



ORGANIC BYTES

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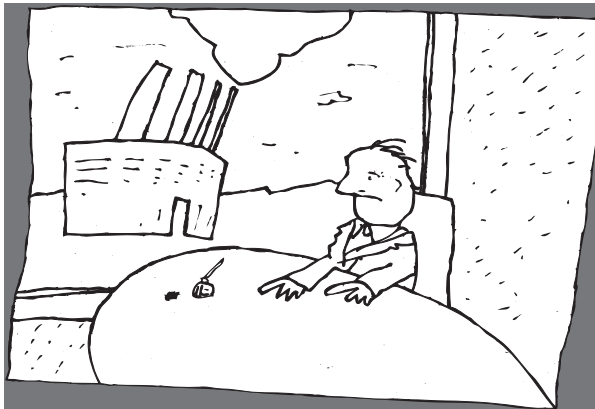
Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association

Four Counties Place GMO-Free Referendums on Ballot

Quote of the Week: Monsanto Alarmed

“Biotech industry leaders are monitoring the rising power of their opponents and facing the possibility that county-level bans in California could spur a statewide campaign, said George Gough, government affairs manager for Monsanto. This week, GMO-Free Mendocino officially joined arms with the Organic Consumers Association, which bills itself as the nation’s largest public-interest group dedicated to a healthy food system. The Association claims 90,000 California members. The goal of the newly minted BioDemocracy Alliance—the two groups’ joint effort—is to prepare for ‘the biotech bullies’ who could challenge California county bans in court or the state Capitol.” - *Sacramento Bee*, July 15, 2004

Last week GMO-Free Mendocino officially teamed up with the Organic Consumers Association to form the BioDemocracy Alliance, a coalition of grassroots groups focused on helping new regions across the US pass legislation to ban genetically engineered crops. The Alliance has already helped four new counties in California gather enough signatures to place GMO-free initiatives on their November ballots: Butte, Humboldt, Marin, and San Luis Obispo. Informed sources have told the press that biotech behemoths like Monsanto will likely soon seek state legislation to suppress these county bans. In an interview with the *Sacramento Bee*, Monsanto spokesperson George Gough expressed the corporation’s fears, saying, “While this still is certainly a grass-roots, county-by-county effort, it may be quickly becoming not so grass roots.” www.organicconsumers.org/ge-free.htm



-Nick Lethert

The OCA urgently needs additional funds to fight Monsanto’s counter-attack in California, and to help spread GE-Free Zones across the country. Earlier this year, on March 15, the OCA sent out an email Action Alert asking for \$50,000 to launch this effort, and you, the readers of *Organic Bytes*, responded generously by sending us \$53,000. Now we are asking for your help once again. This is a turning point in the struggle against Monsanto and genetically engineered foods, so please take the time now to send us a donation. Please make an online donation at www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm or

call or mail in a donation to our office: OCA · 6101 Cliff Estate Road · Little Marais, MN 55614 · Phone: 218-226-4164.

We are also looking for volunteers to help pass GMO bans in other areas. If you wish to volunteer, please email ryan@organicconsumers.org

Home Delivery of Organic Foods

A relatively new food delivery phenomenon is occurring across the US. Increased working hours and busy schedules are requiring that some families find new ways of getting fresh locally grown organic produce to their homes. From San Francisco to Philadelphia to New York City, organic delivery services are successfully filling a new market niche in the food industry. Find one (or start one) near you: www.organicconsumers.org/organic/doortodoor071904.cfm

FBI Harassing Art Professor for Anti-GE Activism

Dr. Steven Kurtz, Associate Professor of Art at the University of Buffalo was recently taken into custody by the FBI for having bioengineered organisms. The organisms were harmless, legal, and commonly used throughout the US, but they were being used to create an art piece protesting the history of germ warfare experiments by the US, including the Bush Administration’s plans to use hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to build more military focused high security labs across the nation. The FBI stacked the jury box with representatives from the FBI and the Department of Defense. Although Kurtz was found innocent of any real terrorist crimes, the FBI succeeded in charging the professor with four counts of mail and wire fraud (up to 80 years in prison). According to the CAE Defense Fund, “Historically, these laws have been used when the government could not prove other criminal charges.” www.organicconsumers.org/ge/fbi-buffalo.cfm

What's Happening to Our Kids?

US census bureau data shows that the gap between rich and poor families in the US is greater than ever before. At the same time, the rate of childhood obesity is increasing practically as quickly as the national debt. A cross analysis of such data is presented in the 2004 *State of the Children Report*, recently released by the Children's Defense Fund, and unfortunately, the results are downright depressing. For example, increased economic disparity on racial lines means African American infants are currently twice as likely to die in their first year as White infants. Cutbacks in education funding have led to a full 70% fourth graders not being able to read or write at grade level. Weaker gun control laws have resulted in eight children dying from gunfire every day. Interestingly enough, many of these statistics are reminiscent of data coming out of Texas during GW's governorship.

www.organicconsumers.org/school/troubles071904.cfm

Sponsored Message: Smile, Laugh and Cry with Ode

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USDA's Own Audit Slams Mad Cow Plan

The USDA's overly confident audit of its Mad Cow (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or BSE) testing policies and procedures has backfired. Assessors announcing the results of this audit have revealed gaping holes in government policies, including poorly trained field inspectors, failure to test the riskiest animals, and "an almost complete absence of available documentation." The report's conclusion supports the recommendations made for years by the Organic Consumers Association and other consumer groups, saying, "The problems identified during our review, if not corrected, may negatively impact the effectiveness of USDA's overall BSE surveillance program, impair its ability to perform risk assessments and program evaluations, and reduce the credibility of any assertion regarding the prevalence of BSE in the United States." www.organicconsumers.org/madcow.htm



Subway: The New King of Fast Food

The American Heart Association's (AHA) recommendations are revered as pure fact by doctors and patients alike. But as is the case in most sects of the US government, a public institution's policies can also be heavily swayed by corporate dollars. As an example, AHA only endorses Bayer aspirin, and in return, Bayer "donates" \$500,000 to AHA every year. Since 2002, Subway has also been riding the AHA bandwagon. In exchange for \$10 million in "donations" over the course of 5 years to AHA, Subway can proudly plaster the AHA's "fighting heart disease and strokes" logo on its advertising materials. Although the majority of the food sold at Subway outlets includes junk food, processed red meats and cheeses,

chips, soda, and cookies, thanks to creative advertising and the AHA, the majority of Americans equate Subway with a healthy fast food outlet. Subway now has more stores in the US than McDonalds (an average of over 300 in every state) with 21,528 restaurants in 75 countries. www.organicconsumers.org/corp/subway071504.cfm

Animal Rights Video Exposes KFC Animal Cruelty

An investigator for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has captured video of workers abusing chickens at a supplier plant for Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). Employees were caught throwing live chickens against walls and kicking them. Eye witness testimony also revealed workers "ripping birds' beaks off, spray painting their faces, twisting their heads off, spitting tobacco into their mouths and eyes, and breaking them in half—all while the birds are still alive." KFC awarded this same slaughterhouse with its "Supplier of the Year" award. PETA has already called for a boycott on KFC until the company requires its suppliers to adhere to animal right laws. www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/kfc.cfm

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

Organic Bytes is a publication of the Organic Consumers Association

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