



ORGANIC BYTES

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www.organicconsumers.org

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

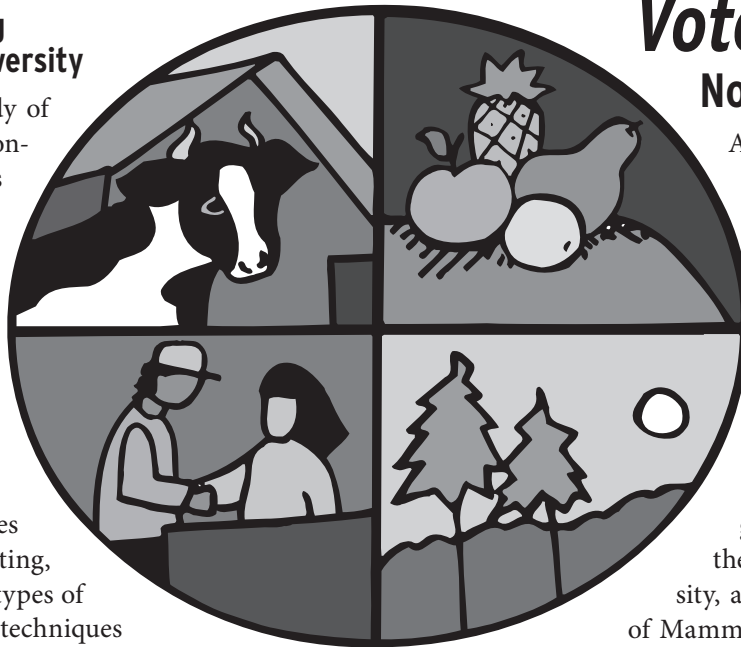
In the largest study of its kind ever conducted, researchers have found that organic farming increases biodiversity. Scientists compared conventional farming to organic farming, and found that biodiversity thrives in an organic setting, due largely to the types of land management techniques used by organic farmers, including the use of natural fertilizers and integrated pest management as opposed to synthetic fertilizers.

www.organicconsumers.org/organic/biodiversity101404.cfm

Leading Natural Body Care Corporation Coming Clean

Avalon Natural Products, a leading body care manufacturer, has been mislabeling their shampoo and other products as "70% Organic" by counting regular water as an "organic" ingredient. But in a positive response to a nationwide consumer marketplace pressure campaign by the Organic Consumers Association, Avalon has stopped labeling its products as "70% Organic," and instead will now be using certified organic essential oils to fragrance their products.

www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/index.htm



-Liz Welch

Vote Organic November 2 & Beyond

As we never tire of repeating, America's 30 million organic consumers need to vote with our pocketbooks, as well as our political voices, today and every day. As a non-profit organization, we face harassment from the Feds if we tell you who to vote for, but it's obvious in many races that there are two types of candidates: those whose absolute bottom line is money and global Empire, versus those who put the public interest, health, biodiversity, and the global commonwealth ahead of Mammon. We stand at an important crossroads. The choices that we make next week, and in the post-election period, are crucial.

Two segments of the electorate that are especially important are rural voters: www.leagueofruralvoters.org and young voters: www.indyvoter.org For information on how to help get out the vote: www.moveon.org Learn about voting rights in your state and find your local polling location here: www.mypollingplace.com

Canadian Consumers Turning Against Gene-altered Crops

A Canadian government poll shows that three out of five Canadians feel that genetically engineered (GE) crops carry more potential risks than benefits. The poll also revealed that more than half of Canadian citizens are uncomfortable purchasing foods with GE ingredients. The same poll conducted five years ago showed only 31% of shoppers had those concerns.

www.organicconsumers.org/ge/canadalabel101404.cfm

Tobacco Just Got Even More Dangerous

Congress has approved a major corporate-friendly tax bill that includes a removal of certain regulations on imported tobacco. The new process makes tobacco the first and only agricultural product that will not require any inspection upon import. US tobacco farmers are concerned that foreign growers will now once again resume using toxic chemicals banned in the US, like DDT, to reduce the cost of tobacco production. Sixty of the 4,000 chemicals in tobacco are linked to cancer. With the removal of import inspections, tobacco users will be left guessing what other dangerous chemicals they are ingesting.

www.organicconsumers.org/corp/tobacco101804.cfm

The Latest Stats on Genetically Engineered Crops

- There are now approximately 167 million acres of GE soybeans, corn, canola, and cotton planted in the US, Canada, Argentina, China, and Brazil.
- 85% of US soybeans are genetically engineered.
- 76% of US cotton is GE.

Source: *The Pew Initiative on Food and Biotechnology*

Is This an Example of So-Called Free Trade?

United States imports & exports look strikingly similar...

COMMODITY	US IMPORTS (TONS)	US EXPORTS (TONS)
Coffee	41,200	42,300
Sugar	70,800	83,100
Potatoes	365,400	324,500
Green Beans	27,000	32,500
Pork & Beef	953,100	899,800

Source: *Ode Magazine*, 11/2004

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Wal-Mart Squats Alongside Ancient Pyramids in Mexico

Standing atop a 2,000 year old ancient pyramid on the sacred site of Teotihuacán in Mexico, one can see why these primordial ruins are known to the Aztecs as "the place where the gods were created." Archaeologists agree this is one of the world's most important historical sites. But near the Pyramid of the Sun and the Pyramid of the Moon, you can now find... a Wal-Mart. The 71,902



square foot store is due to open any day, but protests are on the rise. An angry and increasingly sizeable majority of Mexicans feel that Wal-Mart has literally gone too far. Several weeks ago, a three foot square Aztec altar was excavated—after Wal-Mart contractors had paved it over with a parking lot. Wal-Mart claims a store is needed in the area, since without it there isn't another Wal-Mart for nearly 15 miles. Wal-Mart now controls 30% of grocery sales in Mexico and is, by far, the nation's largest retailer with sales of \$12 billion per year, more than the entire tourism industry. In a recent letter to Mexico's President Fox, 63 prestigious Mexican scholars and artists protested the Wal-Mart construction, stating, "The struggle for Teotihuacán is a war of symbols. The symbol of ancient Mexico against the symbol of transnational commerce; genetically modified corn against the Feathered Serpent [the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, Kukulcan in Mayan] and Mexico's traditional foods."

www.organicconsumers.org/corp/mexicowalmart102504.cfm

Fun Wal-Mart Facts

- Despite Wal-Mart being the largest corporation and largest employer in the US, richer than the entire country of Switzerland, it has recently received over \$1 billion in US taxpayer subsidies.
- \$1 billion of US real estate is purchased and developed by Wal-Mart every week. *New York Times* 7/25/2004
- John Kerry has publicly attacked Wal-Mart for its low wages and union-busting activities, while Dick Cheney commends Wal-Mart for its "spirit of enterprise, fair dealing, and integrity."

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