

The People's Inquiry - Te Uiuinga a te Tāngata

The People's Inquiry into the Impacts and Effects of Toxic Chemicals and Poisons on our People, Wildlife and Environment – *Te Uiuinga e pā ana ki nga Pātanga me nga Tukinotanga a nga Matū Tāoke me nga Paitini ki ngā Tāngata, nga Kararehe Kōwao me te Taiao*



Recent News & Updates

Over the past several months we have been busy interviewing people about their experiences with various toxic chemicals and how their lives have been impacted. Thanks to those involved and the great work of Jo Armstrong we can now share some of these interviews with you as they become available.

This month we share an interview with John Levers from The Bay of Islands. Toxic Hi-Cane spray from a neighbouring kiwifruit orchard drifted on to his property poisoning animals and wildlife. Felicity Taylor also shares her experience of being poisoned on the family farm some 20 odd years ago, and Stephanie McKee from our Executive Committee has an in-depth discussion with Dr. Hugh Jellie of [āta Regenerative Agriculture](#) about the harmful consequences of the widespread use of Glyphosate. Thank you to all those who have taken the time to speak with us and share their knowledge or experience. Find the [interviews on film here](#).

Hear Our Voices!!! is an article shared with us by Stephen Torrington, founder of More Wisdom, to encourage others who have experienced harm from chemical poisons to be courageous and find their voice. Stephen says “those living with ongoing chemical poisoning and sensitivity have as much to contribute to the debate as any scientist, doctor or government agency.” Read the article on the next page, it can also be shared from the website.

The Executive Committee - peoplesinquiry2020.nz / contact@peoplesinquiry2020.nz

Hear Our Voices!!!

by Stephen Torrington (This article is also on the Inquiry website [here](#))

We are being exposed to more and more toxic compounds in our homes and workplaces, as a group we who have experienced chemical poisoning or who live with chemical sensitivities are not often heard, and unless our poisonings are of a life-threatening immediacy they will often go undocumented.

When we try to report harm to our health we often are met with ignorance or denial from our medical professionals, we also will often experience what feels like cover up politics from our Government authorities.

Long term health problems after an acute chemical exposure are very difficult to have accepted by ACC or WINZ.

Ill health or disease from longer term chronic chemical exposures are also very rarely accepted for compensation from ACC or documented as notifiable workplace injuries by Worksafe NZ.

The growing rates of illness linked with chemical residue from pesticides in food and water are also increasing as is the science linking this type of exposure to long term illness.

The spraying around our communities is causing many health problems as are the amount of our jobs which require working around toxic and neurotoxic chemicals and pesticides.

Historically it's been very difficult for those chemically poisoned in Aotearoa NZ to get a diagnosis, compensation, or to access vitally needed healthcare services, as our average local GP just isn't trained to treat or able to diagnose this type of illness, yet the growing rates of those harmed is alarming.

The world's largest pesticide research project the US agriculture and health study has shown that 16% of all pesticide workers and their spouses will receive an acute poisoning at least once in their lifetime.

[Agriculture Health Study](#) / [Agriculture Health Study further publications](#)

The [World Health Organization data](#) states unintentional poisoning caused the loss of 10.7 million years of healthy life in 2012 alone due to illness and suffering, yet our Government fails to properly recognise the harm caused by chemical poisoning.

A movement of environmental health is sweeping the globe, the science fuelling this is compelling, and our country is falling well behind international best practice by not addressing the growing epidemic of harm perpetrated on its people.

The nature of illness from many of the neurotoxic compounds we find ourselves exposed to, can make it challenging for many of us to speak publicly so this must remain a personal decision, yet I hope many will find the courage.

Let's find our voices and help to bring change. Those living with ongoing chemical poisoning and sensitivity have as much to contribute to the debate as any scientist, doctor or government agency and all who have been harmed deserve the chance to have their voices and experiences heard and respected.

Stephen Torrington, chemical poisoning advocate, Founder of [More Wisdom](#)

More Wisdom aims to help support people who have been exposed to pesticides, and other toxic chemicals, which have harmed their lives. More Wisdom also provides a resource for the general public to get better informed and make better choices regarding the use of pesticides.



Healthy Children Campaign

On Universal Children's day 20 November 2017 Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific launched its Campaign to get toxic pesticides out of children's lives. PANAP is one of five regional centres of the Pesticide Action Network, (PAN) a global network dedicated to the elimination of harm upon humans and the environment by pesticide use.

PAN has been doing amazing work for decades, and rather than reinvent the wheel here in New Zealand the Weed Management Advisory together

with our own PAN Aotearoa New Zealand have joined with PANAP and their call for action. Their work and resources are brought together here for us to use and adapt for our situation. Links to other groups both here and around the globe already working on alternatives to pesticides and chemicals are additional valuable resources, and we expect to add to these as we develop this campaign.

Find resources and other information about the campaign [here on the Weed Management Advisory Website](#).

Submissions from people who have experienced harm

Thank you to those that have recently sent in their submissions and for the many messages of support and encouragement for the Inquiry. We have received submissions from around the country concerning harm from organophosphates, 1080 poison and agricultural chemical drift. They each recount the harmful impacts that these chemicals had on people's lives and health and the frustrating lack of accountability and concern from government officials.

Sitting down to write about, or even just recounting traumatic experiences that have left us feeling vulnerable and hurt can be a very difficult thing to do, but it can also be a step toward healing and empowering oneself. If you are writing your submission, take your time and remember there is always support available if you need it. Find out more about [Support and Advocacy](#).



How to make your submission

Once you have prepared your written submission in word format, with any accompanying documents, go the [Submission Guide](#) for clear steps on what to do. It's simple and involves emailing your submission through to us then completing the relevant form linked in the Submission Guide. Once we receive your submission we will be in touch to confirm we have received it, along with your details. If you have any questions you can email us at - contact@peoplesinquiry2020.nz

Website Updates

The Inquiry website is continually being updated with more information and we will try to keep you posted with any significant additions. One recent addition is the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Inquiry which can now be found on the [website here](#). The TOR covers the purpose, intent and outcomes expected for the Inquiry and is worthwhile reading.

Glyphosate

The Inquiry Committee put out a press release in early July in response to the Bayer-Monsanto \$10.9 billion US dollar payout to people who have been harmed by Glyphosate. Around this time Christchurch City Council was considering reintroducing the poison for roadside management of weeds, however it has since backed down due to public outcry.

PI2020 Press Release: [Glyphosate Risks To Human Health Ignored: Where Is The Duty Of Care?](#)

In late July it was also reported that Glyphosate had been found in New Zealand honey products, representing an unacceptable risk to people and our trade relations. It's not the first time pesticides have been found in New Zealand honey, traces of insecticides (neonicotinoids) were found in a global study led by a Swiss Professor ([2017 article](#)), interestingly The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) testing during this time showed no trace of neonicotinoids.

The Soil & Health Association has launched a campaign for getting rid of Glyphosate. There are some very informative documents on their [website](#) that help to lay out the existing international research and findings - while offering New Zealand context.

[Condemnation Of MPI's 'No Worries' Attitude To Glyphosate-contaminated Honey](#) - PAN, WMA, Buy Pure

Poison Eyewitness TV - [Roy talks about his experience as an organic beekeeper in New Zealand until 1080 poison!](#)

Other Links:

[Ministry of Health checks for residents near New Plymouth chemical plant labelled a 'sham'](#) - NZ Herald

[European Union re-establishes pesticide reduction goals](#)

Pod Cast: [Embracing the Connection Between Agriculture and Health with Zach Bush](#)

