

Viewpoint: ‘There is nothing chemical-free’ — Organic foods and farming present numerous unacknowledged hazards

[Alexandra Correia:] What do you think when you hear “chemical free product”?

[Nuno Maulide, Director of the Institute of Organic Chemistry at the University of Vienna:] I always say it’s a sentence with little information. There is nothing chemical free, nor the air we breathe that is just chemicals: molecular nitrogen and oxygen. It is necessary to combat this misinformation of chemical-free food, chemical-free clothing... Then they say: “But there are chemical compounds that are natural...”. Yes, there are natural chemical compounds that can kill us and synthetic chemical compounds that can heal us.

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[AC:] It’s all a matter of dose.

[NM:] As Paracelsus said, “the dose makes the poison”. Strychnine, for example, a well-known poison to mankind, comes from perfectly natural sources – the plant’s Latin name says it all: *Nux vomica*.

There are frogs in Latin America that secrete poisons so potent that the Amazon Indians picked them up and rubbed the tip of the arrow used to hunt animals on them.

The big obsession with organic foods (it’s a very poorly chosen name) has its dangers. There are certain pests that, when not controlled by the “bad guys” (the pesticides and herbicides that no one wants), poison food.

[Editor’s note: This article was originally published in Portuguese and has been translated and edited for clarity.]

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)