



ARBOR FARMS MARKET

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Our May 2017 Newsletter for Healthy Living

Pesticides: Should You Really???

In a 2013 survey, 71 percent of Americans expressed a concern over the number of chemicals and pesticides in their food supply. And no wonder — research has linked long-term pesticide exposure to infertility, birth defects, endocrine disruption, reduced IQ, neurological diseases and cancer. It is only a common-sense conclusion that reducing your pesticide exposure would result in improved health.

The amount of pesticides used both commercially and in residential areas has grown immensely since 1945. More than 1 billion pounds are used each year in the U.S. alone. Worldwide, an estimated 7.7 billion pounds of pesticides are applied to crops each year, and that number is steadily increasing. According to a 2012 analysis, each 1 percent increase in crop yield is associated with a 1.8 percent increase in pesticide use. Logic tells us this is unsustainable when you consider the health and environmental ramifications associated with pesticide use and exposure. Every now and then, though, a ray of hope descends. Earlier this month, two United Nations (UN) experts called for a comprehensive global treaty to not only regulate but actually phase out toxic pesticides in farming, and to move food production across the world toward more sustainable agricultural practices. This is a significant change in stance that can — and hopefully will — have far-reaching consequences. The two experts, Hilal Elver, the UN's special rapporteur on the right



to food and Baskut Tuncak, the special rapporteur on toxics, shared research with the Human Rights Council in Geneva showing pesticides are responsible for 200,000 acute poisoning deaths/year. Chronic exposure has been linked to cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, hormone disruption, developmental disorders and sterility.

As reported by Sustainable

mental health. Even more importantly, their report firmly denies the idea that pesticides are essential to ensure sufficient amounts of food for a growing world population, calling the notion “a myth.” Not only have decades of heavy pesticide use failed to eliminate global hunger, they said, the same chemicals have now become a troubling food contaminant — contaminants made all the

“The experts particularly emphasized the obligation of States to protect the rights of children from hazardous pesticides.”

Pulse: *“The experts particularly emphasized the obligation of States to protect the rights of children from hazardous pesticides ... The experts warn that certain pesticides can persist in the environment for decades and pose a threat to the entire ecological system on which food production depends ... The experts say the use of neonicotinoid pesticides is particularly worrying because they are accused of being responsible for a systematic collapse in the worldwide number of bees. Such a collapse, they say, threatens the very basis of agriculture as 71 percent of crop species are bee-pollinated.”*

The special rapporteurs challenged the pesticide industry's “systematic denial of harms” and “aggressive, unethical marketing tactics,” noting the industry is spending massive amounts of money to influence policymakers and contest scientific evidence showing their products do in fact cause great harm to human and environ-

worse by the fact that they cannot be washed off like many older generation pesticides could. *“The assertion promoted by the agrochemical industry that pesticides are necessary to achieve food security is not only inaccurate, but dangerously misleading. In principle, there is adequate food to feed the world; inequitable production and distribution systems present major blockages that prevent those in need from accessing it ...”* Moreover, the report highlighted developments in sustainable and regenerative farming, where biology can completely replace chemicals, delivering high yields of nutritious food without detriment to the environment. *“It is time to overturn the myth that pesticides are necessary to feed the world and create a global process to transition toward safer and healthier food and agricultural production.”*

Reference: “The Pesticide Problem”, Pnewswire.com July 29, 2016. *Ecologist* June 21, 2016. *National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences*, July 29, 2016. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*; 8(12): 2265-2303. *The CHAMACOS Cohort Study* 2016. *Environmental Health Perspectives*; 112(9):950-8. *Sustainable Pulse* March 7, 2017.

What's Inside This Issue

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Homer Organic Family Farms

2017 Produce CSA



Our Farming Practices

Our farming practices will take you back to the 1930's. Our fields are plowed and worked with horses. Our large families provide many hands to do the hoeing and many other tasks that can only be done by hand. Food that was raised in the 1930's had much better flavor and many more nutrients because farmers were not dependent on the chemicals, pesticides and GMO seeds that most farms use today. Food that has been organically grown doesn't just taste better, but it's also better for you!

We want you to enjoy better health. It is important to know where our food is coming from. Everyone needs a farmer. Who or where is your farmer?

About Us

We farmers (there are now seven participating farmers in our Homer Community) have been raising produce for several years, providing fresh vegetables for Farmers Markets and several of the Ann Arbor food stores. In 2008, we decided to begin a farm share program (CSA). Being a farm share member connects you directly to the farm your food is coming from. We usually offer a couple farm visits during the summer months. A farm visit will not only acquaint you with our farming community, but also offers a glimpse of the efforts made to provide you with good, clean, wholesome food.

We, being of the Amish faith, do not have phones, computers or email, so our communication needs to be by mail, at the farmers markets or through our friends at Arbor Farms. Of course, you are always welcome to come out to our farms.

We welcome you for a farm visit!

What is a CSA Program?

By subscribing to a CSA you are investing in a share of the farmer's harvest. The CSA farm share program then provides you with fresh vegetables every week. The early harvest begins May 31st, continues throughout the summer, and ends October 12th (for a total of 20 weeks).

Not only are subscribers getting the freshest food, but they are also showing their support for the small farmer. The program works well for the farmers and members both. The farmer can plan how much to grow. The member knows they have a box of vegetables coming every week. It makes shopping quite simple. It broadens your eating habits, as you will try new things you've never had before. It can challenge the cook. A seed catalog to us is like a cookbook to you. Sometimes we like to try new items. So be our guest and enjoy the food.

What might I see in my weekly box?

Early Season: June

Asparagus
Leaf Lettuce
Swiss Chard
Sunchoke
Kale varieties
Collards
Zucchini and Summer Squash
Peas: Snap and Snow
Asian Greens

Summer Season: July/August

Lettuce Broccoli Cabbage
Radishes Beans Bell Peppers
Rhubarb Cucumbers Hot Peppers
Strawberries Zucchini Carrots
Peas Tomatoes Sweet Potatoes
Basil Potatoes Cantaloupe
Green Onions Sweet Corn Onions
Swiss Chard Summer Squash Egg Plant
Asparagus Beets Garlic

Late Season: September/October

Remaining summer crops,
Red Peppers
Hard Squash
Pumpkin
Watermelon
Spinach
Cauliflower
Late Greens
And wrapping up the garden.

Subscribe Now-May 24th. Pick-up information & enrollment forms at Service Counter.

Chemicals and Your Kids

You are likely aware that air pollution may affect your lungs, but did you know it has a significant effect on your brain and your cognitive functioning? These changes affect not just adults, but have also been linked to

***When planting your garden or choosing your food, remember:
“A healthy environment underpins a healthy population.”***

lower IQ testing, development of ADHD in children and an increased risk of death. Toxins from the environment, both inside and outside, are almost impossible to avoid. Moreover, the traditional view of toxin exposure is outdated, so you'll need to consider different factors if you're attempting to reduce your exposure and susceptibility to disease and illness triggered by toxic chemicals.

Today toxins can be inhaled, applied to your skin, injected or eaten with your food. The Environmental Working Group reports the average person has 91 toxic chemicals in their body. Unfortunately, while exposure to some chemicals are studied, researchers have no idea how this combined toxic soup and chemical interactions affect your health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 25 percent of all deaths worldwide are attributable to poor environmental conditions, including air pollution. Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General, commented: *“A healthy environment underpins a healthy population. If countries do not take actions to make environments where people live and work healthy, millions will continue to become ill and die young.”*



Reduced ability for U.S. education to compete against other countries around the world may be the result of more than the educational system. According to Philippe Grandjean, professor of environmental health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and Dr. Philip Landrigan, dean for global health at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in Manhattan, rates of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder are rapidly increasing. Problems with cognitive function that are not severe enough for diagnosis are becoming even more common than neurobehavioral development disorders. In

2012, David Bellinger, Ph.D., professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School, published a study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) where he demonstrated a reduction in the IQ of children exposed to toxins. The children,

born to mothers exposed to organophosphates, mercury or lead during pregnancy, suffered a loss of 16.9 million IQ points. Researchers calculated a collective loss of 41 million IQ points in the U.S. from the same exposures. Later Grandjean and Landrigan announced 12 substances, easily found at home, are believed to be linked to lower IQ, ADHD and autism disorder.

Both Grandjean and Landrigan recommend organic foods to reduce exposure to pesticides, especially for expectant mothers. Landrigan told *The Atlantic*: *“I advise pregnant women to try to eat organic because it reduces their exposure by 80 or 90 percent. These are the chemicals I really worry about in terms of American kids, the organophosphate pesticides like chlorpyrifos.”* Scientists also acknowledge the impact that toxins have on the development of young children's neurological system. This includes cognitive development, a reduction in IQ and ADHD. In his comments, Grandjean compared the challenges with toxic chemical exposure in children to climate change: *“We don't have the luxury to sit back and wait until science figures out what's really going on, what the mechanisms are, what the doses are, and so forth. We've seen with lead and mercury and other poisons that it takes decades. And during that time we are essentially exposing the next generation to exactly the kind of chemicals that we want to protect them from.”*

Children are suffering even greater consequences for decisions made by governmental agencies and industrial giants. While falling IQs, plummeting test scores and increasing numbers of children suffering from ADHD and autism spectrum disorder will significantly impact the future economic health of the U.S. and other countries, it is not the ultimate price children are paying. Untested chemicals should not be presumed safe, as they are contributing to the worldwide problem of environmental

pollution. The WHO finds a polluted environment, including indoor and outdoor air pollution, toxic exposure, unsafe water and second-hand smoke, kills 1.7 million children every year. The top five causes of death for children under 5 are related to their environment. Chan reports only 1 in every 10 people around the world live in an area that meets WHO air quality standards. She com-

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mented on the susceptibility of children, saying: *“A polluted environment is a deadly one — particularly for young children. Their developing organs and immune systems, and smaller bodies and airways, make them especially vulnerable to dirty air and water.”*

A recent report from CHEM-Trust, a British charity working internationally to prevent man-made chemicals from triggering damage to wildlife or humans, found current chemical testing is not adequately picking up chemicals that cause developmental neurotoxicity. Their “No Brainer” report evaluated the impact of chemicals on the development of a child's brain. The report praised the European Food Safety Authority for work on risk assessment of pesticides and recommended their approach be expanded to include chemicals from other sources. They also recommended chemicals used for food contact material be routinely tested and screened for developmental neurotoxicity. The report also called for a taskforce to identify and develop better ways to screen chemicals before use.

Reference: *The Lancet* 2014; 13(3):330-8. *Body Burden, Findings and Recommendations*. World Health Organization March 15, 2016. *The Atlantic*, March 18, 2014. *BBC News* March 6, 2017. CHEMTrust, *No Brainer Report* March 2017. *Chemical Watch*, March 7, 2017.



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Homer Organic Family Farms

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*General information for 2017 season is on page 2,
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