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## Quotes Of The Week

"America's one of the finest countries anyone ever stole."

-Bobcat Goldthwaite

"Too many of us look upon Americans as dollar chasers. This is a cruel libel, even if it is reiterated thoughtlessly by the Americans themselves."

-Albert Einstein

"Facts are stupid things."

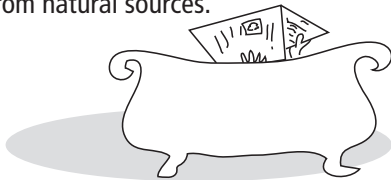
-Ronald Reagan

## Weird Food News Tidbit of the Week

Health researchers told a conference in San Antonio, Texas, that they had treated an overweight college student who had come down with scurvy (absence of vitamin C in the student's regular diet of cheese, crackers, cookies and soda). *Reuters*, 1-22-03

## Funky Facts For Bathtime

- To mislead consumers, some companies in the body care industry list "Tea" as an ingredient. In actuality, they're simply abbreviating TriEthanolAmine, an industrial chemical.
- The label reads, "100% of the ingredients in this product are derived from natural sources." This is a frequently used legal wording trick, because everything humans have ever made is via substances we extract from the earth. Technically even radioactive nuclear waste is a material "derived from natural sources."



# ORGANIC BYTES

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

## Watching the Deal Go Down

Is there anyone reading this who doesn't know about the dirty deal done by Nathan Deal, R-GA, last month? "He succeeded in slipping a filthy, little rider into the massive Appropriations bill that would enable agribusiness operations to feed non-organic feed to their animals and still call the food organic." The rider effectively gutted the USDA Organic Standards that were 12 years in the making. The bill passed and will soon become law—but that assault on Organic Standards is now itself under siege.



Responding to an outraged public, Senator Patrick J. Leahy, Democrat of Vermont and Senator Olympia J. Snowe, Republican of Maine co-sponsored the Organic Restoration Act. "I had complaints from 200 producers and processors—from a small Vermont farmer on the Canadian border to General Mills—saying that we cannot have a multi-billion industry go down the tubes by changing the standards," said Leahy. The bill to repeal

Deal's deal now has 60 co-sponsors in the Senate and 48 in the House and will be voted on in the coming weeks. Read all about it:

[www.organicconsumers.org/organic/030703\\_organic.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/organic/030703_organic.cfm)

## Coming Clean: Stop Organic Standards from Being Watered Down

Body care product manufacturers have discovered that words like "natural" and "organic" on a label are an easy way to increase sales—but few consumers are aware that there is virtually no regulation of labeling in the cosmetics industry. For example, under the USDA's Organic Standards for food, you can't count water and salt in the relative weight of ingredients. But with a body-wash or shampoo, you could brew a small amount of organic herbs into water, and suddenly your product is 70% organic! Detergents, made in big, polluting sulfonation plants, can be labeled "soap." Products with the word "Organic" on the label can even contain toxins like sodium laurel sulfate and methyl paraben. In response to this landslide of misleading product labeling, the Organic Consumers Association is launching a massive campaign called Coming Clean, to ensure the same rigorous standards for organic body care products as for food. The OCA is pressuring the Organic Trade Association and the USDA's National Organic Program not to codify or implement such weak and inadequate standards.



Read all about it: [www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/](http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/)



## Raging Hormones

Organic Bytes #6 included a story about the outrageous demand sent to Maine officials by Monsanto, three dairies, and the Biotechnology Association of Maine. They wanted the state Commissioner of Agriculture and the Attorney General to suspend the use of the state's Quality Seal that identifies milk produced without rBGH/rBST. They even requested law enforcement action against the dairies that were using it, for "unfair trade practices."

Maine's officials studied the matter. And then they told the biotech bullies where they could put their artificial hormones. Attorney General G. Steven Rowe informed Monsanto "Consumer choice is not impaired in any way. Rather, consumer choice is broadened. Nor do we believe that advertising milk as having come from cows that have not been treated with rBST or artificial growth hormones is misleading to consumers."

Sure is refreshing when government officials defend the interests of the citizens! Read all about it:

[www.organicconsumers.org/rbgh/030403\\_rbgh\\_label.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbgh/030403_rbgh_label.cfm)

## I Wanna Move To Vermont

The state of Vermont is working its way towards being free of genetically engineered (GE) crops. On March 3, 36 town councils passed resolutions denouncing GE farming and the absence of labels on GE foods. This brings the total number of towns in Vermont, who have officially rejected GE crops, to 69. Many of the towns' ordinances hold GE companies, rather than farmers, liable for environmental, health and financial damages caused by the technology. The town councils are also pressuring state legislators to pass a law that would require GE foods to be labeled. Speaking about the possibility of Vermont being the first state in the U.S. to be GE-free, Jim Moulton of Windham County Genetic Engineering Action Group said, "This would be a tremendous boon to our state's farm economy and to the integrity of Vermont's environment". Read all about it:

[www.organicconsumers.org/GE/030503\\_genetically\\_engineered\\_vermont.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/GE/030503_genetically_engineered_vermont.cfm)

## Uncle Sam's Drug Problem

The Organic Consumers Association and a coalition of other consumer, environmental and farm organizations are taking the US Government to court. Specifically, the groups are concerned about the USDA's lack of control over experimental plants genetically engineered to create pharmaceuticals and industrial chemicals. In the last few months the USDA has announced that there have been at least two incidents in which corn—genetically engineered to create drugs for pigs—contaminated subsequent crops. The USDA caught those contaminated crops before they could enter the food supply, but how long until such an event is missed, and drug-laced cornflakes appear on breakfast tables? How do we know it hasn't already happened, with hundreds of such Frankencorn drug factories operating in secret locations in the middle of the Corn Belt? The coalition of groups is expected to officially file the lawsuit against the USDA within the next few weeks. Read all about it: [www.organicconsumers.org/ge/030503\\_biotech\\_usda.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/ge/030503_biotech_usda.cfm)

For many more food issue daily headlines:

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

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6101 Cliff Estate Road,  
Little Marais, MN 55614  
218-226-4164 · fax: 218-353-7652

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