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## Quick Quirky Quote

"If all the rich people in the world divided up their money among themselves there wouldn't be enough to go around."

-Christina Stead (1903 - 1983),  
*House of All Nations* (1938) "Credo"

## Critics Shouldn't Be So Critical

Writers, musicians, artists... even restaurateurs have to learn to accept both good and bad reviews, as it's all just part of the business. But when one of Italy's top food critics recently wrote that McDonald's hamburgers tasted like rubber and the French fries like cardboard, the fast food chain decided they shouldn't have to put up with a bad review. So they're suing the critic. McDonald's has actually done this in the past and somehow won, but critic Edoardo Raspelli says he's not backing down, and he still thinks their food is nasty. Full story:

[www.organicconsumers.org/corp/mcdonalds060503.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/corp/mcdonalds060503.cfm)

## Weird Food News Tidbit of the Week

Arlington, Massachusetts is currently home to the world's only "Burnt Food Museum".

The museum's art pieces range from a ten year old burnt apple cake to permanently preserved burned shrimp kabobs. Although the museum normally pulls in over 25,000 visitors every year, it is currently closed...due to fire damage.

[www.burntfoodmuseum.com/](http://www.burntfoodmuseum.com/)



# ORGANIC BYTES

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

## Biopirate Booty & Frankenfoods for All

Thanks to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and a host of "free trade" agreements, it is completely legal for a large corporation to patent and own the genes of individual plants, animals, indigenous medicines and even humans. The WTO states that all member countries must honor all patents filed in the US or face economic sanctions, also known as cross retaliation. In other words, the US can legally impose economic sanctions on Mexico if the Mayan people use their traditional herbal medicines without paying royalties to transnational corporations like Dow Chemical, which now owns patents on some of these thousand- year- old remedies. Heck, it's even legal to patent the genes of the shaman who gives you that medicine. Since the mid-90s, there has been a deluge of US patent applications on human genes of tribal peoples all over the world. Thanks to the WTO, even your genes can be legally owned by corporations or individuals. And now the Bush Administration plans to use a secret trade tribunal of the WTO to force Frankenfoods down the throats of Europeans and consumers worldwide. Ticked off? Do something about it:

Join the OCA and other public interest groups protesting against the WTO and Frankencrops in Sacramento, California (June 20-25) and/or travel on an escorted OCA delegation to attend the historic teach-ins and protests

at the next international WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico, September 4-11. [www.organicconsumers.org/wto\\_cancun.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/wto_cancun.htm)



## Human Children are Actually Guinea Pigs!

Despite a landslide of public comments opposing the idea, the USDA has decided to begin bombarding school lunches with massive doses of radiation. Food safety groups slammed the decision, saying the action turns schools into the world's foremost purveyors of inadequately tested irradiated food, forcing millions of children to serve as guinea pigs. Countless studies have shown that irradiated foods lose nutrients, acquire known carcinogens, and contain new chemical compounds unique to irradiated foods. Local school boards will have the choice of refusing this dubious gift—which is actually more expensive. Spread the word and call your school board members now! Take action: [www.organicconsumers.org/irradlink.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/irradlink.html)

## Meat Eaters— Go Organic or Go Mad

Some cattle ranchers are actually profiting from the new Canadian occurrences of Mad Cow Disease, which can be fatal to humans, once they have eaten the meat. The organic beef market is enjoying a tasty little boom, as consumers are salivating for safe and humanely raised meats. This is catching many leading food-industry economists off-guard. They can't figure out why consumers are showing a preference for pure, free-range organics over factory farmed meats that are laden with toxic pesticides, growth hormones, antibiotics, radiation and potentially fatal diseases. It may take hundreds of thousands of dollars before these economists finally have to file this one as an "unsolved mystery". Read all about it—

[www.organicconsumers.org/madcow/oca060503.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/madcow/oca060503.cfm)

## Starbucks Bullies Aboriginal Tribe

Starbucks, a self-proclaimed promoter of fair trade, is suing an indigenous owned cafe in a tiny B.C. town over the restaurant's name "Haida Bucks". According to Darren Swanson, the store owner, "Aboriginal men are called bucks. The three aboriginal partners are all Haidas. That's how we came up with the name." Swanson said that as a matter of principle, instead of changing the restaurant name, he'd rather use the little money he has left over to fight Starbucks, which raked in \$3.3 billion dollars in revenue last year. Get involved —

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



## Force Fed Funky Fodder

The last issue of *Organic Bytes* (#14) took a good look at President Bush's recent decision to file a complaint to the World Trade Organization against the EU, based on the "problem" that European consumers are freely able to choose not to eat genetically mutated foods. The US filed the complaint and was only able to whip four other nations of the world into supporting it: Argentina, Australia, Egypt and Canada. Unfortunately for G.W., Egypt has now withdrawn its support of Bush's aggressive stance against the EU, citing "the need to preserve adequate and effective consumer and environmental protection." Bush added fuel to the fire by blaming world hunger on the European decision not to import GE foods. European leaders are downright confused by this accusation, pointing out that the US currently ranks 22nd in the percentage of its gross national income devoted to foreign aid—the lowest of any industrial nation.

Learn more: [www.organicconsumers.org/ge/rifkin060203.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/ge/rifkin060203.cfm)



## All We Are is Wheat in the Wind

Farmers all over North America are worried about what will happen if Monsanto's application for genetically engineered wheat is approved. Since wheat pollen travels on the wind, the engineered genes are certain to eventually spread throughout the wheat growing region, thus closing many foreign markets—even to farmers who choose to grow conventional or organic wheat. In fact, tests are showing that the US wheat supply is already contaminated. Genes from GE corn and soybeans that have passed through the same grain-handling facilities are showing up in unmilled wheat and in flour. "We've already got GM contamination in wheat in small levels from non-GM sources," said one US milling source. "If we can't keep the corn and soybeans out of the wheat, how are we going to keep the GM wheat out of the wheat?" Full story: [www.organicconsumers.org/wheat](http://www.organicconsumers.org/wheat)

For many more food issue daily headlines: [www.organicconsumers.org/log.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/log.html)

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