



ORGANIC BYTES

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FLASHBACK: SUCCESS STORIES OF 2007



Thanks to you and others in our network, 2007 was a very successful year in our ongoing campaign for health, justice and sustainability. Below, you'll find a quick recap of some of the most important OCA success stories of 2007. As we gear up to continue our work in 2008, we'd like to remind you how much we need and really appreciate your donations. Ninety percent of our budget comes from grassroots donors like you. We need to raise \$75,000 in donations by the end of this month. If you haven't yet done so, please send your tax deductible donation today. If you prefer to make a donation over the phone, please call OCA's toll-free number: 888-403-1007

JANUARY

Dozens of "Certified Organic" Candidates Sworn Into Office

Dozens of the candidates who took part in the Organic Consumer Fund's Candidate Survey won their campaigns and were sworn into office in January. OCF's survey ranked candidates based on how they answered questions related to health, justice, and sustainability. Thanks to all of you who are "pressing the politicians" and helping to move public policy in an organic and healthy direction. organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3555.cfm

FEBRUARY

Field Trials of Experimental Biotech Grass Halted

The OCA for years has mobilized our network to oppose genetically engineered bentgrass. Ecologists say this herbicide-resistant variety of biotech grass will pollute the environment and become a widespread invasive species. In February, in the wake of protests by the OCA and our allies, a federal court ruled that field trials of Monsanto's genetically engineered bentgrass were illegal and must be halted. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4020.cfm

MARCH

Federal Court Rules Against USDA's Approval of Monsanto's Genetically Engineered Alfalfa

In another major victory, a Federal Court ruled that the USDA had illegally approved the sale of genetically engineered alfalfa for 2007, without adequate environmental impact studies. Echoing complaints by the OCA, a California judge said approval of Monsanto's perennial alfalfa has a high potential of destroying non-GMO and organic alfalfa farms and banned their release. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4492.cfm

APRIL

SDA Bans Cloned Foods from Organics

Although the USDA had previously proposed that the offspring of cloned animals could be considered "organic", after being flooded with complaints from organic consumers, the USDA's National Organic Standards Board voted 12-0 to ban foods from cloned animals and their progeny from the organic market. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_4699.cfm

MAY

Consumers Successfully Pressure Congress on Country of Origin Labels

In May, OCA supporters sent 40,000 letters to Congress demanding country of origin labels on food products. Responding to massive constituent pressure, Congress passed the Country of Origin Labeling Law (COOL) requiring labeling on beef, lamb, pork, fish, perishable agricultural commodities & peanuts. But this may not be the last COOL battle. President Bush has vowed to stop or delay the implementation of COOL. Stay tuned...

JUNE

Factory Farm Has Organic Certification Yanked

For the first time in USDA history, a massive 10,000 head intensive confinement California feedlot dairy had its organic certification suspended. Prior to OCA's boycott, and complaints filed by the Cornucopia Institute, this factory farm supplied Horizon Organic. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_5565.cfm

JULY

Congress Preserves Local Food and Crop Safety Laws

Deluged with thousands of letters from consumers and organic advocates, Congress removed language from the Farm Bill that would have eliminated local and state governments' power to regulate GE crops and police food safety at the local and state level. organicconsumers.org/ge-free.cfm

AUGUST

Beer Giant Goes Organic

Taking advantage of a loophole in federal organic standards, Anheuser-Busch, one of the largest beer producers in the world, was selling a beer labeled as “organic” wild hops without using organic hops. OCA launched a media and letter writing campaign in August, and two weeks later the beer giant announced it would shift to using 100% organic hops.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_6308.cfm

SEPTEMBER

OCA Declares Victory in Its Frankenbucks Campaign

The OCA launched its Starbucks campaign nearly seven years ago. One of the main demands of this campaign has been to force the world’s #1 coffee purveyor to stop using rBGH-laced milk in its products. Due to health concerns, rBGH, a genetically engineered cowhormone, is banned in most of the world, but is legal in the us. After hundreds of OCA organized rallies at Starbucks around the world, and years of grassroots pressure, Starbucks announced, as of January 1, 2008, all of Starbucks products will be rBGH-free. The OCA will continue to pressure Starbucks to increase its sales of organic and Fair Trade coffee and start selling Fair Trade chocolate.

www.organicconsumers.org/starbucks

OCTOBER

Class Action Lawsuit in 27 States Launched Against Factory Farms

Throughout 2007, OCA mobilized a growing boycott against a network of factory farms misleadingly labeling their dairy products as “organic.” We’ve shown consumers how to avoid these products in stores, and many co-ops and retail outlets have discontinued carrying Horizon or Aurora products as a result. In October, OCA mobilized hundreds of consumers in over 27 states to launch a class action lawsuit against Aurora Organic Dairy. OCA is confident that the boycott and litigation will deter unethical “organic” companies from following in the footsteps of Horizon and Aurora.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7757.cfm

NOVEMBER

rBGH Being Driven off the Market: “rBGH-Free” Labeling Protected

Since its founding, OCA has worked hard to drive Monsanto’s recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) out of us dairy production. In 2007, a record number of dairy producers and retailers announced they are going rBGH-free. Reacting to consumer rejection of rBGH, the Monsanto pressured state agriculture departments to ban rBGH labeling of products so consumers wouldn’t be able to choose rBGH-free products. In November, the OCA alerted *Organic Bytes* readers that the Pennsylvania Agriculture Department (PDA) was moving to ban rBGH labeling of dairy products from 16 companies. Market analysts predicted that once Pennsylvania successfully banned such labeling, other states would likely follow. Thanks to a massive outcry from the public, Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell intervened on the issue and is stopping the implementation of the rule. This battle is now spreading to other states. organicconsumers.org/rbghlink.cfm



DECEMBER

Massive NAIS Threat to Family Farmers Held Off

Over the past few months, OCA alerted its readers that various draft versions of the 2007 Farm Bill required the implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). This program would require all farmers (even those with just one cow, horse, or chicken) to implant a computer chip in animals that would allow the USDA to electronically track every animal’s movements. The NAIS would reduce the liability of large factory farms while putting many small family farms out of business. Thanks in part to over 50,000 NAIS letters to Washington, DC from OCA supporters, the current version of the Farm Bill keeps NAIS strictly a voluntary program. But the pressure is still on from big agribusiness to force NAIS on family farmers. We will continue to monitor this issue and provide you with updates.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_8948.cfm



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Thanks to All of You for These Great Success Stories!

There’s a lot of pessimism about the direction of the world right now. But the only way to change that is for each and every one of us to put our attention and our resources into making positive change. Next year’s success stories can be even greater with your support. Without you, none of the great news above would have taken place. Make great news happen tomorrow by donating today. www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm