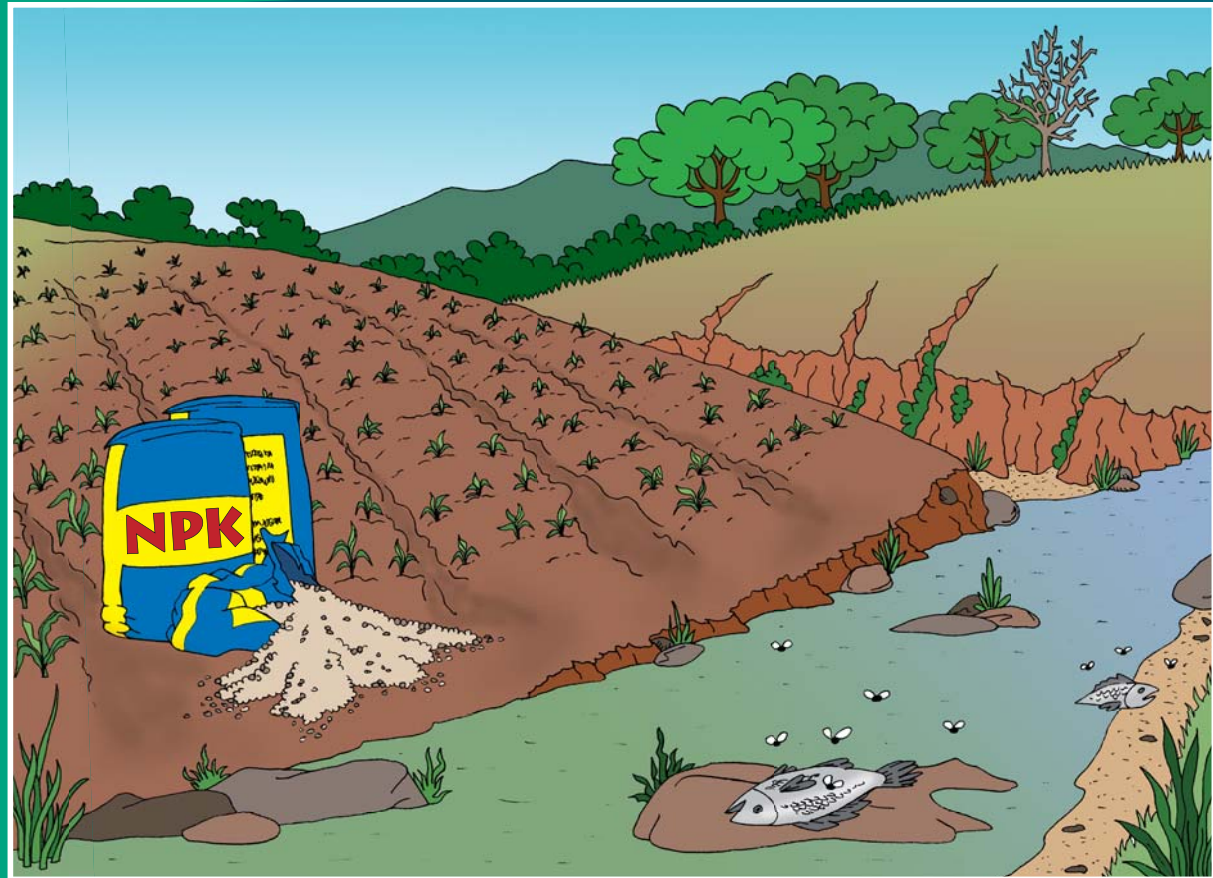


Synthetic fertilisers have long-term negative effects on our environment. They will often:

- **kill beneficial micro-organisms in the soil** – micro-organisms are tiny, living organisms that convert waste material into nutrient-rich organic matter, which is food for the plants;
- **be over applied** – this increases the salt content of the soil and burns the roots, causing plants to grow slowly, become dehydrated, and eventually die;
- **increase nitrate levels in the soil** – plants grown in this soil will be toxic to humans;
- **damage the ability of soil to crumble** – it is only crumbly soil that can absorb water;
- **leach into streams, rivers and lakes**, where they disrupt aquatic ecosystems and cause water pollution;
- **leach into ground water and the subsoil** without providing any real benefits to plants;
- **encourage various diseases in plants**; and
- produce fruits and vegetables with **low nutritional value and less flavour**.



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IMPACTS OF SYNTHETIC FERTILISERS ON THE ENVIRONMENT