



ORGANIC BYTES

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ALERT

EPA Gives Factory Farms Right to Ignore Pollution Laws

The EPA is accepting public comments until March 27, 2008 on an outrageous proposal to eliminate clean air standards for factory farms. Federal laws currently require industry of any type to report hazardous substances they are spewing into the atmosphere, but according to the EPA, factory farms should be exempt so as “to reduce the burden on the regulated community.” It’s time to tell the EPA to stop allowing factory farms to poison the air in our rural communities. Learn more and take action:

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10380.cfm

Bush League Science Exposed As Fraudulent

More than 15,000 government scientists have endorsed a report to Congress protesting government cover-ups of scientific data. The report cites multiple examples of government manipulation of science for the sake of political gain, saying the current Administration has censored, suppressed and falsified important environmental and health research.

“Although surely the worst, the Bush Administration is not the first, nor will it be the last administration to mistreat and misuse science and scientists,” said Anthony Robbins, the former director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The interference has been directed at climate change research, new birth control drugs, species protection, consumer safety studies and agricultural research, the scientists said.

Smelly Memo of the Week: Government Mutes Scientists

“Politically sensitive and controversial issues require discretion...”

-Excerpt from a Bush Administration memo advising scientists to conceal recent discoveries that antibiotic resistant bacteria are contaminating the air in communities near factory farms.

Learn more:

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10369.cfm

Update: Mysterious Brain Disease Strikes Factories in 2 More States

In the last issue of *Organic Bytes*, we reported on the outbreak of a new serious neurological disease in an Austin, Minnesota factory farm slaughterhouse. Since then, two additional slaughterhouses have reported workers contracting this mysterious disease: one in Indiana and one in Nebraska. Investigators believe the spread of the disease is due to tiny bits of pig brains in the factory air. Government officials have not issued a recall on any of the pork products in question and claim that local communities are not at risk.



Cloned Meat Now in US Food Supply

Although the USDA only recently removed a voluntary market sale moratorium on foods from cloned animals, a Kansas cattleman claims these products are already in the US food supply. “I have sold offspring of cloned animals into feedlots, and they are in the food chain,” said Donald Coover, a cattleman and veterinarian.

Coover says he has sold semen from clones to many US meat producers in the past few years, and that others have been doing the same. Despite strong public opposition, the FDA has announced that these foods do not need to be labeled as such, so consumers buying meat dairy and eggs don’t know if the product came from a cloned animal. Fortunately, the USDA has clarified that foods labeled as “organic” cannot come from cloned animals. Learn more:

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10496.cfm

Health Implications of Fluoride in Drinking Water

This quick Fluoride Action Network video shows us some of the major concerns of fluoride in drinking water. Check out the warning label on your toothpaste tube. It notes that the amount of fluoride in a single brushing (.25 mg) should not be swallowed, and if so, the label says you should contact a Poison Control Center. Interestingly, that's the same amount that's in an average glass of tap water. Learn more and watch: www.fluoridealert.org/

Grow Organic Food in Your Home Year-Round

Foods that can be successfully grown indoors include salad greens, tomatoes, green onions, garlic, alfalfa sprouts and even avocado. OCA recommends that we all buy organic, but also "buy local". Unfortunately buying local in the middle of the winter for many Americans is quite a challenge. But you'd be surprised at the diversity of foods you can grow in your own house or apartment. You can't get any more local (or fresh) than food harvested from your own windowsill. Tips and resources can be found at: www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_10529.cfm

Biodynamics 101: Going a Step Beyond USDA Organic

As farmers and consumers go green, innovative ideas are constantly being developed. Although biodynamic farming is hardly a new concept (it's roots go back to 1924), organic foods grown with this method are just now starting to enter the natural products mainstream. Surveys show most consumers don't really understand what biodynamic farming is all about.

Here's a quick overview:

- ✦ Treating the farm as a living organism wherein where all aspects of the farm (i.e. water, soil, pests, fertility, etc.) are managed holistically.
- ✦ Intentional focus on biodiversity in plants, animals and soil bacteria.
- ✦ All input comes from the farm itself (as opposed to importing fertilizer or compost, for example).
- ✦ Utilizing observation of celestial activity to aid in aligning the farming system.

Learn more in the Biodynamics section of OCA's website: www.organicconsumers.org/biodynamics.cfm

Web Video of the Week: How Is the Federal Budget Like a Pile of Oreo Cookies?

Watch this short entertaining video by our allies at True Majority to see how the federal government is spending our tax money. Tax policies may seem abstract, but not when you visualize them in terms of cookies: truemajorityaction.org/oreos/index_oca.php



What's Happening in Your State?

Only the OCA provides a nationwide network with health, justice and sustainability news on global, national, and local levels. Check out the new state pages on our website to find news and events near you.

We want your help in keeping the state pages as relevant and up to date as possible. We are striving to organize or publicize 50 new state campaigns each month, but we can't do that without your help.

You can help by becoming a writer for OCA. Please email us campaign updates. You can also send us ideas for campaigns if you are not sure how to write them up for the site, and we will work with you to develop a campaign update. Email your ideas to volunteer@organicconsumers.org Please visit your local OCA webpage today by choosing your state in the dropdown menu in the left-hand navigation bar and clicking on the "Become a news scout" link on your state page. www.organicconsumers.org

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Organic Consumers Association
6771 S. Silver Hill Drive · Finland, MN 55603
218-353-7454 · 218-353-7652 fax

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Written and edited by
Craig Minowa & Ronnie Cummins