread use and reliance on glyphosate and the simultaneous reductions in the use of sustainable weed management practices have resulted in glyphosate-resistant weeds—a now common and foreseeable issue facing agriculture across the United States. Beyond Pesticides opposes all efforts to perpetuate a failed and dangerous chemically-reliant agricultural system.

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