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[www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)

# ORGANIC BYTES

Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association  
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## Flashback to Our Common Victories and Ongoing Challenges in 2006!

Over the winter and spring we've reported on the good news, along with the bad. Our rapidly growing online network of 400,000 health and green-minded consumers have boldly jumped into the fray on a number of strategic issues. We've won some skirmishes and lost a few, but looking at the big picture and taking the long view, we are hopeful: The times are changing. Join us as we travel back over the past six months to see how your donations and support for the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) have fueled our growing movement for health, justice, and sustainability. As a nonprofit, we need your donations so we can continue to move forward.

### Stopping Chemical Industry Experiments on Children

In late 2005—early 2006, OCA alerted our nationwide network to a proposed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation allowing industry to carry out experiments on children with toxic pesticides and chemicals. After a barrage of 15,000 letters from OCA, and thousands more from our allies, the EPA's own union of scientists came against the rule. Reacting to the growing backlash, EPA administrators announced they would ban chemical testing on children. Unfortunately after the media reported this change in public policy, and public attention turned elsewhere, EPA bureaucrats reinstated similar language back into the proposed regulation. The battle continues.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/epa6.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/epa6.cfm)

### Eliminating Toxic Pesticide Spraying on Public Lands

In January 2006, OCA members and supporters sent over 20,000 letters to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), protesting a federal plan to spray massive amounts of pesticides, including known developmental and reproductive toxins, on 932,000 acres of public lands, including National Monuments and Conservation areas. In the wake of this controversy, the BLM delayed its final decision on spraying pesticides until Fall 2006. OCA will continue pressuring the BLM in the meantime.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/blm.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/blm.htm)



### Banning a Cancer-Causing Pesticide—Methyl Iodide

In February, 2006, OCA generated thousands of letters and phone calls to the EPA opposing the proposed use of the carcinogenic pesticide methyl iodide. In January, the EPA had indicated it would allow farmers to apply up to 400 pounds of the carcinogenic chemical to each acre. Methyl iodide is especially hazardous, vaporizing quickly and drifting over large distances.

Reacting to widespread media coverage and public pressure EPA backed off on legalizing the pesticide.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article\\_258.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_258.cfm)



### Safeguarding Organic Standards

In March 2006, *Organic Bytes* subscribers voted 96% to 4% in an online survey to launch a boycott against two of the largest organic dairy companies in the nation, Horizon Organic (a subsidiary of Dean Foods), supplier to Wal-Mart and many natural food stores; and Aurora Organic, a supplier of private label organic milk to Costco, Safeway, Giant, Wild Oats, and others. Horizon and Aurora, who together control up to 65% of the organic dairy market, are blatantly violating traditional organic standards by purchasing the majority of their milk from factory-style dairy feedlots where the cows are kept in intensive confinement, with little or no access to pasture. These same so-called "organic" dairy feedlots are also continuously importing calves from conventional farms, where the animals have been weaned on blood, fed

slaughterhouse waste and genetically engineered grains, and dosed with antibiotics. In April and May of 2006, OCA submitted over 50,000 petitions signed by organic consumers to the NOSB, calling on the USDA National Organic Program to put an end to these practices. After widespread media coverage generated by the OCA and the Cornucopia Institute, millions of consumers are being alerted to this issue. A growing number of natural food stores and coops have begun to pull these bogus organic dairy products from their shelves.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/nosb2.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/nosb2.htm)

### Defending State Food Safety Labeling Laws

Despite massive public opposition, including 50,000 calls and letters from the Organic Consumers Association, the House of Representatives on March 8, 2006 passed a controversial industry backed “national food uniformity” labeling law, which would eliminate over 200 state food safety labeling laws. The law would take away local government and states’ power to require food safety labels such as those required in California and other states on foods or beverages that are likely to cause cancer, birth defects, allergic reactions, or mercury poisoning. The bill would also prevent local municipalities and states from passing laws requiring that genetically engineered foods and ingredients be labeled. In order to become law, the bill will now have to go to the Senate for a vote. As we go to press, it appears we have created so much controversy that the bill will not pass in the Senate.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/rd/labeling.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/rd/labeling.cfm)

### Organizing Against Genetically Engineered Food

For eight years, OCA has campaigned steadfastly against genetically engineered foods and crops, educating the media and the public about how gene-spliced foods pose serious hazards to public health and the environment. Over the past year we’ve been trying to stop the biotech industry and the Farm Bureau from ramming through “Monsanto Preemption” laws in several dozen states that take away the rights of local and county governments to ban genetically engineered crops. Our joint efforts with our allies have at least temporarily stopped these Monsanto laws in a number of states, including California, North Carolina, and Nebraska. Unfortunately



these anti-consumer laws have passed in 15 other states. Tired of waging defensive battles, we’ve decided to focus on lobbying and passing a mandatory labeling law for GE foods in Congress, similar to the law in effect in the European Union, which has basically driven GE foods and foods off the market. A recent USDA poll found that 83% of Americans support mandatory labels for GE food. Although the labeling bill, HR 5269, *The Genetically Engineered Food Right to Know Act*, introduced by Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) on May 2, 2006, will not pass Congress this session, OCA is determined to get over 100 co-sponsors for the bill over the next year.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/gelink.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/gelink.html)

### Pressuring Starbucks on Fair Trade and rBGH

This month OCA is organizing a series of protests and leafleting events at Starbucks coffee shops, calling on the corporation to ban genetically engineered Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) milk from its cafes and to brew organic and Fair Trade coffee on a regular basis. Facing mounting consumer opposition major dairies such as Dean Foods and retailers such as Wal-Mart are reportedly telling suppliers to stop using rBGH.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article\\_747.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_747.cfm)



### Please Donate to the OCA

As a nonprofit, we need your donations so we can continue to move forward. You can donate online at: [www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm)

Or mail your tax deductible donation to the OCA:

Organic Consumers Association

6771 South Silver Hill Drive

Finland, MN 55603

Or by phone: 888-403-1007 (toll free).



For many more food issue daily headlines:

[www.organicconsumers.org/log.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/log.html)

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6771 S. Silver Hill Drive · Finland, MN 55603

Phone: 218-353-7454 · Fax: 218-353-7652

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