



Consumer and Farmer Victory! Monsanto Finally Forced to Dump rBGH

Monsanto announced on August 6 it will sell off its controversial genetically engineered animal drug, recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH). Monsanto's divestment of rBGH is a direct result of 14 years of determined opposition by organic consumer, public interest, and family farmer groups. Since its founding, the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) has campaigned against this cruel and dangerous drug, pointing out to organic and health-minded consumers that rBGH-tainted dairy products pose unacceptable dangers to humans from increased antibiotic residues and elevated levels of a potent cancer tumor promoter called IGF-1. OCA's *Millions Against Monsanto* campaign has generated over a quarter million emails and petition signatures on the topic of rBGH, helping make rBGH one of the most controversial food products in the world.

Learn more: organicconsumers.org/rbghlink.cfm

We'd like to thank you and all our allies for taking part in this 14-year campaign and helping to bring one of the world's largest and most powerful corporations to its knees. Now let's break Monsanto's stranglehold over seeds and take away their mandate to force-feed genetically engineered food to an unwilling public. Help us push through federal legislation to require mandatory labeling and safety-testing of GMOS.

Contact us with any other campaign ideas you may have: organicconsumers.org/aboutus.cfm#contact - **Learn more about the Millions Against Monsanto campaign:** organicconsumers.org/monlink.cfm

OCA Calls for Review Board to Monitor the USDA Organic Program

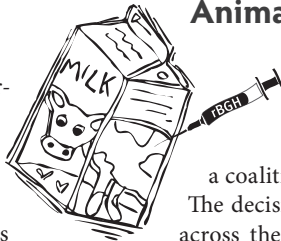
Last week, *Organic Bytes* reported on the USDA's August 5 announcement that half of the accredited organic certifiers under investigation failed the agency's recent audits. The USDA audit report, combined with two recent food safety recalls of tainted organic ginger and beef sent shockwaves through the organic industry. After years of pressure from watchdog groups like the OCA, the Cornucopia Institute, and others, the USDA has finally acknowledged publicly that there are problems in its monitoring and enforcement of the National Organic Program (NOP). In responding to the media over the USDA's audits, and recent food safety recalls by Whole Foods Markets and others of Chinese organic ginger and e-coli tainted organic beef, the OCA has emphasized that the overwhelming majority of organic farmers, producers, and certifiers are indeed "playing by the rules," but we need to stop unscrupulous certifiers and USDA bureaucrats from allowing us factory farm dairy feedlots (operated by or selling to Aurora and Horizon Organic), Chinese importers, and body care companies from labeling their products as "organic" when in fact they are not. We need a professional, well-funded and independent NOP Peer Review Board, composed of respected members of the organic community, as required by law, and we need it now. **Learn more and take action:**

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_13943.cfm

Cloning Your Pet

Some of the world's first clones to be sold commercially are pets. A South Korean biotech company sold cloned puppies to Bernann McKinney in the UK for \$50,000. The puppies were exact clones of the woman's deceased pit bull, named Booger. McKinney had to sell her house to pay for the clones, but according to McKinney, "I had to make sacrifices and I dream of the day, some day, when everyone can afford to clone their pet." Modern-day commercial cloning isn't just for pets. The FDA also approved livestock cloning as safe for the food supply. Fortunately, for the most part, cloning animals is still too expensive to have an immediate affect on the food supply.

Learn more: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_13989.cfm



Animal Welfare Victory! Court Rules Common Factory Farm Practices Are Inhumane

A landmark unanimous vote by the New Jersey Supreme Court will require more humane treatment of animals on factory farms. The case was originally brought to the Court by a coalition of organizations led by Farm Sanctuary, including the OCA. The decision, which is the first of its kind, could cause a domino-effect across the US. The court ruled that widespread factory farm practices, such as "tail-docking" or cutting off the tails of cattle, cannot be considered "humane" simply because they are considered "routine". Many states have a similar exemption to their cruelty code for "common" practices. The court's decision means these factory farm abuses will be reassessed, and if they are considered inhumane, they will be banned. "This decision will protect thousands of animals in New Jersey, and also calls into question some of the worst factory farm abuses practiced throughout the country," said Jonathan Lovvorn, vice president of animal protection litigation for The Humane Society of the United States.

Learn more: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_14067.cfm

Precautionary Advice for Cell Phone Use

The World Health Organization has been compiling data on the health risks of electromagnetic fields emitted by cell phones, but the release of the report has been delayed for over two years. Meanwhile, many nations have sought to protect citizens by issuing their own recommendations for cell phone use, including an announcement in Canada last week. Here in the US, the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute recently posted a useful list of tips to limit harmful health impacts of cell phones:

- ▶ Do not allow children to use a cell phone, except for emergencies.
- ▶ Use hands-free ear pieces or speakerphone.
- ▶ Make sure the back of the phone is pointing away from your body so that the transmitted electromagnetic fields move away from you rather than through you.
- ▶ Switch sides regularly while communicating on your cell phone to spread out your exposure.
- ▶ Don't sleep near your phone unless it is off, particularly if you are pregnant.

See full list of tips at: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_14065.cfm

What Are the Safest Sunscreens?

Here is a reader's comment regarding the Environmental Working Group's (EWG) list of the "safest" sunscreens, as posted in *Organic Bytes* #140:

Reader Comment: "Sun Screen is fine if you intend to spend many hours out at midday or at high altitude, and it does reduce sun-damage and aging. However, it is important to remember that humans evolved under the sun - even pasty white northerners—and that we need sun on our skin to be healthy. Sun disinfects our skin, and it triggers the manufacture of Vitamin D, which is necessary for healthy bones and an effective immune system. Only people with genetic predilection to melanoma should use sunscreen all the time and avoid the sun - the rest of us should spend an hour a day in light shade or morning or evening sunshine, preferably exercising! If you must be out in strong sunlight, use a hat or umbrella, and cover up with lightweight high SPF clothing. Avoid burning, though a light tan on exposed skin is protective against melanoma."

OCA's Response: We strongly agree and have addressed this same point in previous issues of *Organic Bytes*. We'd also like to note that although we typically stand behind EWG's analysis of product safety, it has come to our attention that the first product on their list, Keys Soap Solar Rx Therapeutic Sunblock, actually contains nano-materials, particles so tiny they can go through your skin. The OCA thinks these products should be labeled and regulated as potentially dangerous. Post your comments and questions about *Organic Bytes* in the OCA web forum: organicconsumers.org/forum/