

Foreign hormones in food—atrazine is just one of many

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On Sunday, the [New York Times reported](#) on new research suggesting the common pesticide, atrazine (often used on corn), may be more dangerous to human health at lower levels than previously thought.

According to the Times, "Recent studies suggest that, even at concentrations meeting current federal standards, the chemical may be associated with birth defects, low birth weights and menstrual problems."

Atrazine is just one of a slew of foreign hormones that contaminate or are intentionally used in our industrialized food system. Like atrazine, science now implicates many of them as contributors—even at very low levels of exposure—to hormone-related chronic diseases.

The latter includes not only birth defects and reproductive problems, but also diseases of the immune system, nervous system, and cancer—especially including breast and prostate cancer.

Today, IATP released its new [Smart Guide: Hormones in the Food System](#)—an overview of dozens of different chemical-disrupting hormones that we likely ingest or are exposed to each day.

The Smart Guide covers steroids and arsenic given to food animals to spur more rapid growth: rbGH, hormone-disrupting pesticides, synthetic hormones in food packaging, as well as other hormone-disrupting food contaminants (such as dioxins, PCBs and flame retardants).

The bad news is that common, low-level exposure to these hormones just keeps looking worse, the more closely scientists study them. On the other hand, consumers have some easy, common-sense steps they can take to reduce their exposure.

The Smart Guide recommends eating low-fat meats and dairy products, eating certified organic when possible, avoiding pesticide hormones and using hormone-free cans and bottles. The guide also lists a series of steps for policymakers to take.

Check out the full [Smart Guide](#).