



P.O. Box 25 Callaway, MN 56521

[www.toxictaters.org](http://www.toxictaters.org)

Steve Easterbrook,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
McDonald's Corporation

CC: Sen. John Marty; Rep. Jean Wagenius; Chris Kempczinski, President, McDonald's USA; Francesca DeBiase, Chief Supply Chain and Sustainability Officer; Keith McGovern, CEO, RD Offutt

August 18, 2017

Dear Mr. Easterbrook:

We, the undersigned organizations, join our voices with the people of Minnesota to call on McDonald's to meet with Toxic Taters and to cut the use of pesticides on your potato products.

We are calling on you to direct your potato producers to publicly disclose the chemicals used on their crops and to significantly reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides. We are asking you to support studies on the human and ecological health effects on surrounding communities, and to require your suppliers to farm in a sustainable manner that promotes biological diversity, healthy soil, air, and water, and respects the rights of people and the environment.

We care about rural people, the environment, and the economy. We are concerned that, according to the USDA pesticide data program, 24 different pesticide residues are found on frozen potato products and passed on to consumers. These residues include carcinogens, neurotoxins, developmental and reproductive toxins, and honey bee toxins. We want food to be safe to eat.

We are disturbed that potato growers supplying McDonald's are aerially spraying fields every 5 to 10 days with these toxic chemicals throughout the growing season. Even worse, they are failing to inform local residents of the chemicals they are exposed to from the spraying, despite ongoing requests to make that information public.

We are concerned that according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, irrigation use in the Straight River Groundwater Management Area alone has increased by 85 percent -- 77 million gallons -- since 1985. McDonald's plays a major role in water use in Minnesota, as your potato supplier, RD Offutt, currently pumps over 12 billion gallons annually and is continuing to add well permits.

Contamination of drinking wells is an ongoing problem in the region. Several communities have been forced to shut down or replace municipal wells. Park Rapids, where the Lamb Weston/ RDO processing facility is located, was forced to replace wells several years ago at the cost of over \$3 million. Minnesota Department of Agriculture testing of private wells has shown that nitrate levels exceed maximum health risk limits in multiple townships in the central sands region, where many of the potatoes are grown.

McDonald's, you say that your food philosophy is "the simpler, the better." We call on you to live up to that philosophy. We call on you to meet with Toxic Taters and other allied organizations to determine a strategy to significantly cut or eliminate pesticide use in your potato products.

We ask for a reply by September 15, 2017. Thank you for your prompt consideration and response in this matter.

Sincerely,



Amy S. Mondloch  
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Co-signed by:

Alliance for Democracy/Local Food Campaign  
Beyond Pesticides  
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha  
Clean Water Action  
CURE  
Corporate Accountability International  
Family Farm Defenders  
Farmworker Association of Florida  
Food and Water Watch  
Food Chain Workers Alliance  
Friends of the Earth  
Honor the Earth  
Indigenous Environmental Network  
IPEN  
Kandiyohi County Our Revolution  
Land Stewardship Project  
Lida Farm  
Menagha Conservation Club  
Midwest Pesticide Action Center  
MPIRG  
Organic Consumers Association  
Pesticide Action Network  
Pollinator Friendly Alliance  
Pomme de Terre Foods  
Real Food Challenge

Sacred Water Sacred Land Institute  
Save the Water's Edge  
Science and Environmental Health Network  
U.S. PIRG  
West Central Minnesota Students for a  
Democratic Society  
White Earth Land Recovery Project  
Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice  
Women's International League for Peace and  
Freedom