

blue

morning farm

June 16/17 - Week 7/3 2011



Herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, pediculicides, and biocides are all subclasses of pesticides used in most agricultural practices to protect fruits and vegetables from potentially detrimental invaders that are set on destroying foods before they can be fully grown and harvested. Who are these invaders? Well they come in a variety of shapes and sizes and can include: insects, plant pathogens, weeds, birds, mammals, fish, nematodes (roundworms), and other microbes that destroy property, spread disease or are a vector for disease or cause a nuisance. Depending on the enemy one or more of these subclasses of pesticides can be utilized by the producer (i.e. farmer) to help protect and prevent these invaders from doing harm to their lively hood and way of life.

So what's the problem? The solution seems simple gather up the necessary arms and spray, spray, spray. This is mainly what producers and households do, according to the EPA, in 2006 and 2008; the world used approximately 5.2 billion pounds of pesticides with herbicides. Pesticides are also found in majority of U.S. households with 78 million out of the 105.5 million households indicating that they use some form of pesticide, (EPA, 2007).

Currently, there are more than 1,055 active ingredients registered as pesticides, which are put together to produce over 16,000 pesticide products that are being marketed in the United States alone. Still sound good? Pesticides kill invaders, save food, and are relatively inexpensive. True, but

Some things in life are worth waiting

for. This is a saying that is true to life, and also for the strawberry plants we planted this spring. You might be asking why we have not given out strawberries when we are in the mist of strawberry season. The answer is that we are not picking any strawberries in fact we are not even letting the berries

develop. This somewhat odd approach to taking care of strawberries is not a superstition, but done to help develop the plant for next season and seasons to come. The small plants we transplanted this spring began to grow as soon as they touch the soil and soon after begin to develop flowers. Once we see the flowers we immediately pluck them



What's in the Share this Week?

off eliminating any chance of harvesting strawberries. The flowers were picked off to stimulate growth in the plant and to help establish its roots. When the strawberry plants finish flowering, the plant then sends out runners, which are essential clones of the plant. The runners allow the plant to spread out and form a patch. It is this patch that forms into the area that we will be harvesting strawberries for the CSA shares this time next year. I know it is a year away but the pints of strawberries received



next year will be worth the wait.

1. Salad Greens
2. Spinach
3. Napa Cabbage
4. Snap Peas
5. Beets
6. Swiss Chard
7. Garlic Scapes

they are also a toxin and work by entering the body of the attacker and disrupting vital life systems causing a wide range of effects to stop predation, including: paralysis, nerve damage and death. Herein lies the problem, over 98% of sprayed insecticides and 95% of herbicides reach a destination other than their target species, including



non-target species (i.e. You, Me, Fido, and Paws), air, water and soil, (Miller, 2004). Pesticides may cause acute and delayed health effects in those who are exposed, (EPA, 2007). Pesticide

exposure can cause a variety of adverse health effects. These effects can range from simple irritation of the skin and eyes to more severe effects such as affecting the nervous system, mimicking hormones causing reproductive problems, and also cause cancer. Worldwide, The World Health Organization estimates 3 million people working in agriculture annually are exposed to dangerous levels of pesticides of which 18,000 die. In addition, pesticide use reduces biodiversity, reduces nitrogen fixation, contributes to pollinator decline, destroys habitat (especially for birds), and threatens

endangered species. As space is limited in the newsletter extensive details must be omitted however, I encourage you to educate yourself and family on their importance.



As a guest contributor to this week's newsletter, I do believe I have taken up more of the allotted space and would like to make at least one point regarding your farmer's current pest management program at Blue Morning Farm. Everything in your share this week, last week, the week before that and all the shares you have to look forward to the rest of the season contain the following: Sunshine, water, and the occasional profanity directed at a deer or groundhog getting to close to the fence at dusk.

- Andre, East-side neighbor of BMF

Cited References

- Miller, G.T. (2004), *Sustaining the Earth*, 6th edition. Thompson Learning, Inc. Pacific Grove, California. Chapter 9, Pages 211-216.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2007), http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/pestsales/07pestsales/market_estimates2007.pdf
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (August 30, 2007), [Pesticides: Health and Safety. National Assessment of the Worker Protection Workshop #3](#)