

Protect our farmland

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Building a nuclear plant on the west side of the county risks losing Valley agriculture. The plant is planned practically on top of a known earthquake fault? Do we not remember the destructive 6.5 Coalinga earthquake of 1983?

Nuclear plants are usually built next to bodies of water, but since there is no water on the West Side, they plan to construct a solar power plant to pump water. But what if an earthquake disabled the plant -- especially since it relies on underground pipes?

Even though the industry claims the safety of nuclear plants has improved, many nuclear scientists are not convinced (see March 28 Bee). Maybe that's why no free-market insurance company will insure nuclear plants.

County Supervisor Phil Larson, an admirer of the project, admits that "accidents happen." But even if it were only a minor accident and only small amounts of radioactivity leaked out but just happened to be blown onto the nearby farmlands and dairies, who would ever again want to buy Valley agricultural products?

Finally, the proposed project is unbelievably expensive. For about the same amount, a solar energy plant could produce substantial amounts of power with no risk of radioactive contamination.

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