

October 10, 2011

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]:

We are writing to share with you a letter to principals and PTAs of schools participating in the “organic school garden” program sponsored by EMA. Once again, we are raising concerns that school children’s gardens were contaminated with Kellogg Garden Products made from toxic sewage sludge—industrial, medical, and human waste—as this has still not been satisfactorily addressed.

We know you were not informed at the time of the garden publicity events that you were lending your name or star power to promote a company that does not label the sewage sludge in its products for gardeners. Some of the Kellogg products promoted or that you or your colleagues helped the children use in their gardens or posed with in publicity photos are made from a toxic stew of dioxins, heavy metals, endocrine disruptors, and other hazardous chemicals, which can bio-accumulate.

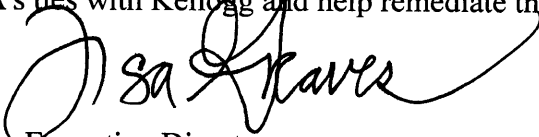
Based on your commitment as an advocate for the environment, we believe you have a right to know how you and your colleagues have been misled and used to promote the Kellogg Garden Products brand, including its bestselling products containing sewage sludge.

In a May 6 email Debbie Levin sent to you, her board, she claimed: “Schools only have access to Kellogg organic materials. This misconception may come from the fact that, shortly after our program started two years ago, one participating school reached out directly to Kellogg and obtained mulch that is not considered organic. We regret that one school acted on its own in securing nonorganic materials.”

This is not true, as you will see from the enclosed documents. Prior to that email and during the garden program before that date, the order form sent to the schools by EMA offered free bags of Kellogg's Amend, Topper, Gromulch, and Nitrohumus, which are not organic and are made from sewage sludge. Through the EMA donation ordering process, at least one school ordered 192 bags of sludge-based material from Kellogg and the order was filled (and we are told that multiple schools sometimes shared large orders of supplies). Additionally, several schools were home to photo ops in 2009, 2010, and 2011, taken of open or closed bags of Kellogg’s sludge-based products posed next to Young Hollywood Board members--including Rosario Dawson, Emmanuelle Chriqui, Olivia Wilde, and Rachele Lefevre. Other stars were photographed next to the Kellogg logo, which was also displayed prominently at the 2010 EMA Awards along with Kellogg’s sludge-based products. Thus, celebrities appearing at these events with EMA were used to help promote or advertise Kellogg products that are sold with misleading labels that do not disclose in any way that they contain sewage sludge (for example, the corporation’s Amend, made from city sewage sludge, even has a prominent tagline on the front of the bag below the name with the words “Quality Organics Since 1925”).

It's a shame this situation has played out this way, and that your well-meaning and beautiful effort of donating your time to get kids excited about organic gardening led to the use and promotion of sewage sludge products as “compost” or “soil.” We hope you will use your influence within the organization to cut EMA's ties with Kellogg and help remediate the soil in any gardens that were contaminated.

Thank you,



Lisa Graves, Executive Director
Food Rights Network/ Center for Media and Democracy
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