

## **Should I Buy That?**

We are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of our consumption on the environment and human and animal welfare. This leads to dilemmas every time we go shopping ; should we buy organic pears from Argentina with their considerable carbon footprint or non organic ones from nearer. Food purchasing is the biggest area where such dilemmas are faced but as Organic gardeners we should perhaps also consider the origins of the materials we buy for our gardens.

We obviously avoid artificial chemicals and have taken on board the desirability to stop using peat but perhaps we should go further.

Organic fertilisers available include:- Bone meal, blood meal, fish meal, seaweed meal, dried concentrated poultry manure etc. I avoid Bone and Blood meal not only as a vegetarian but from the (remote) fear that since meat meal was implicated in the BSE epidemic then perhaps other diseases lurk in these animal by-products. Might they contain residues of drugs?. I avoid using fish meal since although a proportion of the supplies come from waste from processing fish for food much of it is from industrial fishing that has consequences for the ecological balance in the oceans Does anyone Know of any reason why I might reconsider using Seaweed meal?

Do we know whether the concentrated poultry manure comes from caged birds and do we care?

Coir has been used as a substitute for peat. This seems a good use for an otherwise waste product but should we not consider its carbon footprint and instead use materials produced nearer home?

I have written the above in the hope of starting a debate. What do you think?.

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