

Manure — National Alert

K F A G N e w s s h e e t N u m b e r O N E J u l y 2 0 0 8

Home-grown veg ruined by toxic fertiliser

Gardeners across Britain are reaping a bitter harvest of rotten potatoes, withered salads and deformed tomatoes after an industrial herbicide tainted their soil. Caroline Davies reports on how the food chain became contaminated and talks to the angry allotment owners whose plots have been destroyed for the full story go to:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/jun/29/food.agriculture>



As reported by the
Observer on
Sunday 29th June
2008.

The Local Picture

Yes it is true and it is country wide. It appears weed killers used by farmers on cereal and grass land, have via straw and hay got into manures. As a result gardeners feeding the soil have inadvertently caused serious damage to their soil.

Susceptible crops tends to be potatoes and tomatoes, peas and beans, carrots and lettuce and related crops. Affected plants show deformed development, and produces a 'cupping' of the leaves leaving the plants shrivelled which either die or give reduced yields.

The gardening and farming press have carried many reports on the situation. even the Observer reported on affected sites in Hampton, and Sutton and Cheam's MP have tabled a series of Parliamentary questions on the public's safety in relation to infected crops. We also have had some reports of affected sites in Kingston. .Dudley Hewson of Kingston Vale says their site is considering sending samples of their manure for analysis, although the

RHS advises that test are expensive and inconclusive.

The RHS. have received a host of enquiries from anxious gardeners across the country seeking information and reassurance. Unfortunately the only advise forthcoming is quite depressing; Gardeners are being advised not to eat affected produce and the recommendation is to refrain from replanting infected areas for 1 to 2 years. We are advised Infected crops are best dug back into the soil, where the micro-organisms in the soil will break down the chemical residues.

So all in all it's not good news for allotment holders, especially those that are organic.

There is a plethora of information around on this issue just visit any of these websites and follow the links for the latest news.

www.glallotments.btik.com/_Contaminated_Manure.ikml

www.farmgarden.org.uk:80/ari/ari-news/contaminated-manure-alert.html

www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profiles0708/Weedkiller-manure.asp

www.dowagro.com/uk/grass_bites/faq/allotment