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Quote Of The Week

"The government consists of a gang of men exactly like you and me. They have, taking one with another, no special talent for the business of government; they have only a talent for getting and holding office."

H. L. Mencken (1880 - 1956)

Two Sentence Article!

New research has shown that classical music helps cows produce more milk. For an article on this topic with more sentences, go here:

www.organicconsumers.org/rbgh/classical_music_milk_production.cfm



Weird Story of the Week

On May 2, dining room workers at the United Nations staged a strike, leaving the food and drink unattended. According to an early-May issue of *Time* magazine, this led to "Baghdad style (looting) chaos," in which UN staff and delegates robbed the restaurants bare of food, liquor and silverware, including alcoholic beverages stolen by "some well-known diplomats."

ORGANIC BYTES

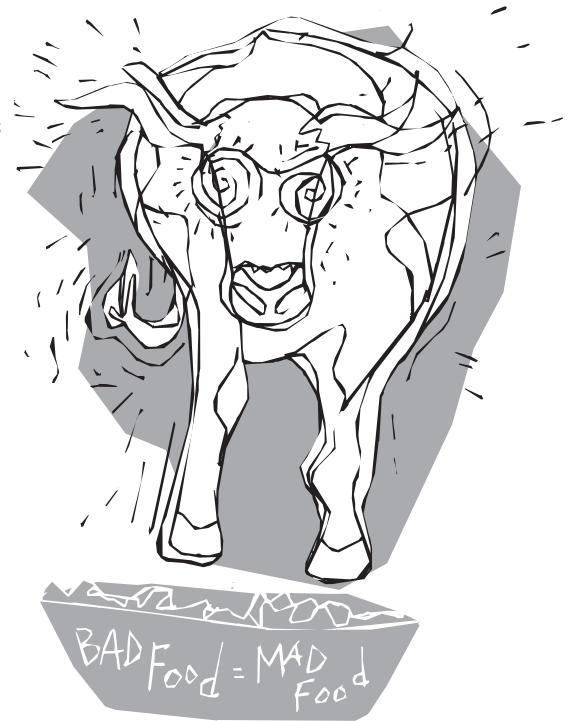
Organic News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association

Canadian Cow Loses Mind

Mad cow disease (bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE) has surfaced in Alberta, Canada, leading the US to ban all imports of Canadian beef.

The risk of humans contracting the fatal Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, after eating beef tainted with Mad Cow disease, is so alarming to consumers that news of the discovery led to an almost immediate drop in stock prices of McDonalds and other burger-focused fast food chains.

An epidemic of Mad Cow disease spread through the UK and EU beef industry a decade ago, due to the routine practice (prohibited on organic farms) of feeding slaughterhouse wastes back to animals. Approximately 130 Europeans have died from BSE-tainted beef thus far, with predictions that thousands more will die of the disease over the next 20 years. The notion that the US beef industry can protect itself from a Mad Cow outbreak by shutting off Canadian beef imports is ludicrous, given that both countries operate under a so-called "ruminant to ruminant feed ban" which is laden with loopholes and haphazardly enforced. Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/Toxic/052003_mad_cow.cfm



Watering Down Organic Standards

The *New York Times* did a cover story in its health section last week on the greenwashing practices of the so-called natural body care industry. (www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/nytimes051903.cfm)

The article highlighted the fact that many body care companies are advertising themselves as "organic", when in actuality the majority of the product's "organic" ingredient percentage is simply water. One of these companies, Avalon, is under investigation by the California State Organic Program after the OCA recently filed a formal complaint, in regards to the company's labeling practices. The OCA plans a nationwide ad campaign to expose misleading labels on body care products and to call for strict organic standards for cosmetics which mirror strict USDA National Organic Program standards for foods. To support this campaign contact the OCA: www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/

Stories for the Short Attention Span

Too Plump to Fly

Last week, the Federal Aviation Administration was forced to reduce its maximum occupancy passenger numbers per airplane flight, due to the fact that the average American is ten pounds heavier than they were just ten years ago when the last standards were made. Experts in weird thoughts, such as the author of the article you are presently reading, can only think "Wow, that means the US is cranking out 270 million pounds of fresh, new human fat every year!"



Just Cuz it's Interesting

A can of Pepsi, like similar sodas, has 41 grams of sugar. This amounts to about SEVEN TEASPOONS OF SUGAR.

Instant Pickles

Scientists at the Agricultural Research Service have proven that vinegar works well as a cheap and environmentally friendly pesticide for some types of weed control. Although organic farmers have known this for years, a formal study is always a nice thing to have around.

Source: ARS News Service

Robot Farmers To Invade Heartland

Scientists and engineers have developed a new "pesticide robot" that should be available on the market within the year. Utilizing sophisticated small cameras, the robot quietly moves through farmers' fields and searches for weeds. Upon discovering a weed, the robot spews a precision blast of milky-colored herbicide on the invader. The developers of the product say it could reduce pesticide use by as much as 80%, saving money and the environment. Since only the weeds would be sprayed, the actual food crop would carry very little pesticide residue. Also under development is a similar robot that would physically uproot weeds, thereby eliminating the need for herbicides. Read all about it: www.organicconsumers.org/organic/052603_pesticide_robot.cfm

US vs. EU on GE

Despite the fact that US international relations are at an all time low, the Bush Administration recently filed a formal complaint to the World Trade Organization (WTO) against the European Union (EU). Bush claims the EU's de facto ban against importing genetically engineered foods is illegal. The EU says it has every legal right to ban the import of foods that they feel haven't had adequate health and environmental safety testing. According to Caroline Lucas of MEP Greens UK, "The US is trying, yet again, to impose its unpopular policies on Europe when it has yet to rebuild the bridges it tore down in the run-up to the war in Iraq. This could be the last straw." Experts in the European food industry aren't concerned, predicting that even if the GE foods are forced upon Europe by the US, over 80% of European consumers have said they wouldn't buy them anyway.

Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/corp/bushplan052303.cfm

How to Take Over the World

Last week, hundreds of concerned consumers, activists and experts convened in St. Louis, Missouri to protest the World Agricultural Forum, an international convention hosted by Monsanto to promote the company's vision of a future based on monopoly and monoculture. Opponents of Monsanto's policies organized a counter-conference and protest, aptly named "Biodevastation". Apparently, there were powerful people in Monsanto's hometown who found this sort of discussion unacceptable. More than thirty people planning to attend the conference and/or the subsequent protest were arrested on charges such as failure to wear a seatbelt, forgetting to use a turn signal, riding a bicycle without a license, and of course, drugs (a bottle of vitamin C). www.organicconsumers.org/corp/051603_monsanto_biodevastation.cfm

For many more food issue daily headlines: www.organicconsumers.org/log.html

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