



RETROSPECTIVE 2021

A Call to Urgent Action

This special issue of *Pesticides and You*, **Retrospective 2021**, is a look at a year of science, policy, and advocacy that informs both the problems we are facing due to toxic pesticide dependency, and solutions that can be adopted now. The information in this issue adds to the body of science that empowers action at the local, state, and federal level, and also provides a framework for challenging toxic pesticide use and putting alternatives in place. 2021 was a pivotal year in both defining the problem and advancing the solution.

This year in review reflects an accounting of scientific findings documenting serious health and environmental effects, disproportionate risk to people of color and those with preexisting conditions, regulatory failures, at the same time as it provides documentation on the viability of organic practices that offer a solution. Dependency on toxic, fossil fuel based pesticides and fertilizers contributes to the existential crises of human pesticide induced or exacerbated illness, biodiversity collapse, and the climate emergency, and calls for urgent action to eliminate their use.

The organic solutions to problems highlighted in this issue—based on the importance of healthy ecosystems—are within reach, and the data provided creates an imperative for action now that phases out pesticides within a decade, while ensuring food productivity, resilient land management, and safe food, air, and water. In the immediate-term, this issue includes the work that Beyond Pesticides and our network and allies are doing to advance change through our *Action of the Week* and hands-on community-based work.

Contributing writers to this issue include Beyond Pesticides staff (Jay Feldman, Drew Toher, and Akayla Bracey), board member and science consultant Terry Shistar, PhD, and writer Debra Simes. Design services by David Gerratt, NonprofitDesign.com.

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