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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFU CALLS FOR MORATORIUM ON SPREADING SEWAGE SLUDGE

The National Farmers Union (NFU) is calling for a moratorium on the spreading of sewage sludge on agricultural fields.

NFU Ontario Coordinator Grant Robertson says sewage sludge contains many toxic residues, including heavy metals, pharmaceuticals and other harmful chemicals that pose a threat to the environment and to people's health.

The NFU has had a policy opposing the spreading of sewage sludge as fertilizer since 2001.

“The NFU is an organization that is committed to a healthy food system, a healthy environment, and healthy communities,” stated Robertson at a news conference in Toronto October 30. “Family farmers, because they have a vested interest in their land and water, are natural custodians of the environment. We want to protect food safety and the environment, and we know that the toxic residues present in sewage sludge pose a serious problem.”

He noted that skyrocketing chemical fertilizer costs over the past year may be contributing to economic pressures to use sewage sludge. But any short-term economic gain will be outweighed by the destructive long-term impact.

“Until processes are in place to remove all these toxic residues from sewage sludge, we believe the spreading of sewage sludge should be prohibited,” Robertson concluded. He added that until a moratorium is put into effect, contractors spreading the sludge should be required to conduct environmental impact studies prior to beginning operations.

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