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Real Food Houston

NEWSLETTER - October 1, 2011

Dear , here's the latest news about food issues, presented by topic, and an update from Real Food Houston - - -

Genetically Modified Organism (GMOs)

Potential Problem with GM Corn Found by University of Illinois Researcher

A researcher from the University of Illinois has found more evidence that GE corn is being damaged by the corn rootworm to which it should be resistant, although the researcher cautions that the resistance has not been proven in the lab. Last month's study, published by Iowa State University, showed that the western corn rootworm survives after eating a corn genetically engineered with a toxin which should kill it. [More ...](#)

California May Vote On GMO Labeling

California may have the opportunity in 2012 to vote on a GMO labeling measure. Many groups are ready to get the required signatures (800,000) to be on the ballot. The groups include The Institute for Responsible Technology, The Organic Consumers Union's [Millions Against Monsanto campaign](#), and the National Organization for Women. Policy established in California is very important because it is often a precursor for what happens in other states. [More ...](#)

What Are GMOs? Many Don't Know

The Huffington Post has a very good article on GMOs if you don't know what they are, how prevalent they have already become, and what are the potential dangers. [More ...](#)

Monsanto Introduces a 'Better' Broccoli

Grist.com says that Monsanto has introduced a 'better' broccoli called Beneforte. This new product was introduced last October and is promoted as healthier than other leading varieties of broccoli. Specifically

Monsanto claims that Beneforte “help[s] maintain your body's defenses against the damage of environmental pollutants and free radicals.” The Grist article points out that environmental pollutants “have increased exponentially as a result of genetic engineering.” [More ...](#)

India is Suing Monsanto for "Biopiracy"

The example given is for eggplant, brinjal in India. There are more than 2,500 different varieties of brinjal grown in India. Monsanto has been trying to market its genetically engineered brinjal called Bt brinjal. Public outcry has led to the Indian government banning Bt Brinjal, but apparently “Monsanto is still stealing native crops, including brinjal, and quietly working on GM varieties of them in test fields, which is a clear violation of India’s Biological Diversity Act (BDA).” It looks like India is way ahead of the USA which is not only not banning GM foods but is actively promoting them, for example, by refusing to label GMO foods. Apparently Indian farmers have destroyed some of Monsanto’s GM test fields. [More ...](#)

False Claims About Benefits of GMOs

The Morung Express provides interesting information about the false claims by GMO proponents, e.g., Monsanto, that GMOs increase crop yields and control pests. The article describes research in India that has shown that GMOS have not produced increased yields. Bt crops that were intended to control pests have led to superweeds and superpests and weeds that are resistant to Roundup. Monsanto’s response to the increased weeds and pests is to pay Indian farmers “to spray even more lethal herbicides such as Agent Orange...” As to Monsanto’s claims that genetic engineering can increase drought tolerance, even the USDA states in its draft assessment “equally comparable varieties produced through conventional breeding techniques are readily available in irrigated corn production reviews.” [More ...](#)

1999 Survey Shows No Cost Savings for GMOs

The Leopold Center For Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University has published a 1999 survey of farmers using GMO and conventional agriculture in Iowa primarily for corn and soybean crops. The reasons farmers gave for using GMOs were increased crop yields, lower pesticide costs, and increased flexibility in planting. However, the survey results showed there was no difference to the bottom line (cost) and the expected crop yields--over half of the farmers cited increased yields as a reason to plant GMOs--were not only not increased and were actually lower for GMO crops. Flexibility could not be determined from the data. If these

were the results in 1999 when GMOs, why would we expect any difference today? [More . . .](#)

USDA Promotes GM Salmon

Grist.org reports that the USDA is promoting GM salmon. The USDA has awarded a \$494,000 grant to AquaBounty Technology to study ways to make their GM salmon sterile. AquaBounty thought it was sure to get FDA approval of the GM salmon in 2010, but the process was delayed by legislators in California and Alaska where GMO labeling is being introduced. The GM salmon have already been shipped to Panama and Canada's Prince Edward Island. AquaBounty acknowledged that their technology of rendering the GM salmon sterile is not yet 100% effective. Friday the company announced Friday a net loss or \$2.8 million and a 'reduction' of three board members. They apparently really need the GM salmon to shore up the company, and the USDA is going to step in and help them by granting the money needed to correct their processes. [More . . .](#)

US and the World Food Program Forces GM Food on Starving Countries in Africa

The Nigerian Observer reports: The US and the World Food Program have been pushing GM food on starving countries in Africa. Some countries asked for non-GMO food aid but were told they should accept the GM food. The article quotes an unnamed US official: "beggars can't be choosers." Many are given the choice of eating GM food or dying. In addition the World Food Program refused to support internal initiatives to supply non-GMO foods. There is much more information provided in the article about the false claims made for GMO crops, such as Bt cotton in Indonesia that did not produce the promised yields and succumbed to drought and pests. [More . . .](#)

Monsanto Spends \$1.71 Million Lobbying the US Federal Government

According to BiofuelsDigest.com, Monsanto, the world's largest seed company, spent \$1.71 million in the second quarter of 2011 (only three months, April, May, and June) to lobby the federal government over regulations. "The Company lobbied Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture over regulations that would affect the distribution of genetically engineered crops like the company's Roundup Ready sugar beets and alfalfa. Monsanto also lobbied the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency on issues surrounding subsidies for the growing ethanol industry.". [More . . .](#)

Raw Milk News

Wisconsin Judge Proclaims People Have No Right to Consume Foods of Their Choice

Wisconsin Judge Patrick J. Fiedler proclaims that cow share program owners do “not have a fundamental right to own and use a dairy cow or a dairy herd.” He also asserted that consumers “do not have a fundamental right to produce and consume the foods of their choice...” Judge Fiedler says that Wisconsin’s position is that raw milk is simply off limits. More at multiple sources:

[TheCompletePatient.com](#)

[NaturalNews.com](#)

[Judge Fiedler's legal response](#)

Wisconsin State Senator Co-sponsors Bill To Remove Most Regulations for Licensed Raw Milk Producers

Maybe there is hope for Wisconsin raw milk drinkers. Wisconsin Ag Connection.com reports that Wisconsin State Senator Glenn Grothman is co-sponsoring a bill that would remove most regulations for licensed producers of raw milk. He says he thinks it will pass next year. The current governor, Scott Walker, has indicated that he would likely sign the bill, similar to one that was vetoed last year by then Governor Jim Doyle.

[More . . .](#)

Review of the International Raw Milk Symposium

NaturalNews.com reviews the International Raw Milk Symposium. There’s a link for downloading (purchasing) the audio from the symposium. Speakers at the symposium included Sally Fallon Morell; Ted Beals, MD; Alan Watson, Catherine Shanahan, MD; Sylvia Onusic; and Michael Schmidt. [More . . .](#)

Acquittal of Michael Schmidt, Canadian Raw Milk Dairy Farmer, Overturned on Appeal

The acquittal of Michael Schmidt, Canadian raw milk dairy farmer, of charges related to the sale and distribution of milk has been overturned on appeal. The decision found him guilty on 15 of 19 charges of which he was acquitted nearly two years ago. He had been acquitted of all charges when a justice of the peace ruled that his program was legitimate and because he was not selling to the public at large but only to customers who were aware of the risks. Schmidt says he will appeal the decision and will continue to operate his dairy business. [More at multiple sources](#).

[The Toronto Star](#)
[CTV News Toronto](#)
[The Complete Patient](#)

Major News Website Reports Children Benefit From Drinking Raw Milk

FoxNews.com reports that a large European study found that “children who drink raw milk are less likely to develop asthma and allergies than those who stick to the safer pasteurized version. . .” Of course, they still add the obligatory cautions and warnings from the US government about the dangers of raw milk, but at least they acknowledged some benefit to drinking raw milk. [More . . .](#)

The Astonishing Story of Real Milk

MotherEarthNews.com takes a look at the history of milk. [More . . .](#)

Sustainable Agriculture

Weeds Found to be Vital to Farmlands

An article on Physorg.com reports ”Weeds are vital to the existence of farmland species, study finds.” Scientists have found that “Since many weeds produce flowers and seed, they are an integral part of our ecosystem and together with other crop and non-crop seeds found on farms, they provide food for over 330 species of insects, birds and animals.” They say “an increase in farm management intensity can lead to a decline of up to 19% in overall seed biomass and energy, which is presumably why agricultural intensification causes many farmland birds to suffer a ‘hunger-gap’ in mid-winter.” [More . . .](#)

Other Interesting Food News

The History of Wheat

Proteinpower.com: The history of human development of wheat is an eye-opener. The review of “Wheat Belly” claims the book is fully referenced and indexed. [More . . .](#)

Houston Woman Sues Pepsico

Courthouse News Service reports that a Houston, TX, woman is suing Naked Juice and maker Pepsico claiming its products are fraudulently labeled as “100% juice,” “all natural,” and “non-GMO.” Apparently the juice container has a large font list of the fruits included giving the impression that the product is all natural. The official ingredients list is in

a much smaller font and includes compounds such as synthetic vitamins, synthetic fibers, and synthetic sweetener. [More . . .](#)

What's Really in Soy Milk

The New Zealand Herald seems to understand what's really in soy milk. The author says it should be called soy imitation milk or soy juice because it really isn't milk at all. Although often touted by those who think they are healthy eaters, soy milk is "the epitome of a processed food. . ." Soy milk includes, at least the brand being reviewed, corn maltodextrin, vegetable oils, cane sugar, synthetic vitamins, and the ubiquitous natural flavor. One good thing about the New Zealand article is that they don't recommend soy milk for infants under 12 months of age because of the phytoestrogens. That's in contrast to the USA where soy milk formula is very commonly used for infants including newborns. [More . . .](#)

And Now, How Some People Still Don't Get It There's Lots of Bad Advice Out There

Denmark Assesses 'Fat Tax' On Butter

The Telegraph, UK, reports that Denmark will start taxing saturated fats, including butter. Hungary has begun taxing all packaged foods containing high levels of sugar, salt, and carbohydrates. Taxing butter and, therefore, most likely encouraging use of dangerous and unhealthy vegetable oils seems a foolish position for a government to take. [More . . .](#)

Sweden's English News Website Recommends Denmark's 'Fat Tax'

The Local, Sweden's English news website, says that Sweden should follow Denmark's example and enact a "fat tax." The author, a leading Swedish nutritionist, does include sugar along with the saturated fat and writes more about excessive consumption of soft drinks and candy than about fat. [More . . .](#)

EzineArticles.com Claims our Paleolithic Ancestors Were Ignorant

EzineArticles.com reports that our paleolithic ancestors ate all parts of the animal because they "did not know about saturated fat" implying that they would not have eaten anything but the lean parts if they knew what we know today about saturated fats. The author claims that those who follow the Paleolithic Diet today will eat only very lean cuts of meat. Dr. Weston A. Price and other researchers found that the healthiest groups of people eat all parts of healthy animals, including fat, organs, and broth made from the bones. [More . . .](#)

Foods to Avoid

This is some of the worst health advice found this week.

HealthJockey.com advises avoiding these high cholesterol foods: egg yolk; animal liver, kidney, or brain; cheese and mayo; ice cream; chocolate mousse; cakes; French fries. Yes, number one and two to avoid are egg yolk and liver, two of the most nutritious foods available to humans. The list seems to be a mixed bag of items, no coherence is detectable. [More ...](#)

How to Select 'Healthy' Restaurants

Here's some more bad advice. NOLA.com tells us how to select the "healthiest" restaurant foods. Among their "healthy" recommendations: trim any visible fat off of a steak; skip the hollandaise; avoid toppings like bleu cheese; avoid heavy cream, butter, and cheese; look for lean protein.

[More ...](#)

Here are the latest posts on Real Food Houston - - -

GMO Foods Should Be Labeled

There's a rally in Austin this Sunday, October 2, to support the requirement to label foods that contain GMOs. The Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA) is supporting the rally. FARFA makes a good point about the FDA's having allowed GM crops to ... [Continue reading →](#)



Southern Cornbread

After finding a good, local source of freshly ground flour and corn meal, I made cornbread, in an iron skillet, of course. I used the cornbread recipe from Nourishing Traditions by Sally Fallon. The organic whole wheat flour and organic ... [Continue reading →](#)

Georgia's Market Downtown

The Houston Chronicle is reporting that Georgia and Rick Bost will open a new restaurant, Georgia's Market Downtown, in early November, located at Main and Prairie. The Bosts are the owners of Georgia's Farm-to-Market grocery store and cafe on the Katy freeway and ... [Continue reading →](#)



Missouri Raw Milk Dairy Closes

There's more than one way to eliminate the small raw milk dairies. There is a war on raw milk, but those attacking raw milk don't always carry guns. The costs of producing safe raw milk were just too high for ... [Continue reading →](#)



5th Annual Farm and Food Leadership Conference, San Antonio

We really enjoyed the two days at the conference in San Antonio's Pearl Stable September 12-13—the presentations, panel discussions, wonderful lunches, and of course, the movie Farmageddon. Monday's keynote speaker was Dr. John Ikerd, author of Sustainable Capitalism, A Return to Common ... [Continue reading →](#)

Rally for Real Food – October 2, 2011

I have just learned about an important event coming up soon. There will be a Rally for Real Food in Austin at the Texas State Capitol on October 2, 2011, from Noon to 3 PM. The rally is promoting a ... [Continue reading →](#)

Let's Help Texas Organic Farmers Devastated by Wildfires

Many Texas organic farmers have been devastated by the wildfires that are raging across the state. Generous Iowa organic farmers have donated "2 truckloads of premium certified organic hay for certified organic producers" to help the Texas organic farmers, but ... [Continue reading →](#)

Forest Metaphor for Government Food Safety Campaign

Piero Sardo has written an excellent post about the high cost of the efforts of the experts to ensure the safety of our food by sterilization, i.e., pasteurizing milk, irradiating meat, etc.. Sardo is the president of the Slow Food Foundation ... [Continue reading →](#)

A Better Way for Coffee Shops

I've learned from a reader that there are two coffee shops in the Houston area that serve unhomogenized, lightly pasturized milk with their coffee. They are Pearland Coffee Roasters and Catalina Coffee Shop. If you really like your coffee, you might ... [Continue reading →](#)

Quick and Easy Salad Dressings—Healthy Too!

Blue cheese dressing I like blue cheese salad dressing but have been avoiding it because almost all commercial brands use soy oil as the base for salad dressings, including mayonnaise. Someone recommended using raw sour cream as a salad dressing, ... [Continue reading →](#)

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