



February 8, 2016

Maine Board of Pesticides Control  
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
28 State House Station  
Augusta ME 04333-0028

PO Box 4744  
Portland ME 04112

207.210.0084

[www.psrmaine.org](http://www.psrmaine.org)

Staff

Karen D'Andrea  
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Daniel Oppenheim, MD  
President

James Maier, MD  
Vice President

Doug Dransfield, MD  
Clerk

Sydney Sewall, MD  
Treasurer

Lani Graham, MD, MPH

Paul Liebow, MD

Peter Millard, MD

Paul Perkins, MD

Peter Wilk, MD

Dear Members of Maine's Board of Pesticides Control,

Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter (PSR Maine) is a statewide organization comprised of medical and healthcare professionals and advocates. We are writing today to endorse the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) work to reduce pesticide reliance and use in Maine.

As we are all aware, pesticides are designed to kill living organisms, and today more scientific studies are finding connections between the use of pesticides, especially organophosphates, and certain diseases.

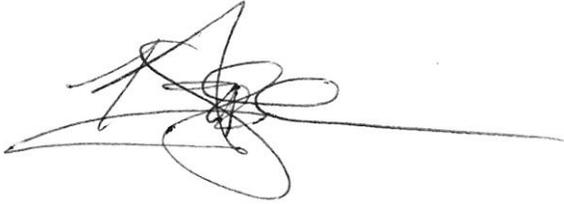
A urinary biomonitoring study completed in 2006<sup>1</sup> found that an organic diet immediately reduced the exposure to organophosphate pesticides in school-aged children. Another study in 2011, indicated a 50% increase in childhood leukemia risk following routine maternal pesticide use in the home or garden.<sup>2</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends reducing children's exposure to pesticides at home including the use of pesticides indoors and outdoors where a 2015 AAP study found an association to leukemia and brain tumors.<sup>3</sup> Children are most vulnerable from pesticide exposures because their bodies are still developing, however; adults' health is also at risk.

Pesticides can damage the male reproductive system in a number of ways. Some chemicals can kill or damage cells resulting in infertility. Others may alter DNA structure, causing gene mutations that may result in birth defects or an inability to conceive, while still others can change the way genes are expressed.<sup>4</sup> And in 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a research arm of the World Health Organization, said that glyphosate is a "probable" cancer-causing substance, or carcinogen.

Over two dozen municipalities in Maine currently ban or restrict the use of pesticides in a number of ways that protect their citizens and natural resources. The number is growing with Portland and South Portland

currently working on ordinances. The importance of education and public health policy cannot be understated. PSR Maine supports policy restrictions as well as education that would reduce exposures to all Maine families and children and prevent disease.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen A D'Andrea', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Karen A D'Andrea  
Executive Director

<sup>1</sup> Lu C, Toepel K, Irish R, Fenske RA, Barr DB, Bravo R, EHP. 2006, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16451864>

<sup>2</sup> Inson F, Merhi M, Baldi I, Raynal H, Gamet-Payraastre L. Exposure to pesticides and risk of childhood cancer: a meta-analysis of recent epidemiological studies. *Occupational and environmental medicine*. Sep 2011;68(9):694-702

<sup>3</sup> Mei Chen, Chi-Hsuan Chang, Lin Tao, Chensheng Lu, 2015, American Academy of Pediatrics, Residential Exposure to Pesticide During Childhood and Childhood Cancers: A Meta-Analysis, <http://bit.ly/1L0d3a4>

<sup>4</sup> Collatta, M. et al "Epigenetics and pesticides," *Toxicology* 307 (2013) 35-41