



What the Heck?!

A number of our supporters wrote recently to complain about the cozy deal between MoveOn.org and Ben & Jerry's. It's a deal that lets the ice cream maker polish its image (and boost sales) by aligning its brand with progressive causes—even though the Unilever-owned company is responsible for the use of massive amounts of toxic chemicals that have all but ruined Vermont's water.

One supporter wrote: "In case no-one else brought this to your attention, I received a solicitation over the weekend from MoveOn sponsored by Ben and Jerry's. When I got around to reading it just now I responded by attempting to notify MoveOn's administrators that they were being used by Ben and Jerry to once again present themselves as "socially responsible" citizens when in fact they are among the worst of the worst offenders of the public health and contamination of the commons through their actions."

This supporter (and others) were referring to emails to MoveOn members from "Ben & Jerry" with subject lines like "We're worried" and "Stop Trump. Eat Ice Cream."

Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, the founders of Ben & Jerry's who later sold the company to Unilever, may in fact oppose the Trump administration. We're fine with that.

But let's be clear. This is free advertising for Ben & Jerry's, a brand that masquerades as "socially responsible" when it isn't. And it's a great example of subliminal advertising, designed to convey this message: "Hey, we're just like you. We care."

The marketing gurus at Unilever and Ben & Jerry's know full well that many consumers go out of their way to buy products sold by "socially responsible" companies. According to a recent report, Unilever's "Sustainable Living" brands are growing 46 percent faster than rest of business.

What better way to spread the message that you're one of the "good guys" than by promoting your brand via a 6-million-plus email list targeting people who care about social justice and the environment? Partnering with MoveOn is just one of several publicity efforts launched in recent months, all aimed at bolstering Ben & Jerry's brand image—there's more. Take Action: orgcns.org/2voBgQ8

Disappearing Act

What's the first thing Bayer did after the U.S. approved the Bayer-Monsanto buyout? The German chemical giant announced that the name "Monsanto" will disappear.

Our response? Monsanto can run, but it can't hide—as long as we stay committed to holding the "Biotech Bully" accountable for its crimes.

Bayer executives know that the name "Monsanto" is as toxic as the brand's products and monoculture farming practices.

That's why Bayer is desperate to distance itself from Monsanto's ugly reputation—by "disappearing" the Monsanto name.

It's up to us to keep Monsanto's name in the news. And keep the pressure on until Roundup is banned.

Please Donate: orgcns.org/2K1clD6

Whole Foods Fail

Five years ago, under mounting pressure from consumers, Whole Foods Market (WFM) announced that by the end of 2018, the then-largest retailer of organic foods would require all of its suppliers to clearly label GMO ingredients and foods.

Whole Foods recently reneged on that commitment, or at least the timeline part of it.

This time, there was no flashy press release, no media fanfare. Instead, the news was circulated quietly in an email to the company's suppliers.

If there were ever any doubt about WFM's original intentions, those intentions are clear now: The company's GMO labeling promise, too little too late from the get-go, was always more about saving face and scamming consumers than it was about real transparency and forcing Big Food to change its ways.

Take Action: orgcns.org/2JbljxX

Child's Play

Good news for kids who like to play outside.

According to new research, a healthy and diverse microbiome may be key to preventing childhood leukemia. And one of the best ways to encourage "gut" health is to get plenty of exposure to dirt—preferably "healthy" dirt, not dirt whose microbial activity has been killed or compromised by toxic agricultural chemicals.

Leading cancer researcher Professor Mel Greaves of the Centre for Evolution and Cancer at the Institute of Cancer Research in London theorizes that the onset of acute lymphoblastic leukemia—the most common form of childhood leukemia—may be prevented if a child is exposed to common bacteria and viruses very early in life. Also known as microbes, these bacteria and viruses can be found in most natural environments, including in healthy soil and in human breast milk.

Most cases of childhood leukemia have high remission rates—up to 90 percent. But conventional treatments for the disease include chemotherapy, radiation and other cancer drugs. And those can create life-long negative side effects. orgcns.org/2t8gXwP

Spirit of Sadhana

In August of 2017, severe flooding killed more than 1,200 people in India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Against a backdrop of video footage from that summer, Velvizhi V explains that even though the city of Auroville, India experienced record rainfall, none of that rain managed to replenish the local aquifer. The water was lost to sea, "wasted again" Velvizhi says. Deforestation throughout the region has stripped the soil of its capacity to absorb rainfall.

Velvizhi, a regeneration steward from Chennai, South India, works with Sadhana Forest, a volunteer-led organization that trains communities in agroforestry and water conservation to restore degraded lands by planting trees.

In *The Spirit of Sadhana*, Regeneration International's roving reporter Oliver Gardiner interviews Velvizhi about the Sadhana Forest project and how it is trying to restore food security around the world, by restoring degraded lands. orgcns.org/2LErp6T