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Family fears poisoning

LAFAYETTE, Colo. (AP) — A couple who moved to a farm near Lafayette five years ago to find a cleaner environment won't know until later this week whether they have been seriously contaminated with the chemical PCB.

"We'll find out Tuesday or Wednesday," Wayne Darling, 32, said Sunday. "We don't know what to do 'till then except wait. The (Boulder County) health department couldn't tell us how much the concentrations were. They said they found traces of it in the (breast) milk from my wife and the chickens."

Darling and his wife, Marie, 29, had been told they would get an answer Sunday on the levels of PCB — polychlorinated biphenyl — found in their chickens and in Mrs. Darling's breast milk.

But Darling said Sunday that health authorities had told him the results are not ready yet.

The source of the PCB is 17 barrels of the chemical that had been stored for years against the barn on the farm they rent between Denver and Boulder at the foot of the Rocky

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For vegetarian couple, nightmare's source was in the back yard

Associated Press

LAFAYETTE, Colo. — A vegetarian couple, who moved to a farm near here five years ago seeking a cleaner environment, won't know until Tuesday or Wednesday whether they have been seriously contaminated with the dangerous chemical PCB.

"We'll find out Tuesday or Wednesday," Wayne Darling, 32, said Sunday. "We don't know what to do 'till then except wait. The (Boulder County) health department couldn't tell us how much the concentrations were. They said they found traces of it (polychlorinated biphenyl) in the (breast) milk from my wife and the chickens."

Darling and his wife, Marie, 29, had been told quantitative measurements still were not available from the tests.

"I would say we're in limbo. My wife is very worried. The worse thing is we're trying to live a clean life. My wife quit smoking before the baby (Matthew, 1) was born and she breast feeds him...he's our biggest concern," Darling said.

The source of the PCB is 17 barrels of the chemical that had been stored for years against the barn on the farm they rent in the rolling plains between Denver and Boulder at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

Darling said he knew the barrels contained PCB but only last week, watching a Public Broadcasting System program, did he discover the chemical was dangerous.

When he wrote Monsanto Agricultural Products two or three years ago, "Monsanto said it was banned by the feds but didn't tell me it was hazardous to our health," Darling said.

Health authorities erected a chain-link fence around the oil drums after discovering some were leaking and plan to move the chemical soon to Idaho for permanent disposal.

Robert W. Harding of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said "really significant" amounts of PCB were found around the barrels and that the oil should be removed.

Darling said the leakage around the barrels is not apparent to the eye because "the grass and the sunflowers grow up around them like every place else."

Before the fence went up, he said his cows and chickens grazed and fed around the barrels often.

Although professed vegetarians, Darling said his family eats the eggs and they do drink the cows' milk.

"I'm also concerned because there are places all over the country like ours where there may be these old barrels and people don't know what's in the barrels...and Monsanto doesn't seem to be liable for the stuff," Darling said.

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