



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on February 20, 2026

Trump's Order Elevates Glyphosate to National Defense Status, Sparks MAHA Revolt

On Wednesday, President Donald Trump signed an executive order mobilizing the Defense Production Act of 1950 to prioritize domestic production of elemental phosphorus and glyphosate-based herbicides. That effectively elevates their production to a national-defense priority.

The move triggered an explosive reaction across the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) camp and beyond. Glyphosate is a well-known toxic compound. It has been linked to cancer in multiple legal disputes and peer-reviewed [studies](#). Juries have already [awarded billions](#) in damages against Monsanto over Roundup-related claims. About 61,000 Roundup lawsuits remain active.



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Now, the White House is invoking emergency national-defense powers to scale up its supply, while also conferring broad legal immunity to domestic producers required to comply with the order.

National Defense Meets Industrial Agriculture

The order, titled "[Promoting the National Defense by Ensuring an Adequate Supply of Elemental Phosphorus and Glyphosate Based Herbicides](#)," frames elemental phosphorus as essential to military readiness. It states that the material is "pervasive in defense supply chains and is therefore crucial to military readiness and national defense." It is used in smoke, illumination, and incendiary devices. The element is also required to manufacture semiconductors used in radar, solar cells, sensors, and optoelectronics.

The order further described phosphorus as increasingly important in lithium-ion battery chemistries used across weapon systems.

But the directive does not stop at munitions or microchips. It explicitly links phosphorus to glyphosate production. It calls elemental phosphorus "a critical precursor element for the production of glyphosate-based herbicides." The White House [fact sheet](#) reinforces this linkage.

The order then outlines the utmost significance of the herbicides:

As the most widely used crop protection tools in United States agriculture, glyphosate-based herbicides are a cornerstone of this Nation's agricultural productivity and rural economy, allowing United States farmers and ranchers to maintain high yields and low production costs while ensuring that healthy, affordable food options remain within reach for all American families.



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The order goes further. It states that “there is no direct one-for-one chemical alternative to glyphosate-based herbicides.” It warns that lack of access would “critically jeopardize agricultural productivity” and could result in cropland being abandoned due to low yields.

Boosting Supply

The White House fact sheet underscores what it portrays as a structural vulnerability in the domestic supply chain. The United States currently has “only one domestic producer of elemental phosphorus and glyphosate-based herbicides.” That producer does not meet annual national demand. The United States currently has only one operating elemental phosphorus producer. That producer is P4 Production LLC, a Bayer AG subsidiary.

The executive order itself states that more than 6,000,000 kilograms of elemental phosphorus are imported from other countries each year. “Large volumes” of it come from China, per [Reuters](#).

Officials warn that any future reduction, or outright cessation, of domestic production would “gravely threaten American national security by disrupting” both defense manufacturing and agricultural supply chains.

In response, the order formally designates elemental phosphorus as “a scarce material that is critical to national defense and security.” It links inadequate domestic production not only to supply chain instability, but also to vulnerability to “hostile foreign actors” in both the defense industrial base and the civilian food system.

Defense Production Act as Regulatory Override

The executive order invokes Section 101 of the [Defense Production Act](#) of 1950 — a Korean War-era statute stemming from the [War Powers Acts of World War II](#). It delegates presidential authority to the Secretary of Agriculture to “require performance of contracts or orders” tied to phosphorus and glyphosate supply.

The Secretary is now tasked with determining “the proper nationwide priorities and allocation of all the materials, services, and facilities necessary to ensure a continued and adequate supply” of these products.

This authority must be exercised in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

The order directs the Secretary to issue rules and regulations needed to implement the order. These rules must take into account the President’s judgment that domestic production of elemental phosphorus and glyphosate-based herbicides is “critical to the national defense.”

The directive adds a striking limitation. It states that any order or regulation issued under this authority must not “place the corporate viability of any domestic producer of elemental phosphorus or glyphosate-based herbicides at risk.”

In practice, this language elevates the financial stability of chemical producers to a defense priority.

Industry Protection

Section 3 of the order extends legal protections to producers. It confers “all immunity provided for in section 707 of the Act.”

The key operative language [states](#):



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No person shall be held liable for damages or penalties for any act or failure to act resulting directly or indirectly from compliance with a rule, regulation, or order issued pursuant to this chapter.

Congressional Research Service (CRS) further explains that Section 707 grants persons “limited immunity from liability for complying with DPA-authorized regulations.” While the measure does not provide blanket immunity from all civil litigation, it does shield contractors from liability arising from compliance with federal production priorities issued under the Act.

Bayer AG [stated](#) to the Children’s Health Defense (CHD) that it would comply with the president’s order.

MAHA Furious

The backlash from MAHA was immediate and fierce.

As [reported](#) by *The Hill*, David Murphy, former finance director for Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.’s presidential campaign, said that

the GOP’s broader embrace of pesticides could have consequences with MAHA voters in the midterm elections — predicting it could cost them between 10 and 20 House seats.

Activist Kelly Ryerson warned,

This move betrays the very MAHA voters who put this administration in power. It stands in direct opposition to the President’s original promise to address the contribution of pesticides to chronic disease.

Representative Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) [promised](#),

This week I will introduce the “No Immunity for Glyphosate Act” to undo the recent Executive Order which promotes glyphosate (Round-Up) and insulates manufacturers from liability. [#MAHA](#)

Activist and journalist Mike Adams, known as the Health Ranger, [questioned](#) the rationale behind the order. He argued,

It is an absolute lie that glyphosate is needed for 80% of U.S. food production.

He added that farmers often spray glyphosate on wheat as a desiccant, or drying agent, rather than to kill weeds, to accelerate harvest timelines. Adams argued that growers could still produce staple crops such as wheat, corn, and soy without it.

His outlet Natural News posted a [chilling report](#), titled “From Nazi Labs to Your Plate: The True, Deadly History of Glyphosate.” The piece traces applications of the chemical as a part of “the systematic, slow-motion poisoning of the global population.”

Attorney Tom Renz [blasted](#) the president for bypassing Congress “by attempting to provide immunity to cancer-causing glyphosate manufacturers.” He added that the order is “a gift to the big pharma/big ag



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industry” and that “Trump has just tried to unilaterally block state laws and court rulings that allow liability for cancer from glyphosate manufacturers.”

RFK, Jr. Backs the Order

U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. emerged as a major disappointment to the movement. For years, he has publicly criticized glyphosate. As an attorney, he helped secure a landmark 2018 jury verdict [awarding \\$289 million](#) to a plaintiff who alleged that Monsanto’s Roundup caused his cancer. The case became the first major courtroom defeat for the company and reshaped the national debate over the herbicide’s safety.

During his 2024 presidential campaign, Kennedy continued that criticism. On social media, he [described](#) glyphosate as “one of the likely culprits in America’s chronic disease epidemic.”

“My USDA will ban” its use, he added.

Now, in a position of power, he has executed a remarkably clean 180-degree turn.

In a statement [reported](#) by *The New York Times*, Kennedy endorsed the president’s decision to invoke the Defense Production Act:

Donald Trump’s executive order puts America first where it matters most — our defense readiness and our food supply.... We must safeguard America’s national security first, because all of our priorities depend on it.

Since taking office, Kennedy has [argued](#) that an immediate ban on glyphosate would put 80 percent of farmers out of business.

For a movement built on confronting corporate chemical power, his reversal hits hard.

Related articles:

[What Is Glyphosate, and Why Is It a Problem?](#)

[Dr. Stephanie Seneff: Toxic Effects of Glyphosate](#)

[Howard Vlieger: Exposing the Dangers of Glyphosate](#)



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