

Aerial Spray

For immediate release: May 16, 1999

The state's population is exposed to health hazards annually from responsible pesticide use, but when area rice farmers choose to aerial spray irresponsibly, there are even more threats to the environment and residents of northern California. Aerial spraying of area rice fields in May and early June 1999 caused drifting herbicides to impact organic farmers, orchardists, even ornamental trees in Chico. These are the impacts that have been reported, but how many other segments of the region have been affected? Is there any water quality testing happening? How are resident birds and fish fairing? How were the lungs of area residents impacted? How have other crops been compromised and how long will it take for organic rice farmers to regain organic certification? Why wasn't the public notified of the problems? Why was this used under an exception before required EPA testing was completed? These are just some of the questions that require answers.

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