



www.organicconsumers.org
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Quote of the Week

"How we eat determines to a considerable extent how the world is used."

Wendell Berry - Author

Quick Facts

- An average family-size seasonal share of produce from a CSA is only \$350 (half shares are also available), which provides the customer with a weekly delivery of fresh, locally grown produce, while offering small family farmers a means to stay in business.
- There are over 1,000 CSAs in the US, up from zero in 1984.
- You can find a CSA near you at www.csacenter.org

Related Tidbits

- The average Americans puts in more hours now than in the 1950s
- We put in more hours than medieval peasants did, and more than any other modern day industrialized country.
- Working Americans average a little over two weeks of vacation per year, while Europeans average five to six weeks.
- Take Back Your Time Day is not about being anti-work. It's about taking back time for your family, your health, and your involvement in bettering the world around you.

More info: www.simpleliving.net

Survey Says...

A recent survey funded by the USDA (released 10/15/03) found that 94% of Americans want labels on genetically engineered (GE) foods. Of those surveyed 74% weren't aware they had ever eaten any foods with GE ingredients, despite the fact that 80% of foods on US supermarket shelves do contain genetically modified organisms. - www.organicconsumers.org/ge/newpoll102303.cfm

ORGANIC BYTES

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

Buying Clubs Sprout in the Big Apple

Over 6,000 low to middle income New Yorkers have discovered how to afford fresh organic produce for their dinner tables—cut out the middlemen. Buying clubs and CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) are enjoying unprecedented growth, bringing the farm life to the inner-city. Organic family farmers are successfully bypassing distributors and supermarkets and literally delivering their food firsthand to families in neighborhoods like Harlem and Brooklyn. As a result, the fruits and vegetables are organic, fresher and less expensive than the produce at supermarkets, yet the farmers see a better profit from their crops. Members of these urban buying clubs are even organizing weekend trips to visit the farms where their food is grown.

www.organicconsumers.org/organic/newyork102703.cfm

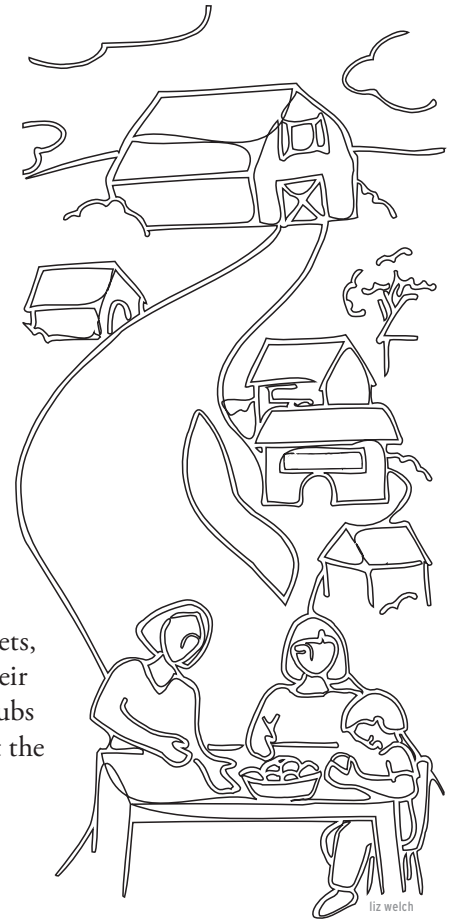
Food Break

Last week (Oct. 24) was national "Take Back Your Time Day". Most of us at the OCA offices forgot to acknowledge it, as we were too busy working, serving as a testament to the problem at hand. In the US, we each work an average of 350 hours (9 weeks) more per year than our European friends. In other words, for the EU and the US to have equivalent work hours per person per year, the average American would need to take off work from October 24 until the end of the year. Although this is not an obvious food related issue, the American work schedule directly impacts how the food industry reacts to consumer demands. Longer days at the office mean more convenience foods, more eat-on-the-run foods, more fast foods, more packaging, and more preservatives. It also means less time to cook with fresh locally grown produce from co-ops, farmer's markets, CSAs, and home gardens.

Burger w/Pickles & Catsup, Hold the Growth Hormones

The European Union has announced it is permanently banning beef from cattle given synthetic growth hormones, due to a number of studies showing such meat to be a human health risk. It is likely the Bush Administration will be filing a complaint to the World Trade Organization against the EU, since the vast majority of synthetic hormone-laced beef comes from the US. Ninety-four percent of US beef cattle have growth promoting hormones implanted in their ears. Organic standards prohibit the use of growth hormones.

www.organicconsumers.org/Toxic/hormone_beef_europe.cfm



Genetically Krafted Foods

OCA and GE Food Alert Coalition recently organized 300 supermarket leafleting events across the US over the last week, pressuring Kraft/Philip Morris, the US' largest food distributor to go GE-free. Recent laboratory tests of Kraft products reveal the company may be listening to consumers, as 6 of 7 products containing corn tested as GE free (under EU standard thresholds: less than .9%). organicconsumers.org/ge/kraft_protests.cfm

Organic Consumers Don't Have to Worry About This

After compiling over 100,000 laboratory tests, the Environmental Working Group has released a list of conventionally grown produce that is the most and the least contaminated by pesticides. Among the worst were apples, peppers, celery and cherries. Among the best were asparagus, avocados, bananas, broccoli, cauliflower, corn, kiwi, mangoes, onions, papayas, pineapples and sweet peas. Of course, the safest course of action is to buy organic fruits and vegetables. Download the full list here: foodnews.org/reportcard.php

In the Press

The *Washington Post* has released a feature story on OCA's Coming Clean Campaign revealing the fraudulent labeling practices of a few of the biggest "organic" body care companies. These companies claim added-water as an "organic" ingredient. Consumers beware: there are now household cleaners that are claiming to be organic, based on claiming added-water as an "organic" ingredient. OCA needs your help and support to fight the "watering down" of organic standards. If you haven't done so yet, sign our petition to the USDA and forward this email far and wide:

organicconsumers.org/bodycare/action.cfm

Take Action

If any of the issues above spark your desire to take action, please visit OCA's Action Center for instant faxes, petitions, volunteering and donation opportunities.

organicconsumers.org/action.htm

Eu Cleans Up

The European Union has also officially banned atrazine, a toxic herbicide that is both a carcinogen and endocrine disruptor. The decision was made after alarming concentrations of the Syngenta chemical have been turning up in waterways all over the world. On the other side of the pond, atrazine recently received re-approval by the Bush-led EPA. Atrazine is currently the most commonly used herbicide in the US, where 60 million pounds were applied in 2003 alone. The water supply in much of the US Corn Belt is contaminated with atrazine and other toxic chemicals routinely used in conventional agriculture.

organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/atrazine102703.cfm

Organic Vending Machines Replacing Junk Foods in Schools

Organic food companies are now testing vending machines in high schools. Perched next to the Coke and Doritos machines at Cranston High School West in Rhode Island, is a new vending machine with soy chips, rice snack bars & organic yogurt. Stonyfield Farm, an organic dairy product producer, has placed similar machines in schools on both US coasts. Attesting to the overall potential of these programs, Gary Hirshberg, CEO of Stonyfield said, "This could be the tip of the iceberg." Profits are divided between the schools and machine operators.

organicconsumers.org/Toxic/organic_cafeteria.cfm

Monsanto Stumbling

Monsanto, the creator of PCBs and Agent Orange and the world's largest purveyor of genetically engineered seeds, has temporarily bowed out of the biopharm industry (genetically engineering plants to grow pharmaceutical drugs). The company says it wants to continue its focus on what it claims to be a profitable venture: genetically engineered foods. Contrasting its PR profit claims, the company recently closed its 4th quarter with a \$188 million loss. Last year

Monsanto lost almost two billion dollars on total sales of \$4.5 billion. Monsanto is currently laying off nearly 10% of its employees worldwide. US farmers growing Monsanto and other gene giant's "profitable" frankencrops lost so much money last year, taxpayers had to shell out \$12 billion in subsidies for corn, soybeans, and cotton. - organicconsumers.org/corp/monsanto_biopharm.cfm

Made In China

As hungry humans in the US and across the globe are demanding more organic food, a massive and profitable market niche has opened—and Chinese farmers are ready to fill it. Organic sales in the US alone are projected to hit \$20 billion by 2005. While many US farmers still seem hypnotized by the PR blitz of pesticide and GE seed companies like Monsanto, Chinese family farmers are happily enjoying the 30-50% higher annual profits they are receiving by going organic. "They earn more money. They don't have to worry about sales. They don't have to worry about storage. There's no reason why they shouldn't go for organic farming," said Wang Tingshuang, an organic farmer in China's northeastern agricultural province of Jilin.

organicconsumers.org/organic/china102703.cfm

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

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