

# Good morning!



Sally Brown  
University of Washington  
slb@uw.edu

# Nature has its' own way of cycling things



Energy from the sun is used to 'fix' atmospheric  $CO_2$  via photosynthesis. Plants take up nutrients from soils

A portion of the carbon and nutrients remain fixed (soil organic matter animal biomass) and the remainder decomposes aerobically and returns to the atmosphere as  $CO_2$



The plant matter is used as food by a wide range of animals including microorganisms



When you have this many 'Bears'



## Uses in agriculture [\[ edit \]](#)

Further information: *Reuse of excreta*

Human excreta may be attractive as [fertilizer](#) because of the high demand for fertilizer and the relative availability of the material to create night soil. In areas where native soil is of poor quality, the local population may weigh the risk of using night soil.

The use of unprocessed human feces as fertilizer is a risky practice as it may contain [disease-causing pathogens](#). Nevertheless, in some developing nations it is still widespread. Common [parasitic worm](#) infections, such as [ascariasis](#), in these countries are linked to night soil use in agriculture, because the helminth eggs are in feces and can thus be transmitted from one infected person to another person ([fecal-oral transmission](#) of disease).

Way back- Night soil  
So what can go  
wrong?



Then  
came



Lake Washington- in the mid  
1960s



# Phase III

Photo courtesy of King County Wastewater Treatment Division

## INFRASTRUCTURE TRANSFORMATION

# WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES AS RENEWABLE RESOURCE CENTERS

---

*One of the great public health triumphs of the last century —wastewater treatment — is poised for transformation into a community sustainability centerpiece.*

*Sally Brown*

the environment. Feeding this water to lakes and streams was more than they could handle. The problem wasn't too much metals or terrible toxic pollution (though there was some of that for sure). Rather it was too much food, too many nutrients. Adding this much extra carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus to lakes and streams caused algal blooms as aquatic organisms chowed down on the new taste treats, depleting oxygen and causing fish kills. These nutrients that can build soils and help to grow plants

All of this gives us more biosolids  
Biosolids-A little bit of you in every batch



# Biosolids = gold for the soil

## For example







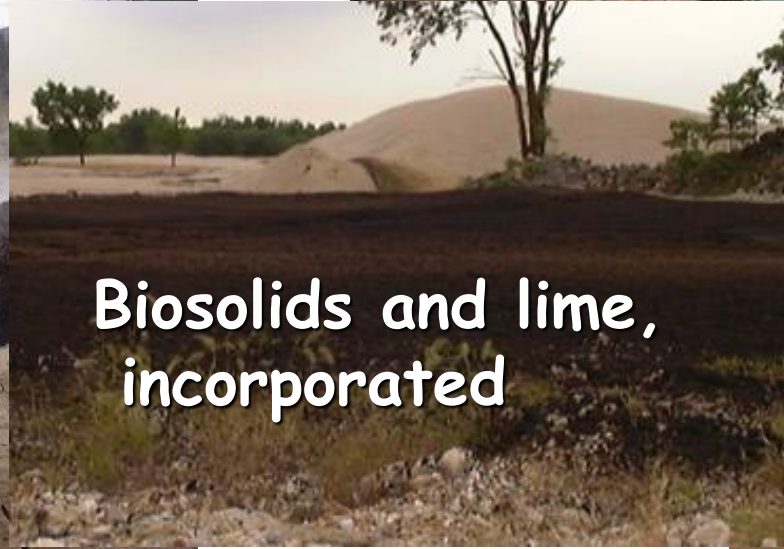
Surface application of biosolids and wood ash



Biosolids sugar beet lime, CaO



Surface application of compost and wood ash



Biosolids and lime, incorporated



Lime stabilized biosolids + Fe



You guys were the pioneers in this work



# Even works for contaminated soils in urban areas

## Residuals based amendments

- Significant source of carbon credits for land application (1-3 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> Mg)
- Can increase yields
- May dilute soil Pb
- May alter mineral form of Pb, potentially decreasing bioaccessibility



## Urban Agriculture

### Soils

- Use of fertilizers and composts may reduce bioaccessibility of Pb
- Active plant cover reduces potential for dust and makes access more difficult for children and toddlers

### Vegetables and fruits

- Insignificant source of lead in diet
- Benefits associated with food security and improved nutrition



# And not just contaminated sites!



**Biosolids to dryland wheat**



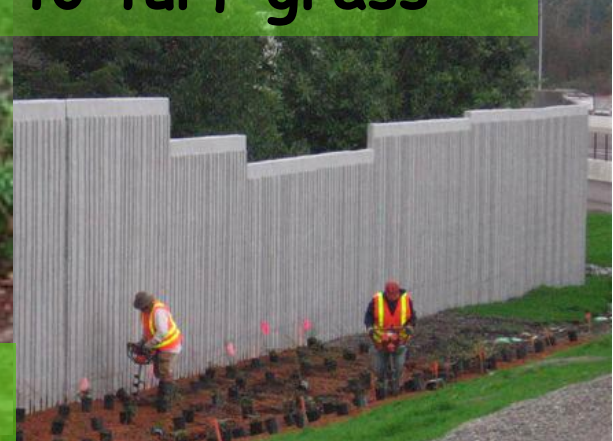
**Composts and biosolids to turf grass**



**Compost to orchards**

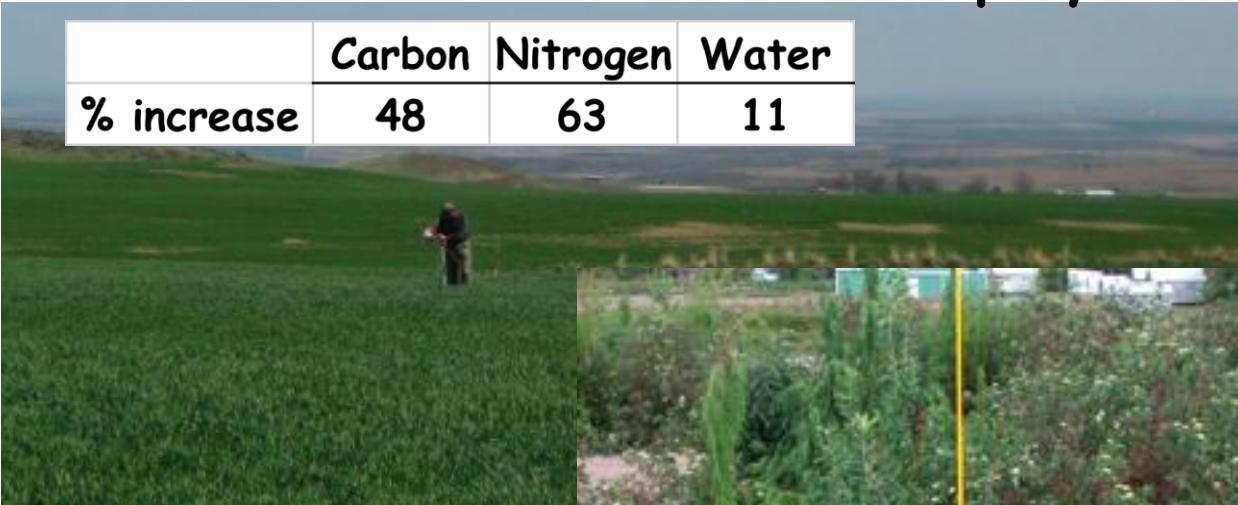


**Composts to landscape**

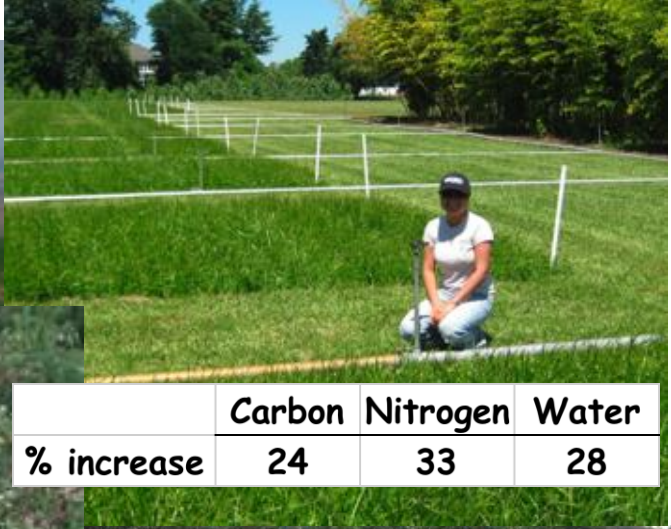


**Biosolids and composts to roadside**

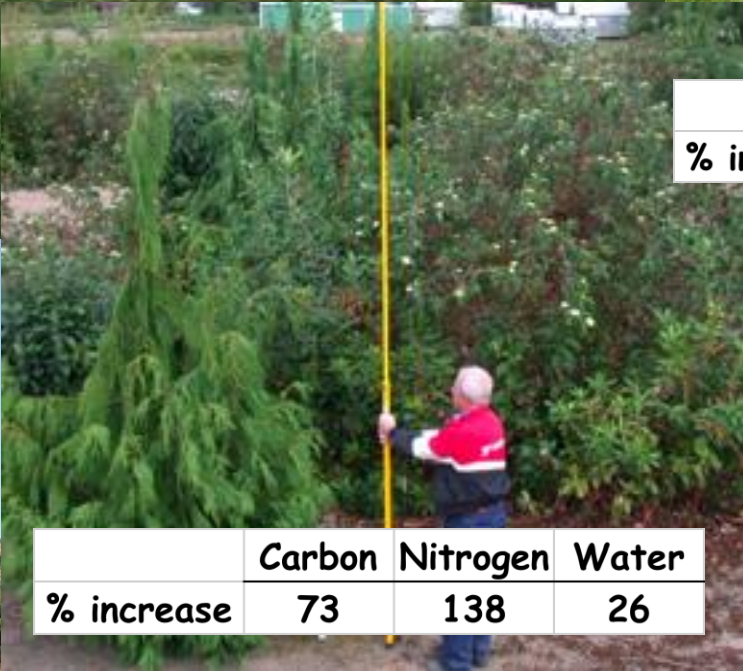
# + Higher yields, + most cost effective for rate payers



	Carbon	Nitrogen	Water
% increase	48	63	11



	Carbon	Nitrogen	Water
% increase	24	33	28



	Carbon	Nitrogen	Water
% increase	73	138	26



	Carbon	Nitrogen	Bulk density
% increase	637	1000	-59



	Carbon	Nitrogen	Water
% increase	44	38	55

You get bigger and healthier trees and  
bigger and healthier broccoli



Just ask Albert





# Plus you save the planet



## Transport and application

- 224 km haul distance
  - 30 ton capacity truck
  - Application by self loading vehicle
- 0.05 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> per dry ton**

## Soils

- Fertilizer value of material
  - -0.245 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> per dry ton
- Increase in soil carbon
  - -5.15 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> per dry ton Tokul soil
  - No change Klaus soil

**Tokul soil balance = 0.05- 0.245- 5.15 = -5.3 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> per dry ton biosolids**  
**Klaus soil balance = 0.05-0.245 = -0.2 Mg CO<sub>2</sub> per dry ton biosolids**



# With a tool like this

- Don't let unrealistic fears stop you from using it as widely as possible

