



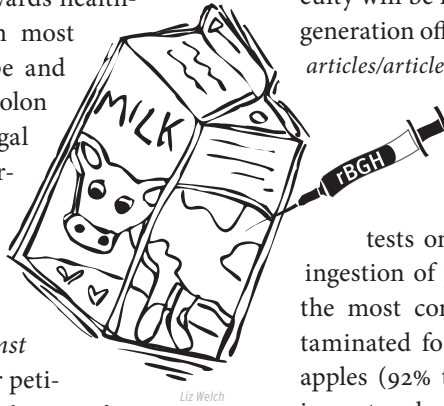
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www.organicconsumers.org

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!

Alert: Monsanto Wants to Make rBGH Labeling Illegal

This week, Monsanto declared war on dairy companies that have chosen to ban the injection of their cows with Monsanto's genetically engineered Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH). Due to escalating consumer demand, an increasing number of large dairies around the US have declared themselves rBGH-free in the last couple of years. Monsanto, the sole producer of the synthetic hormone, has seen substantial losses in sales as a result of this voluntary movement of the industry towards healthier milk. Although rBGH is banned in most industrialized nations, including Europe and Canada, due to its links to breast and colon cancer, the controversial drug remains legal in the US. This week, Monsanto filed a formal complaint with the FDA and Federal Trade Commission, demanding that labeling of rBGH-free dairy products be made illegal. Learn more and get involved with OCA's *Millions Against Monsanto* campaign by signing on to our petition: www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4698.cfm



Liz Welch

Mad Cow Safety Tests Likely to Increase

Creekstone Farms has won one of the most bizarre court cases the USDA has brought upon itself in recent years. Early last year, after the discovery of another case of Mad Cow Disease in the US, foreign markets tightened their ban on US beef based on the fact that the USDA requires such a small percentage of meat to be tested for this fatal disease. In an attempt to maintain sales with customers overseas, Kansas-based Creekstone Farms announced it would voluntarily test all of its meat for Mad Cow Disease. Surprisingly, the USDA responded to Creekstone, saying it was illegal for them to have such high quality food safety testing. This action left Creekstone and its lawyers scratching their heads trying to figure out where in the law books it states that it's illegal to test food for safety beyond what is required by law. Creekstone took the USDA to court and last week a federal judge ruled against the USDA. The results of the case will likely create a domino effect in the industry where more meatpackers will voluntarily choose to increase testing for Mad Cow Disease in order to allure international and domestic customers. Is it out of the question to envision meats in future supermarkets bearing the voluntary label "This meat has been tested for Mad Cow Disease"? Stay tuned to the OCA...

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4655.cfm

USDA to Ban Cloned Foods from Organics

Last month, the USDA proposed that the offspring of cloned animals could be considered "organic". But last week, the USDA's National Organic Standards Board voted 12-0 to ban foods from cloned animals and their progeny from the organic market. Regulators apparently recognize, after being flooded with complaints from organic consumers, that cloning is incompatible with the Organic Foods Production Act and is prohibited under the National Organic Program regulations. The real difficulty will be in tracking these animals, particularly 2nd and 3rd generation offspring of cloned animals. www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4699.cfm

Buy Organic and Avoid the "Dirty Dozen"

According to the Environmental Working Group's (EWG) analysis of data from over 43,000 tests on pesticides in conventional produce, over 90% of ingestion of pesticides in foods can be eliminated by avoiding the most contaminated foods. The "Dirty Dozen" most contaminated foods are peaches (97% tested positive for residue), apples (92% tested positive), sweet bell peppers, celery, nectarines, strawberries, cherries, pears, imported grapes, spinach, lettuce and potatoes. The "Consistently Clean" are onions (90% tested negative), avocados (90%), sweet corn (90%), pineapples, mango, asparagus, sweet peas, kiwi, bananas, cabbage, broccoli and papaya. "Federal produce tests tell us that some fruits and vegetables are so likely to be contaminated with pesticides that you should always buy them organic. Others are so consistently clean that you can eat them with less concern." Says EWG Senior Vice President Richard Wiles. Download your wallet-sized shopper's guide at www.foodnews.org

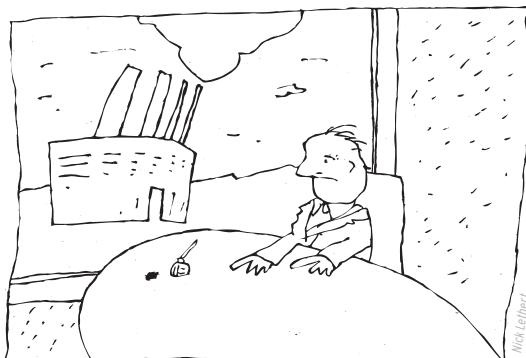
April 14th is National Day of Action on Climate Change

The Organic Consumers Association's *Planting Peace Campaign* invites you to join the **No War! No Warming!** coalition. On April 14th, we'll be out with **Step It Up!** calling on Congress to cut carbon 80% by 2050. The US military, the single largest consumer of petroleum, and the war on Iraq, a country with massive oil reserves, are obvious targets for actions against global warming. The first thing Congress should do to reduce carbon emissions is to set a timetable for the withdrawal of the US military—and US oil companies—from Iraq. For more details on how **No War! No Warming!** will be participating in Step It Up, go to www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4713.cfm

STEP IT
UP! 2007

Junk Food Industry Applauds Itself for Years of "Ethical" Advertising to Children

Responding to public pressure, junk food companies have formed a task force that they claim will address the childhood obesity epidemic. The group, which includes companies like Coca-Cola, McDonalds, and Kraft Foods, held its first meeting at the end of March. One of the first items on the agenda was how to greenwash the routine industry practice of advertising junk foods to young children. Advertisers spend more than \$10 billion annually on manipulating the minds of children. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, children under the age of six cannot distinguish between program content and advertising. Despite this rather undisputed fact, one of the panel's experts, the chief government affairs officer of the Grocery Manufacturers Association, applauded the junk food industry's track record and offered kudos to the current practice of self-regulation saying, "For more than three decades, the self-regulatory guidelines of the Children's Advertising Review Unit have helped to ensure that advertising to children by food companies is age and nutritionally appropriate, and reflects a balanced approach to health and nutrition." According to task force members, it is hoped that future meetings can be as productive, although the meeting concluded with no real changes to the status quo practices of advertising junk foods to children. www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4680.cfm



Self Advertising Review Unit Holds its Annual Meeting

Problem & Solution of the Week: US Family Farmers Can't Compete with Big Processors & Imported Organics

Problem: The value of US organic imports now exceeds exports by a ratio of approximately 8 to 1.

- ☞ In California, which grows 40% of US organics, the number of acres transitioning into organic are now nearly balanced by the acres transitioning out. Evidently, many farmers aren't making enough money growing organically to remain certified, despite the booming retail market.
- ☞ In the US, organic food accounts for about 2.5% of all food sales. But out in the field, just 0.2% of farmland is under organic production.

Source: www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4587.cfm

Solution: Buy Local With OCA's New Organic and Green Business Directory

- ☞ Buying locally, direct from farmers, or at your community-owned co-op, is one of the best ways to ensure that farmers are getting a fair shake. That's why the OCA is proud to announce the launch of one of the most expansive online directories of organic and green businesses. Now local food is just a few clicks away! www.organicconsumers.org/btc/BuyingGuide.cfm

OCA Talks About Cloned Food on *The Daily Show*

OCA's own Adam Eiding was interviewed on Jon Stewart's *Daily Show* about the FDA's proposal to allow food from cloned animals into the food supply. In the process the reporter accidentally clones himself. Check out this hilarious short online video and sign OCA's petition to the FDA. www.organicconsumers.org/rd/clones.htm

Organic Bytes Readers Talk Back: Antibacterial Hand Cleansers (Issue #105):

I appreciate your product plunder of the week about antibacterial hand cleansers. As an added note to your piece, most normal liquid soaps contain a minute amount of triclosan, if I remember correctly, as a preservative. This is the ingredient that is dangerous in antibacterial soaps, as you noted, but it is a significantly smaller amount in other liquid soaps. I just thought your readers

might appreciate knowing the safety studies are in regards to that ingredient being used at much higher levels in antibacterial soaps and not in standard soaps.

Sugar And Obesity Have Nothing In Common? (Issue #105):

In your article you state, "*The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (AJCN)* has confessed to printing a bogus study that denies the links between soft drinks and obesity." The current issue of *AJCN* actually discloses the fact that the study is funded by the American Beverage Association, but they have yet to retract the piece even though the lead author owns major stock in several beverage companies, and the co-author sits on the advisory board for McDonald's. Reference: www.organicconsumers.org/bytes/ob105.cfm

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www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm

Or mail your tax deductible donation to the OCA:

Organic Consumers Association

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

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