



ORGANIC CONSUMERS FUND

GRASSROOTS ACTION AND LOBBYING FOR HEALTH, JUSTICE, AND SUSTAINABILITY

ORGANIC BYTES

August 18, 2006

Health, Justice, & Sustainability News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Fund · www.organicconsumersfund.org

Please forward this publication to family and friends, websites, print it, & post it. Knowledge is power!

ORGANICS AND THE 2006 ELECTIONS: HELP IDENTIFY THE REAL ORGANIC CANDIDATES

The time has come to put organic and related issues on the table for the 2006 elections. Please help us identify local, state, and Congressional politicians seeking office in 2006 who support policies that move us toward a more democratic, healthy, sustainable and re-localized society—with organic agriculture and Fair Trade leading the way. Please take a moment to help OCA's lobbying partner, the Organic Consumers Fund (OCF), identify our

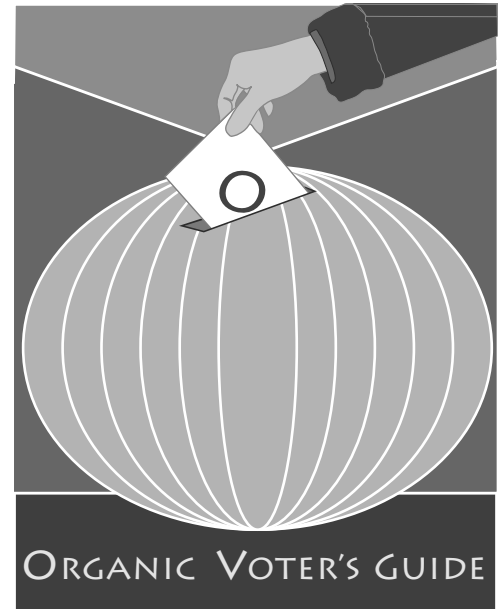
real friends and champions. This ambitious, people-powered political candidate survey has the potential to impact local, state, and federal election races across the country. Please go now to the OCF voter action page and follow the step-by-step instructions to encourage candidates in your area to take part in the *Organic Consumers 2006 Political Candidate Survey*. Once your local, state, and Congressional candidates respond, the OCF website will automatically rank them in terms of their response on key issues of health, justice, and sustainability. It's a whole lot easier than you might think, and the results will have a powerful impact. Please locate candidates in your area and send them the survey at:

organicconsumersfund.org/voterguide.cfm

Don't Read This Paragraph —Unless You're Ready for an Electoral Revolution

The Organic Consumers Fund is a unique and totally grassroots lobbying organization. Every year, agribusiness, biotech, and other powerful special interest groups spend hundreds of millions of dollars lobbying public officials to pass and change legislation in their favor. It's time that we, organic consumers and farmers, make our voices heard—from Main Street to the halls of Congress. To revitalize the country and move in an organic and sustainable direction, we've got to translate our already formidable economic clout in the marketplace into a political force. To do this we need your help. We will not take money from the corporate special interests. All we have is you,

the grassroots. The OCF's goal is to raise \$50,000 in grassroots donations over the next 30 days, so that we can spread our Candidate Survey to thousands of candidates and follow up with phone calls, emails, and other lobbying efforts. Later in the fall we'll publish our Voter Guide, to help people decide who deserves their vote. Our country, as you know, is facing a terrible crisis, whether we are talking about public health, environmental sustainability, a democratic media and elections, or peace and justice. Help us begin to move in New Directions by putting organic issues on the table in the 2006 elections. Donate now:



FORWARD, FORWARD, FORWARD!

There are literally thousands of candidates running for office in the 2006 elections. In order to see how they rank in the "Organic Consumers 2006 Political Survey" they need to have someone in their district request that they take part in the Survey. Please forward this email to friends and family all over the country and ask them to take a couple of minutes to find out how their candidates stand on issues that are crucial to organic consumers and all Americans. Thank you!

www.organicconsumersfund.org/donations.cfm

Related Quote of the Week

“Having raised the earth’s temperature 1 degree Fahrenheit in the last three decades, we’re facing another increase of 4 degrees over the next century. That would imply changes that constitute practically a different planet. It’s not something we can adapt to. We can’t let it go on another 10 years like this.”
Source: NASA’s Goddard Space Institute Director James Hansen speaking to the *Washington Post* about how NASA’s computer models are predicting the quick progression of global climate change.

Product Plunder of the Week

After repeated discoveries of dangerously high pesticides levels in Coke and Pepsi products in India, six states have announced bans of the products in schools and hospitals. In response, the US Under Secretary for International Trade, Frank Lavin, has threatened India with withdrawals of foreign investment. Although the Indian Centre for Science and the Environment have confirmed previous studies, and found levels of pesticides 24 times the legal limit in the Indian-made soft-drinks, New York-based spokesman for PepsiCo’s international division, Dick Detwiler, said of the situation, “All of the data and all of the science point to the fact our products in India are absolutely safe.” Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_1511.cfm

Web Video of the Week: Spy Chips

An increasing number of marketers are apparently implanting Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFID) into products to monitor consumer behavior after they leave stores. The tiny chips, hidden unnoticeably in the product or its packaging, can be read through your home walls, thereby allowing marketers to know exactly when and where you are using a specific product. Marketers claim it’s completely legal, while opponents refer to them as “spy chips”. See an animated short depicting some of RFID’s current capabilities at: spychips.com/RFIDclothingstoredemo.html

Written and edited by
 Craig Minowa & Ronnie Cummins

Factory Farms Seek “Grass-Fed” Label

For most people, the concept of beef labeled as “grass-fed” means animals roaming in pastures, freely grazing on the grasses and forage that ruminants have evolved over eons to digest. Now the USDA has proposed federal regulations that would allow the meat from factory farm animals, injected with antibiotics and hormones, who are fed corn and grain rather than being raised on pasture to be labeled as “grass-fed.” Literally no one supports this proposed regulation other than large beef corporations who would like a federal license to defraud consumers and put family scale farmers and ranchers who still pasture their animals out of business. If you’d like to comment on this issue, letters should reference:

Docket #LS-05-09, and be mailed to: Chief, Standardization Branch, Livestock and Seed Program, AMS, USDA, Room 2607-S, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-0254
 Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_1496.cfm

The 100 Mile Diet

The everyday-American meal contains an assortment of foods that have traveled an average of 2,000 miles to get from farm to fork. For those concerned about energy conservation, greenhouse gases, and oil dependence, the types of food we choose to eat are as important as the types of cars we choose to drive (or avoid). Industrial agriculture and long-distance food transportation generate between 20-25% of all climate destabilizing greenhouse gases in the US. Given this fact, buying food that is locally or regionally grown can dramatically reduce energy consumption and greenhouse pollution. The local food movement has received a recent boost with the new trend of the “100 mile diet,” the brainchild of Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon. “We’re the kind of people that ride our bikes everywhere, so we wondered why we were going to all this effort when our food was flying around the world,” says Smith. The diet trend, which requires participants to only eat foods grown within a 100 mile radius, is catching on across North America. Philadelphia journalist Elisa Ludwig took up the 100 mile diet for 12 days to learn more about the foods she eats. “If eating local is a moral imperative, then every meal is an opportunity to do the right thing,” says Ludwig, who kept a daily journal of the experience. Read her journal entries at: www.organicconsumers.org/2006/article_1463.cfm

Benefits of Grass-fed Beef & Dairy

Animals raised on factory farms are routinely fed genetically modified grains, slaughterhouse waste, chicken manure, and municipal garbage.

Because ruminants have evolved to eat fibrous grasses (not starchy low fiber grain) they are more prone to disease when they are reared on a diet of grains rather than pasture and pasture forage.

Compared to corn and grain-fed cattle, beef and dairy products from grass-fed animals have higher levels of vitamin E, beta-carotene, vitamin C, and omega-3 fatty acids.

The manure from pasture-fed animals is easily taken up by the soil as natural fertilizer. In factory farm feedlots, the animals are confined to such a small space, the manure collects and runs-off into area waterways, increasing algae and bacteria levels. Source: www.eatwild.com

Organic Consumers Fund · 6100 Cliff Estate Road · Little Marais, MN 55614 · Phone: 218.226.4164 · Fax: 218.353.7652

Donate now: www.organicconsumersfund.org/donations.cfm · Note to co-op and natural food store subscribers: *Organic Bytes* is a great tool for keeping your staff and customers up to date on the latest issues. Feel free to print *Organic Bytes* for posting on bulletin boards and staff break tables. You are welcome to use this material for your newsletters.