

Simmering in strawberry country

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Despite the cooler weather, things are simmering in California's strawberry country this week. Santa Cruz County passed a unanimous resolution against methyl iodide on Tuesday, and other local governments are also stepping up in the effort to ban the cancer-causing pesticide.

But pesticide manufacturers and fumigant applicators aren't taking the news sitting down; they're doing everything in their power to hold back the tide of safe strawberry farming.

Opposition to methyl iodide has been brewing throughout Santa Cruz County for over a year. Local school districts have taken a [stand](#) against the chemical and numerous organizations in strawberry country have urged Gov. Jerry Brown to pull the pesticide off the market. Santa Cruz County further cemented those concerns when the County Supervisors passed a unanimous [resolution](#) against the chemical on Tuesday. And local governments are now joining the swelling ranks of scientists, farmers and farmworkers who oppose the chemical's use.

Local governments are joining the ranks of those who oppose the use of methyl iodide.

"I think the drumbeat of people weighing in with concern will hopefully prompt the governor to take a fresh look," said Assemblymember Bill Monning. "I think that's warranted based on the science."

Pesticide companies and fumigant applicators aren't ignoring the groundswell or the science. They've actively courted state legislators and local officials and are doing everything in their power to keep more local governments from following the lead of Santa Cruz.

In particular, the law firm Lombardo & Gilles – known as the "6th County Supervisor" in neighboring Monterey County – is rumored to have entered the fray on industry's behalf. But Monterey County residents aren't backing down. They're [calling](#) on their supervisors to stand up to pressure from pesticide manufacturers and move forward with an already drafted resolution.

The simmer may become a boil in the coming weeks.

Take action » If you live in Monterey County, let your Supervisors know you support a resolution urging Jerry Brown to re-examine methyl iodide:

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