



# ORGANIC BYTES

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

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

## Take Action: Mad Cow USA—Stop the Madness

Despite stating six months ago that regulations would be tightened and enforced to stop the spread of Mad Cow Disease, the FDA has yet to implement any regulations. Instead, in July, the FDA put forth an "Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking." The public comment deadline on this important proposed federal regulation is this Friday 8/13/2004. OCA suggests you tell the FDA bluntly: stop feeding blood, slaughterhouse waste, and manure to animals, period. And start testing all cattle at slaughter for Mad Cow Disease. More information on how you can submit comments...

[www.organicconsumers.org/madcow/fda-alert.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/madcow/fda-alert.cfm)

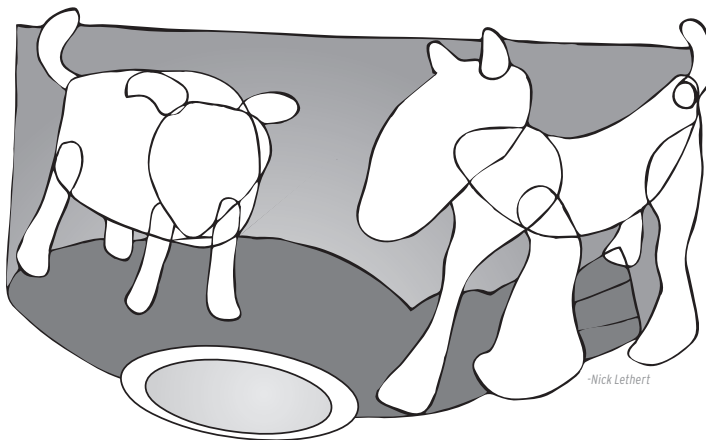
## Don't Just Mourn, Organize!

Join hundreds of other Organic Consumer network members across the US and host an OCA House Party/Film Showing/Fundraiser. Meet up with other food and anti-genetic engineering activists in your community and watch the powerful new documentary, "The Future of Food." Discuss how you can take action locally and spread GE-Free Zones Across the America. OCA's goal is to have 300 simultaneous house parties across America September 11-12, and we're already half way there, with 150 house parties organized so far! Join us to make this goal a reality!

[www.organicconsumers.org/party.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/party.htm)

## Monsanto & Dow Shrug Off Charges of War Crimes

Some four million Vietnamese have filed a lawsuit against chemical giants Dow and Monsanto for poisoning them and their children with Agent Orange, a powerful defoliant sprayed in massive quantities during the Vietnam War. Since the war ended in 1975, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese (and American Vietnam veterans) have died or developed cancer due to their exposure to Agent Orange. In addition thousands of children have been born with severe, often horrific, birth defects. The plaintiffs argue that knowingly and deliberately supplying such chemicals to the US military constitutes a war crime by Monsanto and Dow. Although Agent Orange contains dioxin, one of the deadliest chemicals on the planet, Dow and Monsanto still claim there is no evidence that Agent Orange does any harm to humans, other than causing minor skin irritation. The final ruling is to take place in October. [www.organicconsumers.org/monlink.html](http://www.organicconsumers.org/monlink.html)



## Organic Pet Food Flies Off Shelves

Organic pet food sales are increasing at a rate three times as fast as organic human food sales. "People want their pets to eat as well as they do," says Nell Newman, co-founder of Newman's Own Organics and daughter of actor Paul Newman. Although a bag of organic dog or cat food can be on the pricey side, organic pet

foods are exploding in popularity, particularly on the West Coast. Organic consumers can purchase everything from organic catnip to organic dog cookies. With skyrocketing sales, the labeling of these products is of increasing concern, given the USDA has made recent announcements that it will neither monitor nor police organic labeling of pet foods. [www.organicconsumers.org/organic/dogfood072904.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/organic/dogfood072904.cfm)

## Poisoning Consumers with Teflon

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has filed a complaint against DuPont for withholding evidence revealing negative health and environmental impacts from a chemical used to produce Teflon. The chemical, commonly known as PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid), has been found to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Due to Teflon's popularity (those nifty non-stick frying pans, etc.), PFOA can now be detected in the bodies of 90% of Americans. The EPA is investigating the possibility that DuPont may have learned of potential problems with the chemical more than two decades ago. On an international level, the EPA's announcement has prompted foreign governments to launch investigations into the toxicity of the chemical, and stores in China have begun pulling Teflon products from their shelves. [www.organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/teflon080904.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/foodsafety/teflon080904.cfm)

## Prozac in UK Drinking Water

So many Britons are now taking the antidepressant pharmaceutical drug Prozac that it is showing up in the water supply. With 24 million prescriptions for the “happy pills,” the drug is finding its way into the water via treated sewage. Experts are debating the possible impacts to the environment and human health given this new constant exposure to low levels of the antidepressant. [www.organicconsumers.org/food-safety/prozac080904.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/food-safety/prozac080904.cfm)

## An Ethical Fashion Statement

Clothing companies from Patagonia to American Apparel are profiting from one of the fastest growing segments of the organic industry: cotton. With more consumers making conscious decisions to purchase organic cotton products and avoid genetically engineered or pesticide intensive cotton, farmers and producers are shifting production methods to meet the increasing demand. In regards to organic cotton t-shirts, Roian Atwood of American Apparel said, “We double sales every two months.”

[www.organicconsumers.org/clothes/index.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/clothes/index.cfm)

## Sponsored Message: Smile, Laugh and Cry with *Ode*

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## Indian Farmers Returning to Traditional Organic Practices

Last week organic farmers and experts in India organized to address the agriculture crisis facing the nation’s 700 million farmers. Poor yields, degraded soils, and expensive chemical inputs arising from the cultivation of pesticide intensive crops, including genetically engineered cotton, have devastated India’s rural economy. Crop failures and crushing debt led over 300 Indian farmers to commit suicide between May and July. To address this crisis, farmers from all over the country joined together August 2 to create the “Organic Vision 2020,” a long term strategy to shift the country’s farming focus back to ecological and traditional organic practices. [www.organicconsumers.org/organic/dehradun080304.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/organic/dehradun080304.cfm)



## Kitchen Garden Day, August 22

International Kitchen Garden Day is a global celebration of delicious locally produced foods. It is an opportunity for people around the world to gather in their gardens and fields with friends, family, and members of their local communities to enjoy the multiple pleasures and benefits of locally-grown, home-cooked, organic foods. Kitchen Garden Day is coordinated by Kitchen Gardeners International.

[www.kitchengardeners.org](http://www.kitchengardeners.org)

## Helping Family Farmers Through Music

Farm Aid 2004, a benefit concert for family farmers, will be held in Seattle on September 18. The benefit was started by Willie Nelson, Neil Young and John Mellencamp in 1985 and has raised \$26 million for family farmers since its inception. “There are two million farmers in this country, and we are losing about 350 family farmers per week,” said Farm Aid Campaign Director Mark Smith. “Our take on that is that with the loss of every family farmer comes diminished access to local fresh food. It also means we are more dependent on corporate farming and food overseas.” [www.organicconsumers.org/corp/farmaid080304.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/corp/farmaid080304.cfm)

## Ranchers Go Green

In Wyoming, a new movement, based on traditional practices, is developing among cattle ranchers called Holistic Resource Management (HRM). Ranchers are finding that cattle herds and the land thrive when cattle and livestock are treated more like a wild herd. Altering cattle grazing patterns and herd clustering to emulate those of their buffalo predecessors has a significant positive impact on the environment, including the health and diversity of the native grasses. Rodents are controlled by providing natural habitat for predators like eagles. According to Jim Gould, HRM practitioner on his family’s ranch, “Everything has a place in this life, you just have to figure out what it is.” [www.organicconsumers.org/organic/holistic080204.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/organic/holistic080204.cfm)

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

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