Dumping Contaminated Soil in a Field is not Farming

What is landfarming?

Landfarming is the practice of using good farmland to ñbioremediateò contaminated soil. This means that contaminated soil is removed from one site and transferred to another for biological treatment; which generally involves applying it to land and leaving it in the open air. According to US EPA, it is difficult to reduce concentration of the toxic constituents below 95% by this method. That means that at least 5% of the toxins will remain in the soil, perhaps more.

Typical gasoline contains 150 different chemicals, among them benzene, toluene, ethylbezene and xylene which are known as the BTEX chemicals. Many of these chemicals are known to cause cancer and are considered endocrine disruptors. Some of the contaminated soil may contain lead.

What's wrong with that?

There are several ways public health and the environment can be negatively affected:

- Run-off can contaminate nearby creeks, streams, rivers or lakes
- Groundwater may be contaminated and poison nearby wells
- Volatilization of the contaminants cause air pollution
- Dust and vapor generation during aeration may increase air quality problems

In addition, traffic increases with their accompanying noise and fumes, as well as the potential for devaluation of surrounding property will also affect a communityôs quality of life.

“ Landfarming” is a cheap way to transfer poisons and liability from one place to another. In a community living with such a facility, the only thing that grows is exposure to toxic chemicals.

For more information contact:

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

www.BREDL.org 4617 Pearl Rd. Raleigh N.C. 27610 (919) 345-3673 therese.vick@gmail.com