Reviewer's report

Title: Agricultural Crop Density and Risk of Childhood Cancer in the Midwestern United States: an Ecologic Study

Version: 2 Date: 30 June 2015

Reviewer: Aaron Blair

Reviewer's report:

Review of manuscript “Agricultural Crop Density and Risk of Childhood Cancer in the Midwestern United States: an Ecologic Study”

General Comments:
- Sometimes the articles cited are noted by a number in the text and sometimes by author name and year.
- There needs to be some discussion about what the hazardous agents might be for the crops that so some association with the childhood cancer.
- There are a number of rate ratios for various pesticide/cancer combinations that are less than one. A few are statistically significant. Do these provide useful information?

Specific Comments:
- Page 4, paragraph 1 – Might want to site the study of childhood cancer by Flower et al for the Agricultural Health Study here and in the Discussion
- Page 13, paragraph 1 – The correlation study of agricultural factors and adult leukemia (J Chronic Dis 1980;33:251-260) might be relevant here also.
- Page 14, paragraph 2 – Not sure what is meant by “Sugar beets are the most heavily treated crop” Does this mean the largest percentage of acres are treated, the amount of active pesticide applied is the greatest, or more different pesticides are applied?
- Page 15, paragraph 1 – Might provide a little discussion about the limitations of using crops as an indicator of an environmental hazard. Is it actually the crop itself or some exposure that comes from growing, harvesting, and handling the crop that can impact the general population.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.