

DEVOIR DE FIN DE SEMESTRE N°2

UN experts denounce 'myth' pesticides are necessary to feed the world

1/ The idea that pesticides are essential to feed a fast-growing global population is a myth, according to UN food and pollution experts. A new report, being presented to the UN human rights council on Wednesday, is severely critical of the global corporations that manufacture pesticides, accusing them of the “systematic denial of harms”, “aggressive, unethical marketing tactics” and heavy lobbying of governments which has “obstructed reforms and paralysed global pesticide restrictions”.

2/ The report says pesticides have “catastrophic impacts on the environment, human health and society as a whole”, including an estimated 200,000 deaths a year from acute poisoning. Its authors said: “It is time to create a global process to transition toward safer and healthier food and agricultural production.”

3/ The world’s population is set to grow from 7 billion today to 9 billion in 2050. The pesticide industry argues that its products – a market worth about \$50bn a year and growing – are vital in protecting crops and ensuring sufficient food supplies.

4/ “It is a myth,” said Hilal Elver, the UN’s special rapporteur on the right to food. “Using more pesticides is nothing to do with getting rid of hunger. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), we are able to feed 9 billion people today. Production is definitely increasing, but the problem is poverty, inequality and distribution.”

5/ Elver said many of the pesticides are used on commodity crops, such as palm oil and soy, not the food needed by the world’s hungry people: “The corporations are not dealing with world hunger, they are dealing with more agricultural activity on large scales.”

6/ The new report, which is co-authored by Baskut Tuncak, the UN’s special rapporteur on toxics, said: “While scientific research confirms the adverse effects of pesticides, proving a definitive link between exposure and human diseases or harm to the ecosystem presents a considerable challenge. This challenge has been exacerbated by a systematic denial, fuelled by the pesticide and agro-industry, of the magnitude of the damage inflicted by these chemicals, and aggressive, unethical marketing tactics.”

7/ Elver, who visited the Philippines, Paraguay, Morocco and Poland as part of producing the report, said: “The power of the corporations over governments and over the scientific community is extremely important. If you want to deal with pesticides, you have to deal with the companies – that is why we use these harsh words. They will say, of course, it is not true.”

8/ “The plant science industry strongly agrees with the UN special rapporteurs that the right to food must extend to every global citizen, and that all citizens have a right to food that has been produced in a way that is safe for human health and for the environment,” said the spokesman.

9/ The report recommended a move towards a global treaty to govern the use of pesticides and a move to sustainable practices including natural methods of suppressing pests and crop rotation, as well as incentivising organically produced food. "Chronic exposure to pesticides has been linked to cancer, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, hormone disruption, developmental disorders and sterility." It also highlighted the risk to children from pesticide contamination of food.

10/ "The industry frequently uses the term 'intentional misuse' to shift the blame on to the user for the avoidable impacts of hazardous pesticides," the report said. "Yet clearly, the responsibility for protecting users and others throughout the pesticide life cycle and throughout the retail chain lies with the pesticide manufacturer."

Adapted from THE GUARDIAN, 7 March 2017

PART A: READING COMPREHENSION (30marks)

I/ Which two ideas are NOT dealt with in the text:

- a) Though it has been reported that humanity requires pesticides to avoid world hunger, a new report says this is actually a fallacy.
- b) Farm workers' lack of legal protection and health insurance put them at risk of pesticide use.
- c) Pesticides play a key role in ensuring the access to a healthy, safe, affordable and reliable supply.
- d) The UN warns against the spread of pesticides worldwide and the subsequent potential risks.

II/ Global corporations producing pesticides have been blamed for three things. What are they?

III/ Pick out phrases from the text showing that pesticides may be hazardous to the environment.

IV/ Answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the two main arguments given by pesticide manufacturers to defend their products?
- 2) What are the farming techniques proposed to ensure a safer environment?

V/ Are the following statements True or False? Justify with details from the text.

- 1) Pesticide companies are making an ever increasing financial benefit from their industry.
- 2) According to the UN, there is an imbalance between the soaring global population and food production.
- 3) Elver thinks that pesticide firms have a strong influence on governments.

VI/ What are the root causes of global famine?

VII/ The pesticide firms claim that they are taking part in the fight against food shortage, but actually they are not. Find in the text two sentences illustrating this idea.

VIII/ Complete the sentences on the answer sheets with reference to the text.

IX/ How does the pesticide industry ultimately free itself from being responsible for the pesticides' negative effects?

X/ Find in the text words having nearly the same meaning as:

- 1) immoral (§1)
- 2) harvests (§3)
- 3) made even worse (§6)
- 4) emphasized (§9)

XI/ What do the underlined words and figure in the text refer to?

- 1) them (§1)
- 2) 200,000 (§2)
- 3) They (§7)
- 4) It (§9)

PART TWO: LANGUAGE: (30pts)

Task One: Put the bracketed words in the correct tense or form :(10pts)

Labeling of GM foods and food products is a (1) **(contention)** issue. On the whole, agribusiness industries believe that labeling should be voluntary and influenced by the demands of the free market. If consumers show preference for labeled foods over non-labeled foods, then industry (2) **(have)** the incentive to regulate itself or risk alienating the customer. Consumer interest groups, on the other hand, (3) **(currently/ demand)** mandatory labeling. People have the right to know what they are eating, argue the interest groups, and historically industry (4) **(prove)** itself to be unreliable at self-compliance with existing (5) **(safe)** regulations. The FDA's current position on food labeling (6) **(govern)** by the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act which is only concerned with food additives, not whole foods or food products that are considered "GRAS" - generally recognized as safe. There are many questions that (7) **(answer)** if labeling of GM foods becomes mandatory. First, are consumers willing to absorb the cost of such an initiative? If the food production industry is required to label GM foods, factories will need (8) **(construct)** two separate processing streams and monitor the production lines (9) **(according)**. Farmers must be able to keep GM crops and non-GM crops from mixing during planting, harvesting and shipping. It is almost assured that industry will pass along these additional costs to consumers in the form of much (10) **(high)** prices.

Task Two: Complete with the appropriate word. (The first two letters the word begins with and a synonym of the word are provided to help you):(10pts)

Ever since US presidential candidates railed against free (1) **co...** (= trade), and anti-immigrant parties made sweeping gains in Europe, the question has been asked: are we witnessing the (2) **de...** (= demise) of globalization? A (3) **te...** (=trend) that has dominated economics and trade for decades appears to be coming to an end. Fines on multinationals have (4) **re...** (=attained) record levels. China's breakneck industrialization is (5) **pr...** (=possibly) over. Britain, a nation (6) **fa...** (=well-known) for building its empire on trade, will (7) **le...** (= exit) the world's biggest free-trade area – Europe – by the end of this decade. Donald Trump, an opponent of free-trade (8) **de...** (=business agreements) all his public life, has become president of the United States. These signs point to the slow death of the form of globalization that the rich world has patrolled since the end of the Second World War. For many, the period from 1980 to 2008 marks the high-water mark of such policies – a period that came to an end with global financial (9) **re...** (=slump). There is a (10) **wo...** (=concern) that these years resemble the previously most integrated period of world history: the Gilded Age between 1870 and 1914. This ended bloodily with the First World War.

Task Three: Express differently starting as given on the answer sheets :(10pts)

- 1) Proponents of GM food say that it solves the problem of malnutrition and hunger.
- 2) "I grew these vegetables myself."
- 3) It was unnecessary for you to feel anxious before the interview.
- 4) Jane had to work at weekends. In this way, she was able to complete the report by the deadline.
- 5) They didn't take the necessary precautions to evacuate people on time so many lives were put at risk.
- 6) Both restaurants are cheap.
- 7) In previous years, people kept food by salting it.
- 8) He taught economics for six years in a state school.
- 9) I came first to the station and the train arrived right after me.
- 10) I have a toothache; it's high time for me to pay a visit to the dentist.

PART THREE: WRITING TASKS: (20pts)

Task One: Correct the underlined mistakes in this paragraph: (2.5pts)

Prolonged wars in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan have contributed heavily (1) for a global refugee (2) crises. The number of refugees today, estimated at 65 million, is the highest (3) its been in 20 years. Local and international organizations are working to meet refugees' basic needs, and to (4) adress the high levels of psychological distress commonly (5) find among them.

Task Two: Put in order to obtain a coherent paragraph: (2.5pts)

- a / But many children are stuck in unacceptable work for children – a serious violation of their rights.
- b / and condemning them to a life of poverty and want.
- c / Of course, there is work that children do to help their families in ways that are neither harmful nor exploitative.
- d / Millions of children around the world are trapped in child labor,
- e / depriving them of their childhood, their health and education,

Task Three: Essay: (15pts)

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

"The emigration of Tunisian laureates and highly – skilled individuals is a big loss for the country."

Support your opinion with solid arguments.

GOOD LUCK

DEVOIR DE FIN DE SEMESTRE N°2

(ANSWER SHEETS)

PART ONE: COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS: (30pts)

I/ The two ideas: (2pts)

1).....

2).....

II / The three things companies are blamed for: (1.5pts)

1).....

2).....

3).....

III/ The phrases: (2pts)

1)

2)

IV/ Answers: (3.5pts)

1) The two arguments:

a).....

b).....

2) The farming techniques:

a)

b)

c)

V / True or False Statements: (4.5pts)

1) (.....).....

.....

2) (.....).....

.....

3) (.....).....

.....

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VI/ The root causes: (1.5pt)

- 1).....
- 2).....
- 3).....

VII/ The two illustrations: (2pts)

- 1).....
- 2).....
-

VIII/ Sentence Completion: (3.5pts)

- 1) Because pesticides have turned out to be extremely harmful, UN experts declared that it is imperative to
.....
- 2) Prolonged exposure to pesticides may result in some health problems such as.....,
..... and Children in particular are
vulnerable to

IX/ The answer :(1.5pt)

.....
.....

X/ Vocabulary Items: (4pts)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

XI/ Word and Figure References: (4pts)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

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PART TWO: LANGUAGE (30pts)

TASK ONE: (10pts)

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

TASK TWO : (10pts)

1)	6)
2)	7)
3)	8)
4)	9)
5)	10)

TASK THREE: (10pts)

- 1) GM food.....
- 2) He told me that.....
- 3) You needn't.....
- 4) Only by working at weekends
- 5) Had they.....
- 6) Neither.....
- 7) People used to
- 8) He spent.....
- 9) No sooner.....
- 10) It's high time I.....

[illegible]

PART THREE: WRITING TASKS: (20pts)

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