

«No More Poison!»: Farmers Raise Alarm Over Health and Environmental Crisis Caused by Agrochemicals in Maule Region

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Farmer communities in Curicó Province, Maule Region, are sounding the alarm over a health and environmental crisis caused by agrochemicals. Studies from the University of Chile and the University of Bío-Bío confirm the presence of banned pesticides such as chlorpyrifos, diuron, and fosetyl-Al, linking them to severe public health issues. They demand the immediate ban of these toxins.



Original article: “¡No más veneno!”: La alerta campesina por crisis sanitaria y ambiental a causa de agroquímicos en la Región del Maule

Farmer Sacrifice Zones: Claims Agrochemicals Are Poisoning Lands of Maule

From the Ismenia Ortiz Lizama Farmers' School in Palquibudi, Rauco commune, Curicó province, a group of traditional farmers has raised an urgent alarm regarding the rising contamination from agrochemicals and their devastating impacts on public health and the environment, highlighting the need for agroecological food sources.

The collective demands strict regulations and the immediate ban of highly toxic compounds, which are prohibited in other countries, yet remain in use in Chile. The situation is exacerbated by reports of mass poisoning among temporary agricultural workers in the Maule Region, evidencing a silent health crisis that disproportionately affects vulnerable communities.

This complaint is also backed by scientific evidence. Researchers from the School of Public Health at the University of Chile published a study in 2024 linking pesticides such as chlorpyrifos to severe mental and reproductive health issues.

Notably, Professor María Teresa Muñoz, cited by the group, clearly explained during the study's dissemination, as reported on [UChile's portal](#): «**The use of pesticides like chlorpyrifos affects neurotransmitter mechanisms, causing depressive symptoms and increasing the risk of suicide.**» The academic work also associates exposure to these chemicals with **neurobehavioral disorders, genotoxicity, cancer, and reproductive problems, demanding restrictions on metamidofos and methomyl.**

Contamination extends to water resources. An interdisciplinary research project from the University of Bío-Bío, recently published on the [University of Bío-Bío portal](#), led by Dr. Alexander Panéz Pinto, detected the presence of highly dangerous pesticides in rivers of the Central Valley in Ñuble and Maule regions. Part of the Fondecyt project No. 11220783 and published in 'Sustainability', the study identified diuron and fosetyl-Al, compounds used in agroexportation linked to carcinogenic and toxic effects. «These findings are unprecedented and concerning. All sampled rivers show pesticide contamination, with some, such as the Loncomilla River in Maule, exceeding international drinking water standards,» warned Dr. Panéz.

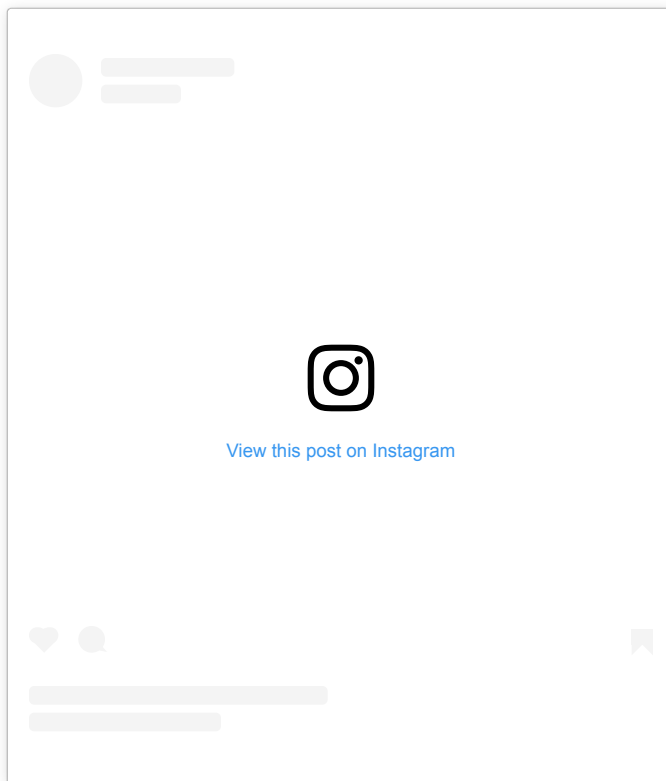
Diuron, a herbicide banned in the United States and European Union, is classified as a carcinogen by the U.S. EPA, linked to genetic, hepatic, and renal damage. Meanwhile, fosetyl-Al, restricted in Europe since 2013, is harmful to aquatic life and persistently toxic. The lack of effective regulation in Chile not only poisons water but also devastates local biodiversity, with critical damages reported in beekeeping due to the indiscriminate use of insecticides, an impact that persists despite judicial decisions on the matter.

In the face of this reality, the collective from the Farmers' School in Palquibudi, Curicó province, demands immediate action. They urge authorities to take responsibility, prohibit highly dangerous pesticides already banned internationally, and establish real protection policies for both public health and ecosystems. Their call highlights an agro-export model that prioritizes production over life, leaving a trail of illness and contamination in rural areas.

The collective, which includes María Cristina Ahumada, María Cáster Hidalgo, Nadia Escobar Aliaga, Juan González Valderrama, Sara Vásquez Marchant, and Giovanna Benítez, emphasized through a video (Registration Cata Camus) the importance of agroecology for healthy food.

Watch the Shared Video

Farmer Sacrifice Zones: Claims that agrochemicals are poisoning the lands of Maule.



They denounce that agrochemicals are poisoning the lands of Maule.

From the Ismenia Ortiz Lizama Farmers' School in Palquibudi, Rauco commune, a collective from traditional farming areas has raised an alarm. pic.twitter.com/3EM1KsYiov

— Minga Ancestral (@mingaancestral) November 9, 2025

Fuente: El Ciudadano