



[www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)  
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## Quick Quotes

"Anyone who is capable of getting themselves made President should on no account be allowed to do the job."

-Douglas Adams (1952-2001),  
*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

"Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former."

-Albert Einstein (1879-1955)



## Weird Story of the Week

Kraft Food Co. has announced that Rob Watkins of Odessa, Ontario, is the king of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese Dinners. Watkins has eaten 10,000 of them over his lifetime, including many days in which each of his three meals was a Kraft Dinner. "I don't consider it an addiction," he said. Kraft is owned by Philip Morris, the Marlboro cigarette monger that was found guilty of secretly increasing the addictive qualities of its products with chemical additives. Not that the two are necessarily connected. Learn more: <http://krafty.org/>

# ORGANIC BYTES

*Organic News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association*

## Today's Salad Dressings: French, Ranch & Rocket Fuel

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently revealed that there are alarming levels of rocket fuel pollutants in the nation's supply of lettuce. Recent studies have found that farms irrigating water from the Colorado River (the region where most US lettuce is grown) are producing lettuce contaminated with perchlorate levels more than 30 times more toxic than what the EPA defines as safe. Perchlorates are well known endocrine disruptors, cause brain damage in babies, and can cause fatal anemia in adults. In response to the frightening report, the Bush Administration put a gag order on the EPA and turned its back on the EPA's \$200,000 request to do more studies. Although Bush claims the decision to silence the EPA's findings is based on a lack of available funds, experts claim the Defense Department is more concerned about liability issues than public health. "If they can spend \$1 million on a cruise missile, it seems kind of ridiculous they won't spend \$200,000 to see if our food is contaminated with rocket fuel," said Renee Sharp, a scientist with Environmental Working Group, which initiated its own lettuce study instead. Read all about it:

[www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/lettuce042903.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/lettuce042903.cfm)

## Feel Good About Eatin' Donuts

Dunkin' Donuts, the world's largest coffee and baked goods chain, has announced plans to become the first national brand to sell espresso beverages made exclusively with Fair Trade coffee. Beans for all Dunkin' Donuts espresso beverages, including cappuccino and latte, will be certified through TransFair USA, which is the only independent certifier of Fair Trade products in the US. The Fair Trade model guarantees farmers a price of \$1.26 per pound for coffee, enabling them to make a sustainable living. Dunkin' Donuts espresso line of beverages will be introduced in stores beginning in September. Fair Trade espresso coffee is expected to represent approximately two percent of total Dunkin' Donuts coffee bean purchases. The release of this news comes shortly before World Fair Trade Day, an international day of education and rallies to promote fair trade for farmers everywhere. Unfortunately Dunkin' Donuts, like Starbucks, is still serving up coffee beverages tainted with Monsanto's recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone, banned in every industrialized country except for the US. Get involved: [www.organicconsumers.org/starbucks/](http://www.organicconsumers.org/starbucks/)



## Short Attention Span?

*Taste These Teeny-tiny News Tidbits*

### News Flash:

Real Mealz, a new organic fast-food restaurant chain, is now being officially launched in the Netherlands and Germany.

-[www.organicTS.com](http://www.organicTS.com)

### Study Released:

Organic foods, including organic meats, will be the fastest growing trend in the US food industry in 2003.

-Food Network's chefs & culinary staff

### Headline Story:

This week the Organic Trade Association is due to assemble its task force in Austin, Texas to continue working out USDA organic standards for body care products. This issue is sure to be a hot debate, as the OCA recently filed a formal complaint with the California State Organic Program, charging that Avalon misleads consumers with false labeling of its "organic" body care products. Avalon's CEO, Mark Egide, is a member of this task force.

Take action: [www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/avalon\\_complaint.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/avalon_complaint.cfm)

### New Report:

39% of the US population now regularly uses organic products.

-*Organic Consumer Trends Report*  
(The Natural Marketing Institute)

## Frigged Up Food Ads & Headlines of the Week

-*Real headlines containing typos, poor wording, or lack of coherent thought*

"Kids Make Nutritious Snacks"

-*The Anchorage Times* (Alaska)

"Open house body shapers toning salon-free coffee & donuts"

-*Bangor News* (Maine)

"Fully Cooked Boneless Smoked Man - \$2.09 lb."

-*Capital Journal Daily*, (Pierre, SD)

## Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

In an appointment all too typical of the Bush administration, Dan Amstutz has been put in charge of agricultural reconstruction in Iraq. Amstutz is a former senior executive of Cargill, the biggest grain exporter in the world. Oxfam, an organization focused on world hunger, said this is an example of the potentially damaging commercialization of the reconstruction effort in Iraq, which it would prefer to see conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. Oxfam's Kevin Watkins said Amstutz would "arrive with a suitcase full of open-market rhetoric," and was more likely to try to dump cheap US grain on the potentially lucrative Iraqi market than encourage the country to rebuild its once-successful agricultural sector. "Putting Dan Amstutz in charge of agricultural reconstruction in Iraq is like putting Saddam Hussein in the chair of a human rights commission," said Watkins. "This guy is uniquely well-placed to advance the commercial interests of American grain companies and bust open the Iraqi market - but singularly ill-equipped to lead a reconstruction effort in a developing country." Read all about it: [www.organicconsumers.org/corp/oxfam050103.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/corp/oxfam050103.cfm)



## Lust, Sex, and Food

In one of the first partnerships of its kind, five state and federal agencies agreed to work together to assist Minnesota farmers with organic growing. Bill Hunt, state conservationist with the USDA, said that the task force opened his eyes to how the federal government could help. "We found out that in many instances we were not providing the types, and quantity, of technical and financial assistance as we should to these producers," he said, mentioning the need to educate farmers on the conservation aspect of organic farming. "This is the right thing to do to

protect our resources." Greg Reynolds, an organic farmer in Delano, said that while many regular farmers are struggling with low prices, organic producers receive nearly twice as much for their crops. If nothing else, he said, the increased involvement of the state and federal governments will dispel a stigma that has dogged organic farmers. "There's an image of the hippie-fringe guy smoking dope and not making any money, and, the fact is, it's profitable." [Note to readers about this piece's headline: this story has nothing to do with sex or lust, but at least the headline got you to read the story—mission accomplished!]

Read all about it: [www.organicconsumers.org/organic/minnesota050103.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/organic/minnesota050103.cfm)

For many more food issue daily headlines: [www.organicconsumers.org/log.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/log.html)

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