

Veritable Vegetable's

❖ p r o d u c e n o t e s ❖

Water Woes: new report right from the tap

According to "Water Woes," a new report by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Environmental Working Group, and the Environmental Information Center, "**more than 45 million Americans used drinking water during 1994-1995, that was polluted with unsafe levels of pesticides, toxic chemicals, parasites, lead and other chemicals.**" Moreover, during that time, "471,000 people drank water from 588 water supplies that violated the EPA's standard for nitrate contamination, the principal cause of which is **overuse of nitrogen fertilizer.** During the same time, **40 different pesticides or industrial chemicals** were found in 325 water systems at levels exceeding federal health limits..." "Water Woes", The Organic Report August '96, Organic Trade Assoc.



If you are interested in water quality reports going on throughout the country try calling the U.S. Geological Survey's Water Information Clearinghouse 1-800-426-9000, or check out their page on the World Wide Web: <http://www.USGS.GOV>.

☆ ☆ ☆

Just so you know... Three to four times a year, representatives from the California Department of Food and Agriculture periodically come in to randomly select **produce samples for pesticide residue testing.** They do this throughout the state to ensure that California produce does not exceed state EPA residue limits. The completed reports sent back to us name the item, the label and the pesticide categories tested. To date, all our produce has tested 0% residue detected in all three categories of organophosphates, chlorinated hydrocarbons and carbamates. All kinds of fruits and vegetables have been sampled over the years, although the last set of reports we got back were for grapefruit, oranges, plums, green beans, red potatoes and bell peppers sampled early in August.



Holy Cow! Vitamin B₁₂ in Organic Produce

Vegetarians have always been told by nutritionists to be sure and get enough vitamin B₁₂ since it is vital for healthy nerves, strong immunity and new blood cells— but you need to eat meat, fish or fowl or dairy products to get an adequate supply. Brewers' yeast, sea vegetables and vitamin supplements are vegan sources of B₁₂, but recent findings show that plants can be a source, too. As reported in the **September/October 1996 issue of Organic Gardening magazine, soils fertilized with cow manure can produce plants 2-3x higher in vitamin B₁₂ as plants chemically fertilized.** Single cell bacteria and fungi are responsible for most B₁₂ production. Cows and other animals, but not humans, host B₁₂ bacteria in their gut, so when we consume the meat, we get the vitamin, too. **Dr. A. Mozafar** discovered that excess B₁₂ excreted from cows can be absorbed as fertilizer by plants. Once again, here is **research documenting a direct relationship between using organic fertilizers and higher nutrition.** Higher nutrition for humans via better nutrition for plants— makes sense, doesn't it? Plants fed B₁₂ directly contained the highest levels of the vitamin.

~~ Liz Bourret