This is a monumental news day for the organic industry. The President’s Cancer Panel Report released today exhorts consumers to choose food grown without pesticides or chemical fertilizers, antibiotics, and growth hormones to help decrease their exposure to environmental chemicals that can increase their risk of contracting cancer!

“Exposure to pesticides can be decreased by choosing, to the extent possible, food grown without pesticides or chemical fertilizers...Similarly, exposure to antibiotics, growth hormones, and toxic run-off from livestock feed lots can be minimized by eating free-range meat raised without these medications,” according to the report, “Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk: What We Can Do Now,” submitted to President Obama by Dr. LaSalle Leffall, Jr., an oncologist and professor of surgery at Howard University, and Dr. Margaret L. Kripke, an immunologist at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

In a letter to President Obama, the panel stated “The American people—even before they are born—are bombarded continually with myriad combinations of these dangerous exposures. The Panel urges you most strongly to use the power of your office to remove the carcinogens and other toxins from our food, water, and air that needlessly increase health care costs, cripple our Nation’s productivity, and devastate American lives.”

Thanks Liz Sarno for bringing this report to us.

Glyphosate Affects Seed Composition in Glyphosate-Resistant Soybean

Abstract: The cultivation of glyphosate-resistant (GR) soybeans has continuously increased worldwide in recent years mainly due to the importance of glyphosate in current weed management systems. However, not much has been done to understand eventual effects of glyphosate application on GR soybean physiology, especially those related to seed composition with potential effects on human health. Two experiments were conducted to evaluate the effects of glyphosate application on GR soybeans compared with its near-isogenic non-GR parental lines. Results of the first experiment showed that glyphosate application resulted in significant decreases in shoot nutrient concentrations, photosynthetic parameters, and biomass production. Similar trends were observed for the second experiment, although glyphosate application significantly altered seed nutrient concentrations and polyunsaturated fatty acid percentages. Glyphosate resulted in significant decreases in polyunsaturated linoleic acid (18:2n-6) (2.3% decrease) and linolenic acid (18:3n-3) (9.6% decrease) and a significant increase in monounsaturated fatty acids 17:1n-7 (30.3% increase) and 18:1n-7 (25% increase). The combined observations of decreased photosynthetic parameters and low nutrient availability in glyphosate-treated plants may explain potential adverse effects of glyphosate in GR soybeans.
Proper manure suggests balanced nutrition.

Looking at the manure suggests how good you are at managing your spring forages. An excessive protein content will have watery-green-no-fiber type manure.

This manure is too high in protein which causes discontent.

"We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles."
— Jimmy Carter

Supplement Perennials With Annuals

Annual crops can provide for rest and recovery of perennial pastures from grazing or crop stress. They can be used to provide additional feed in years when you need it, such as during or after a drought, or they can become a routine part of your feeding strategy to give you added feeding flexibility. As part of your annual pasture rotation plan, annuals allow you to utilize more of your farm for grazing.

Because an annual crop can be grazed four to six weeks after spring seeding, and fall-seeded winter cereals can be grazed as early as mid-May, you can consider your selection of annuals based on when you need them (see growth chart below). Remember, for every day you delay grazing of your perennial pastures in the spring, you can gain three additional grazing days in the fall. Even if seeding is delayed, you can begin the grazing season on a perennial pasture, and move to an annual pasture when it’s ready. The perennial pasture will still profit from the rest.

Although not a cheap feed source, if you cut annual cereals as green feed they can provide better quality than perennial hay - especially if the crop is cut when heads are half full, for maximum energy value. Annual cereals are also an excellent source of silage.

Not only will annuals help you get maximum returns from your perennial pastures, they can help you extend your grazing season - either in early spring or in late fall.

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