



## OCA Study Finds Greatly Reduced Carcinogens in Personal Care Products

The Organic Consumers Association (OCA) released a new study today that assesses hazardous levels of the unlabeled carcinogen contaminant 1,4-dioxane in leading conventional as well as "natural" and "organic" brands of personal care and household cleaning products. The results indicate significant improvement for 23 products from sixteen major brands that OCA had previously exposed last year as containing potentially dangerous levels of 1,4-dioxane. Thanks to ongoing pressure from the OCA and its allies, some of the best selling personal care products on the market have been reformulated to be safer for human health and the environment. The study also found a number of conventional products that had alarmingly high levels of the carcinogen. The study was commissioned by the OCA and was overseen by environmental health consumer advocate David Steinman (author of *The Safe Shopper's Bible*). The independent third-party laboratory, Bodycote Testing Group, known for rigorous testing and chain-of-custody protocols, performed all testing. [organicconsumers.org/bodycare/](http://organicconsumers.org/bodycare/)



## Pressure on Obama and Vilsack Brings Results

Thanks to your hard work and ongoing pressure, the Obama Administration and Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack are apparently responding to OCA and our allies' calls for major reform in the food and farm sector, including:

- ▶ President Obama's budget plan includes a \$1 billion a year increase in funding for U.S. child nutrition programs including school lunches.
- ▶ Secretary Vilsack has called for government support for farmers using alternative energy, as well as those converting to organic farming practices. Vilsack also has called for cuts in taxpayer subsidy payments to large farms.
- ▶ Vilsack has pledged the USDA's support in ending racial discrimination in the farm sector, specifically condemning past discrimination in limiting credit opportunities for African-American farmers.
- ▶ The USDA's National Organic Program has cracked down on companies spiking organic fertilizer with prohibited synthetic additives.
- ▶ President Obama has guaranteed at least \$500 million for the Green Jobs Act in the stimulus package.

What's next? Keep the pressure on! Congress, President Obama and Secretary Vilsack need to hear from you on key issues such as reining in GE food, stopping NAIS, and removing rBGH from schools. Visit OCA's Action Center to take action on these issues and more: [organicconsumers.org/action.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/action.cfm)

## Campaigns Shift USDA, Help Hilda Solis Get Confirmed

The Obama administration has heard the voice of organic consumers and named Kathleen Merrigan deputy agriculture secretary. Merrigan has a solid background in sustainable and organic agriculture. She was the administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service at the USDA when the division crafted the organic guidelines. Since then, she's been a board member of the Organic Center and a professor at Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy. She's been an avid organic booster, spreading the word about the superiority of organic foods. Thank you to the nearly 100,000 organic consumers, including 50,000 new OCA participants who pressured Secretary Vilsack to make positive changes at the USDA with actions like the appointment of Merrigan.

Thanks also to the thousands of you who took part in another OCA alert and supported Hilda Solis for Labor Secretary. Secretary Solis, the department's first Latino chief, is a longtime ally of farm workers, a champion of workers' rights and green jobs, and an experienced leader who has fought to restore balance to our economy. OCA expects Solis to bolster protections for farm workers and other laborers in the food sector.

## Stop Mandatory NAIS Before March 11!

"Whether you're a small farmer, rancher, a person that owns just one animal, or just an average consumer, we are all going to suffer for this. If you think food prices are high now, just wait when the NAIS becomes mandatory. You can forget about buying healthy, free range, or organic meat, milk & eggs because it will become price prohibitive.

The House Agriculture Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry will hold a hearing on NAIS on March 11. Bills to put NAIS into law, HR875 and companion Senate S814, are being pushed through Congress, as well as an Appropriations Bill with funding for NAIS. This hearing is critical to blocking mandatory NAIS..." -posted by Cyn in the OCA web forum: [organicconsumers.org/forum/](http://organicconsumers.org/forum/)

## Sign the Health Revolution Petition

The OCA is co-sponsoring a health care reform petition, put together by our friends at *Natural News*, with a goal of generating 100,000 signatures for submission to officials in Washington, DC. The broad scope of this petition reminds the President and Congress that the nation's health is dependent on prevention as well as curing disease:

- ▶ **Safeguarding our food supply:** Banning GE foods and known toxic ingredients such as aspartame and MSG.
- ▶ **Investing in disease prevention:** Teaching the public about nutrition and exercise with Public Service Announcements.
- ▶ **Cleaning up the environment:** Investigating the impact of fluoridation and pharmaceuticals in the public water supply.
- ▶ **Protecting our children:** Restricting junk food advertising and encouraging the use of fresh and unprocessed foods in schools.

Take action: [www.healthrevolutionpetition.org](http://www.healthrevolutionpetition.org)

## Monsanto's GE Cotton is Killing the Soil

A study analyzing fields planted with Monsanto's GM cotton indicates the crops are causing the soil to slowly die. The study found that over a three year period, soil micro-organisms, necessary for building healthy and nutrient rich soil, decreased dramatically in the Monsanto cotton fields. According to the Institute for Science in Society, "At this rate, in a decade of planting with GM cotton, or any GM crop with Bt genes in it, could lead to total destruction of soil organisms, leaving dead soil unable to produce food." You can make a difference. Join the OCA and contact your Congresspersons today and urge them to require mandatory labeling of all GE plants and animals, place a moratorium on new GE plants or animals, and protect non-GE and organic farmers by assigning liability for injury caused by GE organisms. Take action at [organicconsumers.org/action.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/action.cfm)

## Taking a Bite Out of Childhood Obesity

Healthy and delicious food can be served in school lunchrooms: that's what OCA's DC Intern, Chantal Clement, learned at *Take a Bite out of Childhood Obesity*, a briefing on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act sponsored by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. Because of junk food diets, the estimated lifetime risk for kids born in or after 2000 to contract Type 2 Diabetes (a disease doctors generally treat patients aged 30 or more for) is 32.8% for men and 38.5% for women. Due to widespread dietary unhealthiness, boys will lose 11.6 years from our current life expectancy rates and girls will lose 14.3 years. The Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act is an opportunity to get these healthy, cost-effective foods to every school child through the school meals.

## Please Donate

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