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Organic offers a safe alternative to toxic endosulfan

Protestors concerned over Australia's decision to continue using the broad-spectrum farm chemical – endosulfan, can find a safe alternative in certified organic food says Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA).

BFA says Australian consumers can still choose to avoid contact with endosulfans despite the fact Australia has elected not to join New Zealand, and 56 other countries worldwide, in implementing a ban on the insecticide's use.

"Organic is about healthy food choices. The complete prohibition of agri-chemicals, including all those linked with health concerns is a cornerstone of organic food production," says Holly Vyner, BFA Manager.

"Consumers that choose organic are often more aware of the potential side effects of farm chemicals in the food chain, and are working consciously to minimise their contact with environmental toxins."

She says certified organic is often the only alternative for those people who genuinely want to limit their exposure to farm chemical residues in food.

Endosulfan exposure is most likely to occur through food residues or through accidental exposure, including spray drift (air contamination) from farm crops. The chemical is not registered for use in or around the home.

Jo Immig, the Coordinator and President of the National Toxics Network says that this agri-chemical has raised health alarms.

"In 2008, the international scientific Persistent Environment Pollutants (POPs) Review Committee concluded that endosulfan shares the same characteristics as pesticides, such as dieldrin and heptachlor, which are already banned worldwide.

"Farm chemicals which are POPs are dangerous as they linger in people and the environment, and later result in health issues – possibly crossing generations in the process.

"Recent studies; 2006, 2007, 2008 show that endosulfan contaminates breast milk, the umbilical cord blood of new born babies and even their mothers' placenta," says Jo.

"Choosing organic eliminate health doubts over these and other un-tested chemical risks," says Ms. Vyner.



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The BFA has a vision for organic industry growth and education in Australia. Ask about your copy of the Australian Organic Market Report to see how the organic industry is achieving its goals! More information is available at http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=260



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