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PERSPECTIVE | BRIDGE - MEDICINES AND PESTICIDES

Toward pesticide vigilance

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Summary

Agricultural pesticides are an important component of intensive agriculture and, therefore, of global food production. In the European Union, ~500 active substances used in pesticides are approved, including insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, and plant growth regulators. When used at industrial scales, pesticides can harm the environment (1), but there is a trade-off between this effect and the need to produce food. Recent uncertainties about the health and environmental effects of glyphosate herbicide and neonicotinoid insecticides underline the need for regulation to be sensitive to this trade-off (2, 3). Better regulation is needed to control how pesticides are used and affect the environment at a landscape scale.

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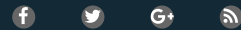
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