

Pesticide and Coffee Facts

5 Facts about the Coffee Industry

1. Coffee is the second most traded commodity in the world, second only to oil.
2. Over 26,000 square miles of the Earth's most bio-diverse regions are planted in coffee trees.
3. Each year over 40 million gallons of chemical pesticides, untold millions of gallons of herbicides and billions of pounds of fungicides and chemical fertilizers are consumed by the coffee industry.
4. Thousands of people suffer pesticide poisoning each year resulting in as many as 20,000 fatalities.
5. Chemical farming methods can render the land sterile after only 7-10 years.

From http://www.beantrees.com/fr_main/coffee_facts.htm

MORE things to consider:

- Many workers do not know they are being exposed to pesticides and only years later do they see the health effects of working with pesticides.
- Communities effected by pesticide run-off in their water sources often have inadequate health services and additionally do not have the power to change the situation.
- Pesticides that are sold in Central America have often already been banned in the US, so US companies get rid of their excess supply by selling to those countries with less strict restrictions.
- Warning labels and instructions for proper usage are in English. Even if are instructions in Spanish, workers applying pesticides still do so wearing only a cotton shirt and bare feet because proper coverage (goggles, boots, gloves) is expensive and often unavailable.