Subject: Letter Opposing the Re-registration of Paraquat

The undersigned 52 farmworker, public health, environmental justice, environmental, and farmer advocates urge the EPA to ban paraquat because of its substantial and demonstrated risks. The continued use of paraquat cannot be justified and the EPA must cancel its registration in order to adequately protect the people and places most likely to be harmed by this dangerous herbicide.

Paraquat is the most acutely lethal herbicide still in use today and has resulted in the death of at least 30 people in the U.S. in the last 30 years. In addition, chronic paraquat exposure has been associated with an increased risk of developing Parkinson’s disease.

Much of the world has banned or is in the process of phasing out paraquat due to its high toxicity, including three of the largest agricultural producing nations in the world – the European Union, China and Brazil.

Yet paraquat use in the United States is higher than it’s been in the past 25 years, with use rising considerably in recent years. This increase shows no signs of slowing.

Paraquat is one of the most highly toxic herbicides still used in the United States. Yet in the draft risk assessment, EPA has erased protections for the most vulnerable young children in our population and ignored associations with Parkinson’s disease.

The agency found serious risks to farmworkers who are exposed to high levels of paraquat on the job, which also poses a significant risk to their families. The EPA has also identified considerable environmental harms.

We urge the EPA to ban this chemical. Farmworkers, farmers, children, and our natural places should not be left behind when crucial public health and environmental protections have been granted almost everywhere else in the world.

Signed,

350 Colorado
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
Beyond Pesticides
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Food Safety
Coalition of Florida Farmworker Organizations, Inc.
Coming Clean
Community Alliance for Global Justice
Endangered Species Coalition
Environmental Working Group
Fair World Project
Family Farm Defenders
Farmworker Association of Florida
Friends of Milwaukee's Downtown Forest
Friends of the Earth
IPEN (International Pollutants Elimination Network)
Justice/Justicia For Migrant Workers
MADE SAFE & Nontoxic Certified
Md Pesticide Education Network
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farm Worker Ministry
National Toxic Encephalopathy Foundation
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
Nature Coast Conservation, Inc.
New Hampshire Audubon
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Massachusetts
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York
NY4WHALES
Oceanic Preservation Society
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC)
People Concerned About Chemical Safety
Pesticide Action Network
Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter
Pollinate Minnesota
Prairie Rivers Network
Predator Defense
Protect All Children's Environment
Real Food Media
Sierra Club
Sierra Club Toxics Team
South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)
The Animal Welfare Institute
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research
The Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
Toxic Free NC
Unexpected Wildlife Refuge
Virginia Association for Biological Farming
Western Watersheds Project
WhyHunger
Wildearth Guardians
Worker Justice Center of New York