



THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA  
LE CONSEIL NATIONAL DES FEMMES DU CANADA

February 9, 2016

The Hon. Jane Philpott  
Minister, Department of Health  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H6

Dear Minister:

The National Council of Women of Canada commend you and Health Canada on the decision to stop the practice of granting conditional registrations of pesticides as of June 1, 2016. This practice has led to lengthy conditional registrations currently totalling 76 pesticides and herbicides, according to a recently published Pest Management Review Agency (PMRA) document, and has been criticized by the Commissioner for Environment and Sustainable Development.

Prior to this, on December 15, 2015, the PMRA issued a request for consultation on the approval of Atrazine, a triazine herbicide, for a 45-day period ("Re-evaluation Note REV2015-11, Special Review of Atrazine: Proposed Decision for Consultation"). In this document, Section 6.0 Proposed Special Review Decision for Atrazine states: *"Evaluation of available relevant scientific information related to the aspect of concern, indicates that atrazine and its chlorinated transformation products do not pose unacceptable risks to human health and the environment, with respect to drinking water, taking into account the current conditions of use. On this basis, PMRA, under the authority of the Pest Control Products Act, is proposing to confirm the current registration of pest control products containing atrazine for sale and use in Canada. This proposal affects all registered products containing atrazine in Canada."*

The PMRA, in their own words (above) want to continue the use of atrazine, while asking for a consultation on its use. The same document states European Union Member States banned the use of atrazine in 2003 due to environmental concerns. There has also been extensive controversy over the use of this herbicide in Canada and the United States over many years. *"Atrazine is recognized as an endocrine disrupter, which means that it can have an effect on the hormonal balance of an organism,"* said Monique Boily, an adjunct professor in biological sciences at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

The National Council of Women of Canada have long supported the use of the precautionary principle with respect to products that have potential to harm the ecosystem, wildlife and humans. Therefore, we strongly urge the Government of Canada to:

- 1) employ the precautionary principle with regard to Atrazine or triazine
- 2) research and monitor the use of pesticides in Canada
- 3) expedite the development of the necessary legislation to control or restrict the use of pesticides
- 4) regulate and improve management practices for pesticides and enforce such regulations and
- 5) do research to develop alternatives.

Sincerely,

*Karen Monnon Dempsey, President*  
National Council of Women of Canada

Text written by VP Environment Jeannette Logan and President Karen Monnon Dempsey

cc: The Hon. Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food  
The Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Founded in 1893 and incorporated in 1914 by an Act of Parliament, the National Council of Women of Canada is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organization (NGO) representing a large number of Canadians of diverse occupations, languages, origins and customs, and reflecting a cross-section of public opinion. We have been given 'national historic significance' status by the Government of Canada in recognition of the major contributions NCWC has made.