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JOHN'S CORNER: NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

by John Ferguson

Two more studies from universities in the Middle East and published in peer reviewed medical journals, confirms the link between autism and mercury (Hg). These studies support the work done in Egypt and published in the Journal of Metabolic Brain Disease that linked autism to vaccines. Dr. Mercola has noted in his newsletter that these studies are not reported on American news media due to the amount of advertising by Big Pharma. As gardeners, we are exposed to mercury in two additional ways. First, mercury is found in the phosphate deposits (along with lead and cadmium in the deposits) that are mined, and used to make artificial fertilizers. Second, many mulch companies use coal ash (which is a source of mercury) to chemically burn the mulch black.

Another problem gardener's face is in using fertilizers made with chicken manure, or feathers. A 2012 study tested US and Chinese feather meal and found antibiotic residues in both as well as acetaminophen (Tylenol, for poultry fevers), diphenhydramine (Benadryl, used for poultry anxiety), and norgestimate (a sex hormone). When we use fertilizers that contain these ingredients, they become part of the soil that grows our food. Dr, Maya Shetreat-Kline, from the "Dirt Cure".

In addition to the reasons above to avoid fertilizers based on poultry manure and the problems associated with the high salt or sodium (Na), there are two other major issues have shown up. First, most of the soils in Texas and especially along the Gulf Coast are very high in phosphorus (P), which is causing problems in gardening, creating a chemical imbalance in the soil. Poultry manure is very high in phosphorus, which will only make the chemical imbalance in our soils worse. Secondly, mycorrhizal fungi are extremely important to a plants health and growth; if soils have a lot of phosphorus then the mycorrhizal fungi WILL NOT colonize plants roots and protect it from soil diseases or drought.



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Several studies have found that as carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels rise, plants grow faster, however researchers have now found that the nutrient density of our food crops decrease. For example, over a billion people are zinc (Zn) deficient around the world and as carbon dioxide levels rise, this problem will get worse. They also found that protein levels in grain like wheat and rice dropped. Protein in pollen also dropped which is affecting our bee population. They also found that some species like poison ivy grew even faster than trees. Science News, December 23, 2017.

More studies continue to show that our relationship with a healthy soil is very beneficial. We know that getting our hands in the dirt can improve our mood. Cancer patients whom are exposed to healthy soil report improved quality of life and happier mood. Animal studies have found that the soil bacteria *Mycobacterium vaccae*, boosted serotonin levels as effective as any antidepressant drugs (and without bad side effects like suicide). In studies, using animals the animals learned more quickly and were more alert and better focused. Another reason to be an organic gardener!

"We are only as healthy as the soil our food is grown in!" and "You are what your food eats". Dr, Maya Shetreat-Kline, from the "Dirt Cure". When we eat conventional food, grown on mineral depleted soil full of toxic chemicals it is not good for us. Yet many people ask, "Why does this happen to me? Or why did God let this happen?" when they get sick from eating toxic nutrient depleted food. The reasons to grow one's own vegetables and fruits organically continue to increase.

A study from the University of California published in the journal Trends in Parasitology, show that mosquitoes have evolved a type of genetic shield to protect them against pesticides. Over 60 countries have reported mosquitoes developing resistance to pesticides. This is allowing the new super malaria strains to spread faster. As we have seen with weeds, diseases, and other insects, the more toxic chemicals we use our problems only get worse. More reasons to use organic methods.

Studies have shown that broad leaf weeds thrive on available nitrates and potassium (K). Hence, the water-soluble artificial NPK chemical fertilizers encourage weed growth. The phosphorous (P) will also bind to calcium, which reduces the *available* calcium in the soil. This



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promotes conditions that encourages nature to germinate weeds like quack grass, crabgrass, dandelions, etc. that are calcium scavengers and bring calcium back to the surface.

There was a good article in Natural News titled; "Top 10 ways to get deathly sick that no medical doctor will be able to solve". Go to www.naturalnews.com for full article. These are:

- 1) Eat GMOs daily
- 2) Drink tap water daily
- 3) Take prescription medications daily
- 4) Get the flu shot every year
- 5) Consume artificial sweeteners
- 6) Use personal care products that contain parabens, phthalates, aluminum, and sodium laurel sulfate
- 7) Eat foods that are artificially colored and artificially flavored
- 8) Get every vaccine the CDC recommends
- 9) Drink Coke, Diet Coke, Pepsi, or Diet Pepsi daily
- 10) Eat canola oil regularly