



ORGANIC BYTES

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www.organicconsumers.org

Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association
Please forward this publication to family and friends, websites, print it, & post it. Knowledge is power!

Go Local for Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving has traditionally been a holiday to celebrate nature's bounty and enjoy the year's harvest. What better time to choose and prepare food that's good for your health and the environment than Thanksgiving dinner. This week *Organic Bytes*' challenge to ourselves and our readers is to put a little extra effort into trying to purchase and prepare as many locally grown foods as possible. With up to 25% of greenhouse gases generated from our energy-intensive and long-distance food and farming system (including cultivation, petroleum-based fertilizer, harvesting, processing, packaging, storing, refrigerating, and shipping), making Thanksgiving a more earth-friendly holiday is as easy as stopping at the local farmer's market, or looking for locally produced foods at your grocery or co-op. Look for locally and regionally produced food and buy local and organic. www.organicconsumers.org/btc.cfm



New Congress Scolds FDA for Not Doing Its Job in Protecting Public Health

FDA Bureaucrats received a kick in the butt this week from Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), the newly elected chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. Kennedy slammed the FDA for endangering public health by ignoring science and serving as a puppet for big business. "The dedicated professionals at the FDA have been pressured to trim their scientific views to the prevailing political winds. These are symptoms of a serious illness, and we should act without delay to provide the cure," the senator said. Kennedy said the committee will hold a series of FDA oversight hearings in early 2007 to force the agency back on track. FDA advocates responded by saying the agency can only become scientifically credible if Congress increases the FDA's budget in order to supplant the millions of dollars it now receives from industry.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3397.cfm

Pleasing the Vegetarians at Your Thanksgiving Dinner

Whether you are a vegetarian yourself or you have vegetarians coming to dinner, there's no need to sweat over the Thanksgiving dinner spread. Roughly one in ten Americans call themselves vegetarians, according to the Vegetarian Resource Group's website. With the statistics from the 2000 census, there are an estimated 5.7 million adult vegetarians in the US. The traditional Thanksgiving dinner has a multitude of vegetarian dishes built-in: potatoes, beans, corn, bread, cranberries... so there's really no need to worry about your attending vegetarians. But for those who would like to offer additional options to their vegetarian attendees, or for those who are preparing a strictly vegetarian feast, check the list of Thanksgiving recipes from vegetarian chefs:

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3399.cfm

Fear Factor Candy Challenge

The hit prime time television series *Fear Factor* forced competitors to face their fears by challenging them to do everything from leaping off cliffs to eating insects. Now the "challenge" has been converted into a junk-food eating game for kids. The "toy" has been ranked as one of the most dangerous toys of the holidays by the group World Against Toys Causing Harm (WATCH), which has monitored toys for over three decades. According to WATCH, "Toy aisles should not be used to encourage food-eating competitions, which invite potential choking and ingestion injuries, particularly for young children." In order to win a round of the Fear Factor Candy Challenge, contestants must consume as much candy as possible in the shortest amount of time. Learn more about OCA's **Appetite for a Change** Campaign, a campaign to reduce children's exposure to pesticides, toxins, and junk foods, at www.organicconsumers.org/afc.cfm

Quote of the Week

"We should not hide the word hunger in our discussions of this problem just because we cannot hide the reality of hunger among our citizens." -Rev. David Beckmann, president of *Bread for the World*, speaking about the USDA's annual report on hunger in the US. For the first time in the agency's history, the USDA avoided the term "hunger" in its report and used a euphemism in its place. The phrase "suffering from food insecurity" is how the USDA now refers to the nation's 35 million hungry. www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3390.cfm

Quick Facts

- The biotech industry has officially celebrated the planting of the billionth acre of GE crops.
- 75% of the world's GE crops are grown in the US and Argentina.
- More than 90% of world's GE seeds were developed and sold by the Monsanto Corporation (planted predominantly with Monsanto's genetically modified corn, cotton, soybean and canola seeds).
- Monsanto's GE seed sales alone brought the company over \$4 billion last year. Outside of GE seeds, Monsanto's past and present product-line has included Agent Orange, DDT, PCBs, RBGH and aspartame.
- Notable historic quote: "Monsanto should not have to vouchsafe the safety of biotech food. Our interest is in selling as much of it as possible. Assuring its safety is the FDA's job." - Phil Angell, Monsanto's director of corporate communications. "Playing God in the Garden" *New York Times Magazine*, 10/25/98.

www.organicconsumers.org/monlink.cfm

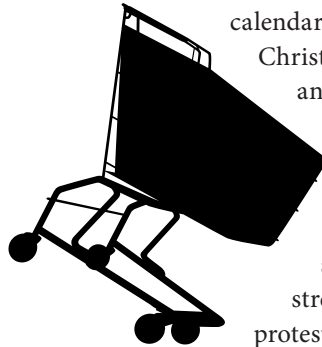
Flu Shots Contain Mercury

A survey of over 9,000 Americans found that an overwhelming majority of people had no idea their flu shots contain mercury. "More than 75 percent of Americans feel a mercury-containing flu shot should not be given to a pregnant woman or a child," said Lisa Handley, a founding parent of *PutChildrenFirst.org*, the group that organized the survey. Handley's own son, Jamison, had an adverse reaction to a flu shot containing mercury in 2003. "I know firsthand how life-changing a flu shot with mercury can be, since our son began his regression into autism after his flu shot." In 1999, government agencies called for the removal of Thimerosal, the mercury-based preservative in most vaccines. Then, in 2001, the American Academy of Pediatrics stated that, "mercury in all of its forms is toxic to the fetus and children." Despite these actions, 90 percent of this season's flu vaccines still contain Thimerosal. www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3400.cfm

Be an OCA State News Scout

We need your help. Become a News Scout! The OCA, with your help, will be unveiling News and Action Centers for all 50 states in the next few weeks. We want to keep your state's news items up to date. Send us news, events, organizations, and campaigns for your state www.organicconsumers.org/state/statecontribute.cfm

iBND



Buy Nothing Day
November 24th 2006
www.adbusters.org

Mark Your Calendars: Coming Events

Friday, November 24: Buy Nothing Day

On November 24th, the busiest day in the American retail calendar and the unofficial start of the international Christmas shopping season, thousands of activists and concerned citizens in 65 countries will take a 24 hour consumer detox as part of the 14th annual Buy Nothing Day. Featured in recent years by the likes of CNN, *Wired*, the BBC, and the CBC, the global event is celebrated as a relaxed family holiday, as a non-commercial street party, or even as a politically charged public protest. Anyone can take part provided they spend a day without spending.

www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_3387.cfm

Tuesday, December 5: National Starbucks Call-In Day

Tell Starbucks to stop lacing its coffee drinks with Monsanto's genetically engineered Bovine Growth Hormone. Tell them that injecting this cruel and dangerous drug into dairy cows is morally unacceptable. By calling them and telling them you'll stop going to their cafes if they don't drop RBGH, you'll let Starbucks know that RBGH is bad for business. Call Starbucks at 800-235-2883



www.organicconsumers.org/Starbucks/index.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

Or mail your tax deductible donation to the OCA:

Organic Consumers Association

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

For many more food issue daily headlines:

www.organicconsumers.org/log.html

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