



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

By John Ferguson

Many times, we have talked about the dangers of using sewage sludge (biosolids) or compost and fertilizers made from them, on our gardens. Many companies and some government agencies believe that our back yards are a good dumping ground for this toxic material.

Another paper from the University of Toronto finds that “super bugs,” the most dangerous and antibiotic resistant bacteria are produced by exposure to antibiotics, etc. According to the paper, between 2014-2016 there were 700,000 deaths worldwide attributed to antibiotic resistance from these bacteria.

Triclosan has been found to be another contributor to this problem and is found to accumulate in sewage sludge and related products.. The FDA has banned triclosan in a few products but it is still used in thousands of consumer products. Environmental Science & Technology 2022

For gardeners beware of low-cost composts and similar materials like pelletized fertilizers made from sewage sludge. Many companies use these toxic materials in their products to lower costs. Also, when one is buying products for insect and disease control read the label to ensure it does not contain triclosan.

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More and more gardeners are growing their own food since the Covid pandemic. Researchers at the University of Sydney Medical School have found another reason to grow one's own food.

From animal studies they found that those whom ate grain-based foods versus processed foods, were much more likely to survive a flu or other virus infection. They found when the animals did not have an infection there was little difference in health or behavior. However, when an infection was present, all the animals on the processed food diet died. Journal Cell Reports 2022

Other studies have shown that the concentration of nutrients consumed while recovering from an infection can have a major impact on the severity of the infection.

Purchase organic food or best yet grow one's own food on re-mineralized soil so the food is full of micro nutrients that our immune system requires to work at its maximum.

Another study finds a link between foods that scored higher by a new nutrient profiling system, and better long-term health outcomes. The Friedman School of Nutrition Science at Tufts University have shown that a holistic food profiling system (Food Compass) works much better at identifying better health and lower mortality risk.

This new measurement system looks at the overall nutritional value of a food, beverage, or mixed meal. It measures nine domains of each item, such as nutrient ratios, food-based ingredients, vitamins, minerals (elements), extent of processing, and additives.

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“A higher score was associated with lower blood pressure, lower blood sugar, lower blood cholesterol, body mass index (fat), and hemoglobin A1c levels; and a lower prevalence of metabolic syndrome and cancer.”

The higher score was also associated with a lower risk of mortality of all causes. Journal Nature Communications 2022

“One of the alarming discoveries was just how poor the national average diet is.”

This study reinforces that we as gardeners need to grow more of our own food organically and buy from local farmers markets as much as we can.

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