

34,000 Pesticides and 600 Chemicals Later: US Food Supply is Suffering

Yet we keep spraying more and more

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More than 34,000 pesticides derived from about 600 basic ingredients are currently registered for use in the United States by the EPA. Industrial agriculture (meaning about 75% of all land used in the U.S. to grow food or raise animals) relies on these chemicals to grow food. Where, exactly has this gotten us? [1]

Billions of pounds of pesticides and herbicides used has resulted in:

- Pesticide exposure causes farm-workers to suffer more chemical-related injuries and illnesses than other work-forces. This has led farmers to suffer [from organ damage and cancer](#), leading to [numerous lawsuits against biotechnology](#) and pesticide-creating companies like Monsanto.
- About 95% of the country relies on groundwater for drinking water, yet it is [often contaminated by pesticides](#), especially in agricultural areas.
- [Pesticide 'drift' is common now](#). This means that in places like California, you can't take a deep breathe without inhaling pesticide chemicals.
- More babies are being born with [preventable birth defects](#) due to pesticide exposure.
- UC Berkeley [has found that](#) children are being exposed to pesticides even before they eat their first apple or munch on their first carrot. That's because the chemicals are so prevalently used, they show up in breast milk of mothers.
- General population illnesses are on the rise, including asthma, autism and learning disabilities, birth defects and reproductive dysfunction, diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, and several types of cancer. Their [connection to pesticide exposure](#) becomes more evident with every new study conducted.
- Most of our food is [laced with pesticide residues that cannot be washed off](#). Only organically-grown food is free from this concern.
- Genetically engineered crops developed and marketed to withstand copious herbicide and pesticide spraying are causing millions of [acres of super weeds to](#)

[grow](#), as well as causing super bugs which are resistant to the very chemicals which were created to destroy them.

- Pollinating insects which help to make sure we have a tremendous variety of foods have been absolutely decimated by chemical herbicides and pesticides. Bees, butterflies, and other pollinating insects are dying at an unprecedented rate.
- Even our ocean life is being contaminated by pesticide run off. Fish, crab, seals, and even micro-algae have been affected by the amount of chemicals we use to 'grow food.'
- Agricultural practices that rely on this type of chemical addiction are [stripping the soil of nutrients](#) with remarkable implications. They are devastating the nutritional value of crops, making dramatic changes at an alarming rate — in less than a lifetime, to be specific. As an example, there has been a 41.1 to 100% [decrease in vitamin A in 6 foods](#): apple, banana, broccoli, onion, potato, and tomato. Of them, both onion and potato saw a 100% loss of vitamin A in a 48-year span from, 1951-1999.

Despite these myriad concerns, the US Environmental Protection Agency gives the green light to a new concoction of health-harming chemicals used by Big Ag companies seemingly every month.

If 34,000 registered pesticides haven't been enough to grow food for the world, certainly, new and more dangerous combinations of these chemicals will not magically solve the problem. Is it any wonder people are turning to organic farming practices and [demanding organic, pesticide-free food](#)?

Notes:

[1] [McDaniel.edu](#)

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