

ARA Denounces Anti-Science Pesticide Claims in MAHA Report, Warns of Potential Threats to Food Security

The Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) expresses deep concerns regarding comments on pesticide safety in the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) report, which was released today. While the importance of evaluating agricultural practices is undeniable, the report's conclusions contradict longstanding scientific research and fail to acknowledge the critical role pesticides play in ensuring food security and public health.

Pesticides are among the most heavily regulated tools in agriculture, supported by decades of rigorous scientific oversight. The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) of 1947, along with its major update through the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) in 1996, introduced stringent regulations, particularly emphasizing the safety of infants and children. Under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), every pesticide undergoes extensive testing for human and environmental safety, with public and scientific scrutiny at every stage. The EPA continuously reevaluates and updates product labels as new data becomes available. As reported by EPA, "Pesticides are used to control various pests and disease carriers, such as mosquitoes, ticks, rats, and mice. Pesticides are used in agriculture to control weeds, insect infestations, and diseases."

Hidden in the report is a call for consideration of "actions that further regulate or restrict crop protection tools beyond risk-based and scientific processes set forth by Congress." In other words, the MAHA Commission Report calls for the United States to abandon its gold standard regulatory system and instead embrace a hazard-based precautionary system that includes *non-scientific* factors, such as that in the European Union.

In short, the pesticide testing that the report calls for has already been done by regulators in the United States, Europe, Australia, and around the world. None of them has found a causal carcinogenic link.

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations highlights the significant threat pests pose to global agriculture, with annual crop losses ranging between 20 percent and 40 percent. "Without pesticides, farmers will struggle to control invasive insects and plant diseases, particularly those affecting perishable crops like fruits and vegetables," says ARA CEO Daren Coppock. "This would result in reduced food availability, diminished quality, increased consumer costs, and heightened food safety risks."

ARA maintains that the MAHA report's recommendations would undermine—not enhance—America's health and well-being. If implemented, these measures will lead to higher food costs, reduced availability, stifled innovation in agriculture and disproportionate harm to families with limited financial resources. President Trump has repeatedly said that he has the farmers' backs; now is his time to back that up by reining in the anti-science drivel in this report.