

## **CARCINOGENIC CORN FLAKES**

If you are reading this over breakfast please don't choke.

I have always been careful of what I put in my compost heaps. Gardening books exhorted me to put newspapers in with all of the other material such as green waste from the kitchen, grass cuttings and weeds from the garden. However, I always resisted the siren calls to put in newsprint. I was suspicious of the ink. I did not know what was in the ink so I refrained from composting newspapers. I wanted my muck to be pure, unadulterated muck, not contaminated muck. I also refrained from following the advice of other gardening experts who advocated putting cardboard sheets down on top of weeds then putting soil on top as a way of eradicating perennial weeds. I did not know what was in the cardboard. I have tried to be completely organic on my allotment and in my garden, and that meant keeping away completely from man-made products, including compost accelerators.

On the Today programme on Radio 4 on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2011 there was an item on synthetic oils. It appears that cardboard, which is often made from recycled newspapers, contains synthetic oils from the printing inks. These synthetic oils have been found to be carcinogenic in rats and to cause internal bleeding. The report also said that the cardboard outers of packets of cereals have been found to leak the synthetic oils into the cereals through the moisture-proof inner packaging. The longer the packets of cereals remain on the shelf the worse the leaking. The average level of synthetic oils in the cereals was found to be 50 times the approved rate for those chemicals.

Bon appétit!

MIKE MASON