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www.organicconsumers.org

ORGANIC BYTES

Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association
Please forward this publication to family and friends, websites, print it, & post it. Knowledge is power!

Voting Organic in November

The long-awaited November 7 elections are quickly approaching. Can we elect a new crop of politicians to deal with our nation's current crisis and move us in a positive direction? How well do you know the candidates running for office from your area? OCA's allied lobbying organization, the Organic Consumers Fund (OCF), has put together a detailed nonpartisan Organic Consumers Political Candidate Survey to identify candidates who support organic agriculture, and are willing to get behind legislation that promotes health, justice, peace, and sustainability. Learn more about your local and Congressional candidates and spread the word about the Organic Consumers Political Candidate Survey by visiting the OCF website:

www.organicconsumersfund.org

An Introduction to the Debate Over Raw Milk

Most Americans are only familiar with milk that has been pasteurized and homogenized. That's because, in most states, it's illegal to sell raw milk, based upon government concerns about food safety. But there's a growing and vocal segment of health-minded consumers who passionately believe that raw bovine milk is practically the perfect food. In fact, one common question we get from our supporters is, "Why do the national organic standards allow organic milk to be pasteurized?" In a nutshell, laws banning raw milk were passed in the early 1900s, when shipping and handling of dairy was problematic, leading to mass spoilage and food poisoning. But today's raw-milk advocates note that modern day production and shipping alleviates these problems. Advocates note that pasteurizing milk kills beneficial enzymes while reducing nutritional value, leaving conventional milk difficult to digest and less healthy. But the FDA literally equates drinking raw milk to playing Russian roulette. Because raw milk is still illegal in most states and frowned on by the FDA, the writers of the USDA national organic standards realized that if they didn't allow certified organic milk to be pasteurized, there simply wouldn't be any such thing as "organic" milk available on the market.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3134.cfm

Progressive Democrats of America Helping to Put Organic on the Table in the 2006 Elections

The 80,000-member Progressive Democrats of America has joined the Organic Consumers Fund to get Congressional, state, and local candidates to support organic agriculture and to take a progressive stand on related issues of health, peace, justice, sustainability, and democracy. Learn more about PDA: www.pdamerica.org/articles/alliances/2006-10-18-13-36-27-alliances.php

Mexico Bans GE Corn

Mexico has, once again, passed a law banning GE corn from being planted in the country. The law is designed to protect native varieties of corn from being contaminated by biotech varieties. The Monsanto corporation, the biggest global seller of genetically engineered corn vows it will reverse this law when president-elect Felipe Calderon takes office. Monsanto claims Mexico's 59 varieties of corn, many of which have been grown for thousands of years, will not be at risk of contamination if genetically engineered varieties are approved.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3178.cfm

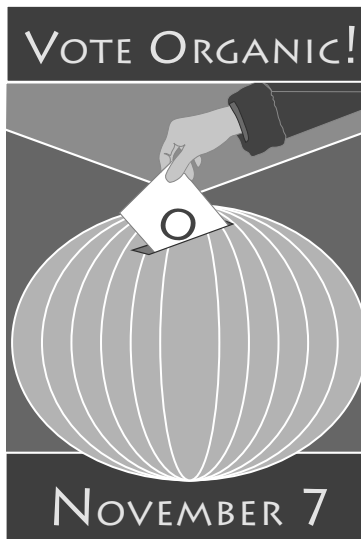
More GE Food Contamination in US and EU:

Yet another strain of experimental GE rice has been detected in us food shipments to Europe. This is the third GE rice contamination scandal in less than two months. The rice (LL62) was designed by Bayer but is not approved for human consumption in the EU. US rice farmers have suffered millions of dollars of losses from GE contamination just in the last few months. www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3179.cfm

Be an OCA State News Scout

We need your help. Become a News Scout! The OCA, with your help, will be unveiling News and Action Centers for all 50 states in the next few weeks. We want to keep your state's news items up to date. Send us news, events, organizations, and campaigns for your state.

www.organicconsumers.org/state/statecontribute.cfm



Everything You Need to Know About E.Coli

- Despite a number of inaccurate media reports, the recent spinach E.Coli outbreak has not been linked to any organic products. As expected, the outbreak has now been directly linked to a factory farm feedlot located adjacent to conventional spinach fields in California.
- This was the 25th E.coli outbreak in the California Salinas Valley in 11 years, demonstrating, once again, that industrial farms and feedlots and their toxic runoff are inherently dangerous.
- Studies show that factory-farmed cattle have 300 times more pathogenic bacteria in their digestive tracts than cattle that are allowed to openly graze in pastures.
- If you are concerned about E.coli, organic food is the way to go. The USDA national organic standards require organic farmers to carefully compost their fertilizer—made up of animal manure and plant matter—up to 160 degrees, so as to kill any harmful bacteria.
- Organic farmers can only apply this composted manure four months prior to planting.
- Conventional farms have no regulations specifying when they can and can't apply manure and are not required to destroy the harmful bacteria in the manure prior to spreading. In addition, it is perfectly legal to spread highly toxic sewage sludge on conventional farms, while this practice is banned on organic farms.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3140.cfm

Your Hair Reflects Your Diet

Researchers at Brigham Young University have discovered that eating disorders can be detected by analyzing hair samples. Scientists were able to pinpoint the problem in 80% of the samples taken. The lead author, Kent Hatch, says hair acts like a “tape recorder” and is working to develop an affordable testing system for use in clinics. The hair test would be able to indicate problems where a patient may be secretive, such as problems with diet, alcohol or drugs. Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3151.cfm



Save Money on Organic Food: Join or Start a Buying Club

Organic consumers across North America are saving money by organizing local buying clubs. Buying clubs are groups of people who get together and purchase a wide variety of organic foods, grains, and herbs in bulk from a wholesale distributor. According to Kathy MacDonald, a member of a buying club in Cheyenne, Wyoming, she is able to buy organic foods she normally wouldn't have access to in her area, while saving an average of 20% on what those same items would cost in stores. Members of buying clubs also say it's a great way to build community. For more information, and to find a buying club near you, go to:

www.organicconsumers.org/organic/buyingclub.cfm

Sleepless Kids Become Overweight Adults

A new peer-reviewed study from Bristol University highlights an important factor in the current childhood obesity epidemic. Researchers found that children who stay up too late at night are more prone to pack on pounds throughout their lives. The study noted that sleep deprivation leads to a disruption of hormones that control the desire for calorie-rich foods, hunger and energy expenditure. One in four children aged 11-15 years is now so obese, their weight threatens their health. Researchers in the study indicate weak parental oversight of children's use of television, computers and mobile phones is a prominent cause of children sleeping less.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3174.cfm

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Or by phone: 888-403-1007 (toll free).

For many more food issue daily headlines:

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