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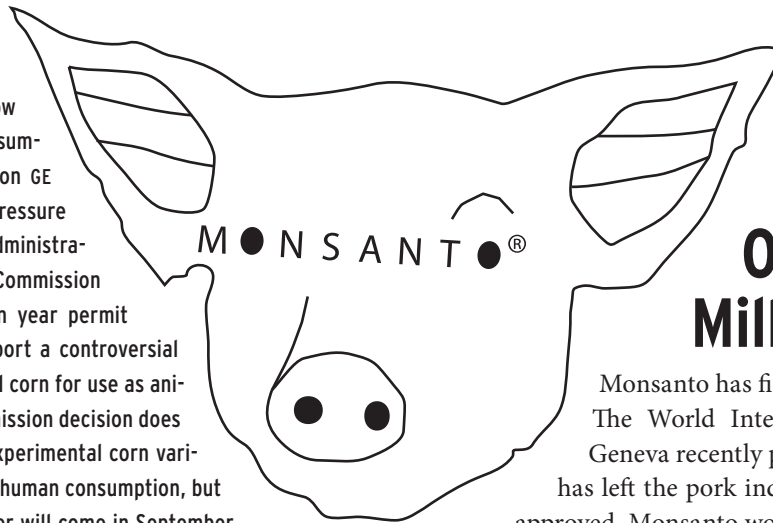
Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association
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Quick Tidbits

Recent polls show that 70% of EU consumers support a ban on GE crops. Yet, under pressure from the Bush Administration, the European Commission has approved a ten year permit to Monsanto to import a controversial genetically modified corn for use as animal feed. The Commission decision does not yet allow the experimental corn variety to be grown for human consumption, but a vote on this matter will come in September. www.organicconsumers.org/monsanto/franken-corn080905.cfm

The annual Anholt-GMI Nations Brand Index survey of 25 nations reveals that international consumer support of US name brands is quickly slipping. The index, used by marketing and advertising agencies, assesses global consumer perceptions of individual nations' cultural, political and investment potential. The US ranked last place in the category of cultural heritage, a measure of a country's "wisdom, intelligence, and integrity." www.organicconsumers.org/BTC/brandname080305.cfm

Last Wednesday, a study funded by the British government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs reported that organic farms in the UK support, on average, 32% more birds and 35% more bats than non-organic farms. According to the study, thicker hedging, smaller fields and the lack of pesticides on organic farms were all contributing factors to the richer wildlife. www.organicconsumers.org/organic/birdsbats080305.cfm



Monsanto Files Patent Claiming Ownership of Millions of Pigs

Monsanto has filed patents in 160 nations for... pigs. The World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva recently published the patent requests, which has left the pork industry squealing with contention. If approved, Monsanto would gain ownership of certain types of breeding techniques that are already in common use by farmers around the world. The patents also request Monsanto overtake ownership of the pigs born of those breeding techniques as well as their related herds. Although controversial, the profit incentive of this legal maneuver for Monsanto is enormous, as annual pork sales in the US, alone, are \$38 billion annually.

Take action: www.organicconsumers.org/monsanto/pigs.cfm

College Campuses Breaking The Chains

Student run farms on college campuses are cropping up at record levels across the US. In 27 states and at 60 colleges, these farms are providing an opportunity for students to learn sustainable farming techniques while incorporating healthy and locally grown produce into the college dining programs, area farmers markets and restaurants. Another 200 colleges across the US have joined the farm-to-college program wherein local farmers provide universities with locally grown produce. As students begin preparation for the fall 2005 semester, the record harvest from these quickly expanding programs clearly indicates the "buy local" movement is on the threshold of mainstream fruition.

Learn more and get involved: www.organicconsumers.org/btc.htm

Gaseous Cows On Factory Farms: It Ain't No Joke

Thanks to dense populations of bovines in California's heavily factory farmed San Joaquin Valley, cow burps and flatulence are now creating more smog and greenhouse gases in the local area than cars. Each and every one of the valley's 2.5 million cows excretes nearly 20 pounds of gas per day, causing new policy debates between air quality regulators and the dairy industry. "This is not some arcane dispute about cow gases," said Brent Newell, an attorney for the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment. "We are talking about a public health crisis. It's not funny to joke about cow burps and farts when one in six children in Fresno schools is carrying an inhaler." www.organicconsumers.org/OFGU/gases080305.cfm

New Studies: Monsanto's Best Selling "Safe" Pesticide is Highly Toxic

Two new peer-reviewed scientific studies have further confirmed the toxicity of glyphosate, the world's most commonly used herbicide. The June 2005 scientific journal *Environmental Health Perspectives* reports that glyphosate, sold by Monsanto under the brand name "Roundup," damages human placental cells at exposure levels ten times less than what the company claims is safe. A study in the August journal *Ecological Applications* found that even when applied at concentrations that are one-third of the maximum concentrations typically found in waterways, Roundup still killed up to 71 percent of tadpoles in the study. Similar glyphosate studies around the world have been equally alarming. The American Academy of Family Physicians epidemiological research has now linked exposure to the herbicide with increased risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a life-threatening cancer, while a Canadian study has linked glyphosate exposure with increased risk for miscarriage. A 2002 study linked glyphosate exposure with increased incidence of attention deficit disorder in children. Despite these studies, Monsanto continues to advertise Roundup, sprayed heavily on 140 million acres of genetically engineered crops across the world, as one of the "safest" pesticides on the market. Learn more & take action: www.organicconsumers.org/monlink.html

Attention: Working Assets Members

Each year, Working Assets Long Distance (WALD) phone company donates a portion of its profits to the individual public interest organizations that WALD customers vote for on their annual ballot. Organic Consumers Association (OCA) is pleased to be listed on this year's Working Assets ballot. We'd like to call on *Organic Bytes* readers who are also WALD customers to cast votes for OCA. The more votes you give, the more money OCA will receive. If you're not already a Working Assets customer for your long distance you can sign up and then vote for the OCA to receive funds. It's that simple. By taking a moment to vote, you'll be helping OCA raise the funds we need to move forward. Vote here: www.workingassets.com/vote

Attention Minnesotans: Your Mercury Laws Are Being Weakened

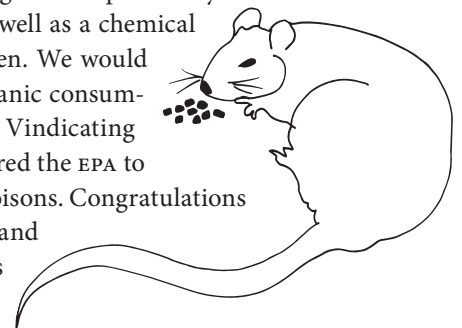
According to the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has weakened a statewide proposal to reduce smokestack mercury emissions after giving utility and industry officials an early, behind-the-scenes opportunity to suggest revisions. While discussing the draft plan with major mercury emitters, including Minnesota Power and Xcel Energy, MPCA officials last fall refused to meet with environmental groups that support tough regulation of the toxic heavy metal. At one point, an MPCA official told environmental groups that there was nothing to talk about. Mike Robertson, environmental policy consultant for the state Chamber, said that industries affected by the mercury plan were pleased with the MPCA approach. Mercury-contaminated fish have been found in more than 800 Minnesota lakes and many rivers, prompting health warnings to limit consumption. Minnesota children are more heavily impacted by this pollution than any other segment of the population. Please take action now by clicking here: www.organicconsumers.org/mpca.htm

Being Fibbed To May Make You Thin

A team of psychologists at the University of California have found that lying to patients can actually cause them to lose weight. Published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the study reveals that scientists successfully created aversions in patients to sweets like strawberry ice cream by tricking the subjects into believing it made them sick when they were kids. The scientists also planted positive memories about nutritious foods like asparagus. Weight control experts are expressing interest in the study, but skeptics, like Stephen Behnke, director of the ethics office of the American Psychological Association, say addressing the unhealthful aspects of the American diet requires a holistic cultural approach, adding the procedure of implanting false memories "raises profound ethical questions." www.organicconsumers.org/Toxic/diet-lie.cfm

A Rat Poisoning Story With A Happy Ending

In January, the OCA alerted *Organic Bytes* readers about the EPA striking a back-room deal with chemical companies to weaken rat poisoning regulations that were originally created to protect children. These regulations previously required the addition of artificial coloring as well as a chemical to give the rat poison a bitter taste for children. We would like to personally thank the thousands of organic consumers who signed OCA's action alert to the EPA. Vindicating our position on August 8, a federal judge ordered the EPA to implement stronger safety guidelines for rat poisons. Congratulations to everyone for standing up to the government and the chemical companies to protect children's health. www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/rat.cfm



For many more food issue daily headlines: www.organicconsumers.org/log.html

Organic Bytes is a publication of the Organic Consumers Association

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