Measuring arsenic and metals in garden produce in the Yellowknife area

Many residents are concerned about the impact of past mining activities on the quality of local garden produce and soil. Previous work from the early 2000’s showed that levels of arsenic in garden produce were elevated relative to national levels but not at a level that would present a health risk for typical consumption. Despite this work, some residents continue to be concerned about the quality of local produce and there is value in having more information on arsenic and metal concentrations in local garden plots. If you are interested in participating in this study, please follow the instructions below and contact Mike Palmer for sample pickup/delivery.

***Types of produce:*** You are welcome to submit all types of garden produce for analyses. We are particularly interested in: ***spinach, kale, peas, beans, potatoes and carrots***. We only need a small amount for analyses (approximately one cup).

***How to collect GARDEN PRODUCE for chemical analyses:***

1. Collect garden produce as you would for you and your family. Please wash the produce like you would be eating it (i.e. remove soil).
2. Place produce in a clean Ziploc bag. Different types of produce should be placed in different bags.
3. Fill in the information on the attached sample information sheet, or if you do not have the sample information sheet include the following:
   1. Type of produce (specific species of produce types if available)
   2. Date of collection
   3. Location of collection (GPS coordinate or street address)
   4. Your name and contact information
   5. Where your soil is from (i.e. bagged soil from hardware store, bulk soil from local contractor, unknown)
4. Collect a small amount of soil (1/4 cup) from four locations (1 cup total) in the garden bed and place all together in a **SEPARATE** clean Ziploc bag. Label with date of collection, location, and your contact information.
5. Freeze the produce and soil samples and use the contact information below to arrange sample drop off or pick up.

Contact information:

Mike Palmer, Aurora Research Institute mpalmer@auroracollege.nt.ca 867-446-0511