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DISTURBING reports reach us of weedkiller pollution in composts and manure.

We have repeatedly warned of the peril of municipal green waste compost added to leading brands of potting composts.

Homeowners dump weedkiller-polluted mowings and diseased plant material in roadside bins and, where this is composted in open windrows, there is a risk infected material will result.

Mad cow disease resulted from feeding cattle infected food. But now we are raising plants in infected growing media rather than sterile peat or coir-based seed and potting composts.

In recent weeks I have received letters reporting dismal growth of broad beans and potato and tomato plants, and your photos suggest weedkiller damage.

One reader reports a failure of greenhouse tomato plants in branded growbags of composted green waste, while plants outside in an alternative compost are fine.

Pansies

Growers in Cambridgeshire and Yorkshire have lost tens of thousands of seedling pansies and weedkiller in compost has been proved to be the culprit.

At the Royal Horticultural Society Gardens at Rosemoor in North Devon and Wisley, Surrey, tomato trials have revealed symptoms of weedkiller pollution. Manure and composted green waste both appear to be to blame.

Composted green waste also has wood in it, *inset*. This absorbs nitrogen as it decays and means feeding plants early and often is necessary.

If plants have pale-green, small leaves they may need a liquid nitrogen feed. Universal potting composts often have such big bits of wood they need sieving.

If you have had problems with distorted plant growth caused by weed killer pollution, please let us know at the address on the far right. It would be helpful if you were able to identify the source.



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