



www.organicconsumers.org
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Quote of the Week

"Universal testing of every cow slaughtered for human consumption in the US is the only way to ensure the safety of the American beef supply."

-Dr. Michael Greger, M.D. 12/31/03
organicconsumers.org/madcow/greger123103a.cfm

Who Do You Trust?

The Bush Administration gave the USDA Secretary of Agriculture position to Anne Venemon (who once served on Monsanto's Calgene Board of Directors). She appointed Dale Moore as her Chief of Staff. Prior to playing his new role of "protecting" consumers from food safety threats like Mad Cow Disease, Dale Moore was the chief lobbyist for the National Cattle-men's Beef Association. *Source:* www.usda.gov/agencies/gallery/moore.htm

Family Farmers vs. Transnational Corporations

In Mendocino County California, voters will be deciding whether or not to ban genetically modified crops, to protect the county's organic farmers from possible contamination from neighboring GE crops. The vote will be held March 2, 2004 and would make the county the first in the US to pass an anti-GMO resolution. The biotech industry has responded with a goliath investment into persuading the voters of the county against the measure. Indeed, the biotech battle plan is to call every household in the county with a paid 20-30 minute conversation, in order to assuage voter concerns about GE issues. Can Mendocino organic family farmers compete with transnational corporations? Your help is needed:

www.gmofreemendo.com

ORGANIC BYTES

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

Is Mad Cow Disease Causing Thousands of Human Deaths in the United States?

Thanks to a massive marketing blitz (funded by scarce taxpayer money) the US Government has been working overtime to alleviate the public's concerns about Mad Cow Disease and its human counterpart Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease (CJD). Consumers no longer know who to trust. Regardless, experts on all sides of the political spectrum agree with one basic fact: the two diseases are undeniably connected. In both cases, aberrant proteins, known as prions, begin to multiply and literally cause holes in the brain, ultimately leading to death. According to the US Center for Disease Control, hundreds of CJD human fatalities have been occurring in the US every year, but until now, they have simply been written off as unexplainable and spontaneous cases. At the same time, it is well known that ingesting meat contaminated with these prions causes the same fatal reaction to occur in the human body. Based on that basic understanding, coupled with the fact that the vast majority of US cattle are never tested for Mad Cow Disease, scientists like Dr. Michael Greger, a world renowned expert on the issue, and dozens of research institutions around the world are now linking these deaths to the food supply.

organicconsumers.org/madcow/GregerCJD.cfm

Got Blood?

The Mad Cow Disease outbreak in the UK sent off global warning signals, regarding various beef industry practices that perpetuate the disease. On the

top of this list was the logical push to ban feeding cows to other cows, since the disease spreads via ingestion of infected beef. Despite this, in order to maximize profit margins in the US, calves are regularly fed cow blood as a protein supplement. The OCA is coordinating a donation drive to post a quarter page educational ad in the Sunday *Washington Post*, highlighting the obvious threats of cow cannibalism to the human food supply. Check out the ad and consider donating to this educational campaign!

www.organicconsumers.org/madcow/gotblood.cfm

got blood?

MAD COW USA-
STOP THE MADNESS

Let's stop feeding blood, manure, and slaughterhouse waste to farm animals.

Sign our petition at
www.organicconsumers.org



Breaking News: Human Life May Be Worth as Much as a Nickel!

Although the US banned beef imports and frowned upon the UK when Mad Cow Disease related CJD began to take the lives of British citizens, recently revealed documents show little has been done to protect US consumers



from similar outbreaks within our own borders. In fact, internal USDA papers dating back to 1991 show that the US government (and related lobbyists) have been basing food safety related decisions on corporate profit margins over human health. Specifically, the USDA refused precautionary measures that would mitigate the possible outbreak of Mad Cow Disease, stating that "the cost to the livestock and rendering industries would be substantial." This assessment may be true, depending on what the price of human life is. Indeed, the cost of testing all cattle for this fatal disease would add 3 to 5 pennies per pound to the price of beef.

Reference: *Mad Cow USA* by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber.
Common Courage Press
www.prwatch.org/books/madcow.html

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

Millions of Consumers Unite

Last year, while the European Union (EU) tested ten million cattle for Mad Cow, the US only tested 20,526 cows out of 35 million slaughtered. In response to this threat to food safety and consumer rights, the OCA has launched a massive campaign to pressure the USDA into creating standards that emulate those of Japan and the EU. Every day, thousands of citizens are signing on to this important petition. Help the OCA in achieving its goal of gathering over a million petition signatures, demanding that the US Government adopt and enforce:

- **Mandatory testing for all cattle brought to slaughter, before they enter the food chain.**
- **Ban the feeding of blood, manure, and slaughterhouse waste to animals.**

Please sign the petition at:

www.organicconsumers.org/madcow.htm

and pass the address on to family and friends!

Organic Toxic Sludge

Much of what you flush down your toilet likely ends up being spread on local farm fields as fertilizer for the food you eat. At face value, it seems like a perfectly natural process. Historically, manure has been a preferred fertilizer for farmers worldwide. In the US, 60% of sewage sludge is treated, dried and shipped out to the farm. Proponents claim the sludge has only low levels of bacteria, but what about the chemicals homeowners and industry dump into the wastewater system? Those toxins don't just disappear. When applied to the soil, they work their way into the ground water, the air, and the plants we eat. Award winning scientist, David Lewis, a microbiologist, was recently fired from the Environmental Protection Agency for his criticism of the US Government's sewage sludge policies. Lewis and like-minded opponents question how the EPA, in 1992, determined that sewage sludge was too toxic to continue dumping in the oceans, yet it's perfectly legal to apply the same stuff to food crops intended for human ingestion. The EPA is now considering selling this same sludge under the label "organic compost". Write a letter to the EPA, expressing your concerns:

www.organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/sludge011504.cfm

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

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