



ORGANIC BYTES

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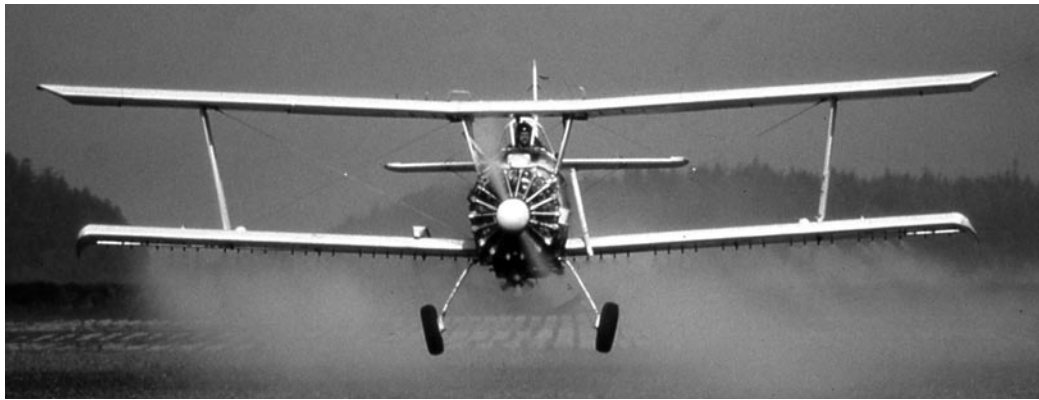
Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association
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Mad Cow Japan

On Monday, the Japanese government partially lifted a ban on us beef, despite a pledge by Japanese consumers to boycott American beef. Japan was one of 60 countries that banned American beef in 2003, based on the discovery of Mad Cow Disease in the us and poor testing procedures for the fatal disease by the USDA. While Japan tests all of its cattle for Mad Cow Disease, the us tests only a tiny fraction of its cows, and still allows high-risk feeding practices to cows that are banned in Japan. For example, us factory farms are still allowed to feed cattle blood and slaughterhouse waste. The Japanese ban cost American ranchers about \$3.1 billion over the last two years, prompting the Bush Administration to threaten Japan with economic reprisals. Despite a Kyodo News Agency poll last week that found that a full 75% of Japanese consumers would refuse to purchase us beef if the ban was lifted, the Japanese government has agreed to allow imports from the us for cattle slaughtered under the age of 21 months. Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/madcow.htm

Alert! US Proposes Dousing Wilderness Areas with Herbicides

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has proposed to apply massive amounts of herbicides to public lands in 17 Western states. The BLM claims these pesticides need to be applied to forests, rangelands and aquatic areas in order to reduce the risk of fire and slow the spread of invasive weeds. Under the proposal 932,000 acres would undergo chemical application in 17 western states, including National Monuments and National Conservation areas.



An integral part of this proposal involves aerial spraying of toxic herbicides, which increases negative impacts on non-targeted vegetation, wildlife, and people, including recreationists, tourists, and native peoples. The pesticides that would be used include persistent and mobile chemicals, including known developmental and reproductive toxins. Public comments are being accepted until January 9, 2006. Sign the petition to support the continued use of traditional vegetation management techniques on public lands that do not involve toxic chemicals: www.organicconsumers.org/blm.htm


Alert Update: EPA Proposed Rule Allowing Chemical Testing on Humans


Thanks to all of you for responding to OCA's recent alert regarding the EPA proposed rule that would allow studies of chemicals on children. Over 20,000 of OCA's supporters sent letters to the EPA on this issue. Last week, EPA's union of scientists joined our ranks and publicly protested the rule. "The main reason that most people came to EPA was because we wanted to protect public health. This rule is really undercutting what EPA is supposed to stand for," said Dave Christenson, an EPA scientist. The public comment period on the proposed rule closed on Monday, and the EPA administrative officials are now discussing what to do with the rule. We will keep you posted.


Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/Toxic/epa6.cfm




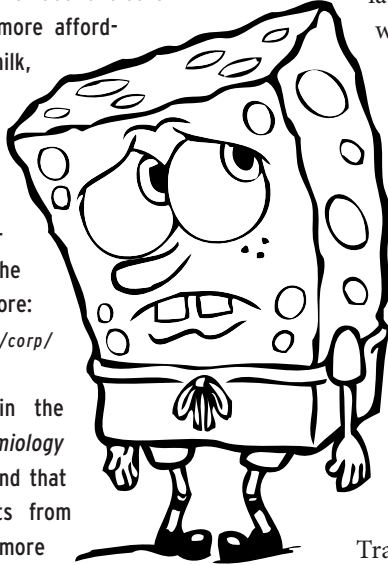
Quick Tidbits

 The FDA is considering new rules that would allow exotic animal milk in conventional ice cream. Imported milk from yaks, water buffalo, reindeer and other exotic animals can be more affordable than domestic cow milk, so ice cream producers are lobbying the FDA to modify labeling laws to allow the dairy substitution without having to prominently label the product as such. Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/corp/icecream.cfm

 A new study in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* found that negative health impacts from junk food costs the UK more than twice as much as smoking related illnesses. Study authors are calling on the UK government to regulate junk foods comparably to tobacco. organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/badfood120705.cfm

 Despite pressure from the pesticide industry, Canada's top court has upheld Toronto's pesticide ban. Toronto's council passed a bylaw in 2003 outlawing pesticide use on lawns and gardens. The pesticide industry has now exhausted all legal avenues of reversing the ban. A number of other Canadian municipalities say they will follow Toronto's lead and pass similar bylaws. organicconsumers.org/school/toronto120905.cfm

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Government Study Says SpongeBob Squarepants is Naughty

A new US government report attacks Hollywood for allowing advertising companies to use popular cartoon and TV characters to sell junk food to kids. The report calls for federal regulations on junk food advertising, noting that food companies spent over \$10 billion to market junk foods to American children last year. The US Centers for Disease Control funded the study, which was conducted by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) said of the study results, "We would like to think that SpongeBob Squarepants, Shrek and the Disney princesses are likable, kid-friendly characters, but they are being used to manipulate vulnerable children to make unhealthy choices. This must stop."

www.organicconsumers.org/school/study121005.cfm

Breaking the Chains: Join OCA in Celebrating Buy Local Month

Buy Local Month coincides with the busiest shopping season of the year, running through December. It's a time to practice putting our consumer dollars where our values lie and to support healthy and sustainable local businesses and producers. As part of a growing international movement for Fair Trade, health, justice, and sustainability, organic consumers are saying "No" to Wal-Mart and the other big box chains, while promoting locally or regionally-based alternatives. As part of Buy Local Month, we are asking our network volunteers to "Break the Chains" by organizing rallies, house parties, educational events, and film showings. Please find an event near you or create one of your own at: www.organicconsumers.org/btc.htm

Progressive Holiday Shopping: Books & DVDs We Like

We at the OCA want to get you started using a new service that could be a great benefit to the organic and progressive community. "Books We Like" is a new section on our website that provides a shared recommendation system for books, music, and films. It allows its users to contribute to a "collective intelligence" on the internet about what media is deserving of our recognition. Purchase OCA recommended media for holiday gifts and recommend some of your favorite progressive books, music and films for others to enjoy. It's a great way to bring attention to progressive media while helping the OCA. A portion of your purchases (7%) is donated to the OCA. Our goal is to get 10,000 people converted to starting their online purchases this way for the holiday season. Please help us make that happen. www.organicconsumers.bookswe-like.net

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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