



BEYOND PESTICIDES

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FOOD, FARMING, HEALTH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION 1

Warning of Pesticide Product Hazards

On June 25, 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court sided with agrichemical manufacturers in *Monsanto v. Durnell* in a 7-2 decision, effectively shielding manufacturers from liability associated with those who are potentially harmed but not warned about pesticides' adverse effects like cancer, neurological or immunological conditions, reproductive dysfunction, and other chronic illnesses. The court establishes liability immunity under federal pesticide law, finding that the *Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act* "preempts a state-law failure-to-warn claim concerning a pesticide registered by EPA [the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency], where the agency has determined that a particular warning is not required and the warning cannot be added to a product label without EPA approval."

Bipartisan legislation, *Americans vs. Poisonous Pesticides Act*, has been introduced to reverse this decision and return to a long history of jurisprudence. Safety advocates have called on Congress to hold multinational agrichemical corporations accountable for failing to disclose the potential long-term health effects of their products.

Will you support and cosponsor or oppose this bill? Is there anything else you will do?

CANDIDATE RESPONSE

Yes, I will support and cosponsor the bill "The Americans vs. Poisonous Pesticides Act (H.R. 9807)" because federal pesticide regulations should not automatically prevent people from suing corporations when the company may be liable for harm caused by its product.

Here's what else I will do:

I will commission independent research and examine the evidence more closely before drawing conclusions.

Pesticides are chemicals with the power to kill living organisms, and people should reasonably already understand that they can be dangerous. A person who uses a pesticide also has responsibility to read the label, follow the instructions, use appropriate protective equipment, avoid unsafe exposure, and consider their own health, age, immune system function, and individual risk factors when deciding whether to use the product.

For example, according to AgWeb, an agricultural farm journal, more than 90% of Roundup litigation claims came from the residential lawn and garden market.¹ However, their findings do not tell us which residential users made up that percentage.

I would commission independent research to determine what percentage of residential-use claims involve home gardeners and casual users versus professional landscape contractors. That data would help determine whether differences in training, safety protocols, oversight, and

experience may be relevant. Home gardeners and casual users may not have the same training, protective equipment, or safety procedures as professional landscaping crews.

Today, many people are choosing chemical-free gardening, opting to pull weeds by hand and use natural alternatives rather than spray chemicals, whether or not a warning appears on the label.

Source

¹ AgWeb, "Bayer to Pull Glyphosate from U.S. Lawn and Garden Markets," July 30, 2021.

<https://www.agweb.com/news/crops/crop-production/bayer-pull-glyphosate-u-s-lawn-and-garden-markets>

QUESTION 2

Sustainable and Organic Agriculture

Many in agriculture say that the status quo in agricultural production practices and policies provide for a bountiful food supply based on the use of safe pesticides registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), petrochemical fertilizers, and profitable returns. At the same time, many farmers also cite a web of challenges, including navigating cost shocks due to tariff and geopolitical tensions, federal funding cuts resulting in a nearly 20 percent reduction in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's workforce, disruption to pest and pathogen surveillance for outbreaks of *Cyclospora* and the New World screwworm, and concerns about agrichemicals.

At the same time, numerous analysts have concluded that sustainable agricultural practices, which do not utilize petrochemical pesticides and fertilizers, can significantly mitigate current existential threats to health, biodiversity, and climate stability. There is growing understanding that the nurturing of ecosystem services is a foundational tenet in safe and cost-effective pest management, supporting healthy soil and human biological systems. In this context, the benefits of organic farms in sync with nature have been documented—in peer-reviewed science on microbial diversity biomarkers and nutrient cycling, as well as long-term field trials showing competitive and increased productivity and profitability for farmers.

The sponsors of the *Opportunities in Organic Act* say that organic agriculture has a "wide array of environmental and health benefits" and the legislation invests in an expansion of the small- and medium-sized organic farm sector.

Will you support and cosponsor or oppose this bill?

Is there anything else you will do in support of food systems that shift away from dependency on synthetic agrichemicals that may have harmful effects?

CANDIDATE RESPONSE

Yes, I will support and cosponsor the bill "The Opportunities in Organic Act (H.R. 7318)" because farmers should have more opportunities to use sustainable farming practices that protect soil health, support biodiversity, reduce dependence on chemical pesticides, and promote environmental, human, and animal health.

Here's what else I will do:

I will also support programs that help small and medium-sized farmers transition to organic farming by providing education, technical assistance, and financial support. Farmers need practical options that allow them to make changes without costing them their farms or putting their livelihoods at risk.

I will also support legislation that creates healthier soil, like resting the land, crop rotation, cover crops, and amending the soil to help restore soil fertility.

Plants can make their own sugars through photosynthesis, but they cannot make minerals. They must absorb minerals from the soil. Commercial fertilizers typically supply only 3 primary plant minerals: nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K). However, there are 16 minerals humans need!

That's why nourishing the soil is so important. We can replenish soil minerals with natural soil amendments and practices like compost, manure, wood ash, and returning plant material to the soil to help maintain soil fertility.

People get minerals through the plants they eat, and plants get them from the soil. But if the soil is depleted, the crops are depleted of nutrients too. We don't just want plants to grow, we want them to be nutrient rich!

I am on board with any legislation that will help restore health to the land and the people, which, as we are learning, is returning to farming practices that were in place for thousands of years. The Amish never forgot!

QUESTION 3

Addressing Widespread PFAS Contamination

There is an ongoing effort to change protections from PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) chemicals through federal rulemaking, reducing restrictions on contamination in biosolid sewage sludge fertilizer products on over 12,000 known PFAS compounds. Biosolid/fertilizer products are often marketed as a sustainable, circular-economy-style solution, even though they may contain toxic residues from synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, PFAS, plastics, pharmaceuticals, heavy metals, and other toxicants, which are being passed along to farmers and consumers who then ultimately face the health (and financial) consequences of exposure. Meanwhile, EPA continues to allow expanded exposure to PFAS by registering pesticides whose active ingredients contain one fully fluorinated carbon atom, the internationally accepted definition of PFAS.

What steps, if any, will you take to address hazardous PFAS exposure and/or prevent PFAS in consumer and agricultural products moving forward?

Do you think there should be remediation of contaminated land and a ban on PFAS under internationally recognized standards?

CANDIDATE RESPONSE

I will research existing PFAS legislation and any bills already introduced in the House, identify the ones that offer meaningful protection against PFAS in consumer and agricultural products, and then go to work across the aisle—in nonpartisan fashion—to support and cosponsor them. If the bills fall short, I will help strengthen them by clarifying legislative language and wording, closing loopholes, and drafting effective new legislation that has a better chance of passing.

To guard against efforts to change PFAS protections through federal rulemaking, I will scrutinize legislative proposals and read entire 3,000-word bills, looking for hidden provisions, loopholes, and rules buried in fine print using misleading language and semantic trickery to weaken protections for the public, and I will call them out publicly and demand accountability.

I will push for investigations into PFAS contamination and corporate influence over environmental regulations, expose the findings publicly, demand accountability, and ensure those responsible face consequences. I will work to ensure investigations lead to real corrective action rather than allowing reports and hearings to sit on a shelf.

REMEDICATION OF CONTAMINATED LAND AND BAN ON PFAS:

Yes. As good stewards of the earth, we must remediate and restore contaminated land. There are many nonprofit environmental organizations here in the U.S. willing to help with cleanup efforts, and partnering with them could reduce the financial burden on taxpayers. There is already a growing Green Movement, and we should build on that momentum while holding those responsible for contamination accountable.

Yes. I believe PFAS should be banned and using internationally recognized standards is a good start. Europe and other countries have taken steps to restrict PFAS and broader restrictions are still being developed.