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## *Real Food Houston*

NEWSLETTER - October 15, 2011

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

### ***Raw Milk and Food Rights***

#### **Raw Milk As Contraband in New York City**

Caitlin Van Dusen, a blogger who lives in New York City, has an interesting post about "Contraband Raw Milk." It sounds a lot like prohibition, but it's just MILK? [More from citylore-sensenadthecity . . .](#)

#### **Raw Milk Consumption Going Underground**

Here's another report about underground raw milk consumption. The discussion is about states that prohibit selling raw milk for human consumption, but allow the sale of raw milk for animal consumption, sometimes dyed. Apparently people are sufficiently motivated to drink raw milk that they are willing to drink it dyed blue or green. No state has yet outlawed the consumption of raw milk; only the sale is regulated or prohibited. This article calls it a legal loophole. With their apparent enthusiasm for armed raids, the 'raw milk police' and regulators will surely look for a way to stop this too. The California 'raw milk police' found a way to stop Mark McAfee of Organic Pastures raw milk dairy from interstate selling of his raw milk as 'pet food.' [More from npr.org . . .](#)

#### **CNN Claims No Proven Benefit From Drinking Raw Milk**

CNN Health is still reporting that there are no proven benefits from drinking raw milk. I guess they haven't heard about the recently published European study that showed reduced asthma and allergies in children who drank raw milk. They also ignore the protective factors in the raw milk by saying that "pasteurization is the only effective way of killing most, if not all, harmful bacteria." *AND* they also misrepresent the truth about the number of illnesses resulting from drinking raw milk (we'll assume it's only a manipulation of the data, not outright lying). CNN Health claims "Raw milk is responsible for nearly three times more hospitalizations than

any other foodborne disease outbreak.” However, based on government data, Dr. Ted Beals has found that we are thirty-five thousand times more likely to get sick from other foods than raw milk. [See my [post](#) about Dr. Beals report at Real Food Houston.] [More from cnn.com . . .](#)

### **Dr. Mercola Explains Benefits of Raw Milk**

Care2.com posts an article by Dr. Mercola, “The Science Behind Raw Milk,” which gives good, detailed information about the benefits of raw milk and the reasons not to drink pasteurized, homogenized milk. He also explains how the breed of cow producing the milk is very important—the health benefits of the milk is not equal in all breeds. The better breeds are older breeds, such as Jersey, Guernsey, Asian, and African. The most popular breeds in North American unfortunately are Holsteins and Friesians, which are not as good. All raw goat and sheep milk is of high quality. [More from care2.com . . .](#)

### **Do We Have a Right to Consume Raw Milk?**

The Calgary Herald has a good article about food rights in response to the court decision against Canadian raw milk dairy farmer Michael Schmidt. The judge, in overturning Schmidt’s previous acquittal, declared “The entitlement to consume milk, raw or otherwise, is not a Charter-protected right.” The article also refers to a similar decision in Wisconsin where a judge ruled that people “do not have a fundamental right to . . . produce and consume the foods of their choice.” [More from calgaryherald.com . . .](#)

### **The Crusade Against One of Nature's Glories**

Karen De Coster discusses the raw milk and food freedom issues in her post “The Freedom to Buy and Sell Raw Milk.” She says that the August 2011 raid on Rawesome foods in Venice, California, “came at a time when raw milk alarmism had reached an all-time high. The folks who wish to banish raw milk can’t leave the issue alone, and instead they have ramped up a cacophonous crusade against one of nature’s glories.” She thinks the Rawesome raid was “a test case for the new powers granted to the FDA under the Food Safety Modernization Act.” She refers to Ari LeVaux, a writer for the Atlantic, as saying that food freedom in America is vanishing. She also talks about the FDA campaign to discredit the Tucker Adkins Dairy in South Carolina. [More from mises.org . . .](#)

### **Texas Raw Milk Dairy Farm Featured for Creating Jobs**

Houston Chronicle features a local effort to create jobs. The local Nation of Islam has pooled their efforts to set up Pure Milk Farms in Winnie

Texas, which produces raw milk, eggs, honey, butter, whey protein, and cheese. [More from blog.chron.com . . .](#)

### **Genetically Engineered Foods (GMOs)**

#### **Belize Announces Destruction of Imported GM Corn**

Due to widespread public outcry against Genetically Modified Organisms, the Ministry of Agriculture in Belize has announced that it will destroy (or has already destroyed) imported GM corn. [More from lovefm.com . . .](#) and [More from reporter.bz . . .](#)

#### **Damage to DNA May Be More Extensive Than Previously Thought**

Monsanto whistleblower says that genetically engineered crops may cause disease. The damage to DNA by the process of genetic engineering apparently is more extensive than previously thought. The gene insertion is done by “using a gene gun (particle bombardment).” This process can cause unpredictable changes to the DNA, possibly creating new types of proteins. [There’s much more in this article by Jeffrey Smith . . .](#)

#### **China Suspends Commercialization of GE Crops for 5 to 10 Years**

China has decided to suspend commercialization of genetically engineered crops for the next 5 to 10 years. There’s evidence of increasing caution about GE technology. [More from gmwatch.org . . .](#)

#### **"Natural" Foods Are Misleading**

The Cornucopia Institute has released a report, *Cereal Crimes*, revealing that many products promoted as “natural” actually are contaminated with “toxic agrichemicals and Monsanto’s genetically engineered organisms.” “Unlike the organic label, no government agency, certification group, or other independent entity defines the term “natural” on processed food packages or ensures that the claim has merit. . . . *Cereal Crimes* details how prominent agribusinesses are increasingly using various strategies to create the illusion of equivalence between the “natural” and organic labels to mislead consumers.” Examples given of brands promoted as “natural” while containing genetically engineered ingredients are Kashi (Kellogg’s), Mother’s (PepsiCo), Barbara’s Bakery (Weetabix), and 365 (Whole Foods Market). All contained more than 28% GE ingredients, some were 100%. Even though “natural” products are made with conventional ingredients, manufacturers often price them higher than organic products. [More from cornucopia.org . . .](#)

## **10 Reasons to Avoid GMOs**

Mother Nature Network gives 10 reasons to avoid genetically modified foods. #1 superweeds that can't be killed by common herbicides have been created by high amount of herbicides used on GM crops. #2 because of the superweeds, Monsanto is creating even more powerful herbicides to fight them. #3 new animal research shows that GMOs have adverse effects on organs, especially the liver and kidneys. [More from mnn.com . . .](#)

### **How to Avoid GMOs When Eating Out**

Jeffrey Smith gives advice on how to avoid GMOs when eating out. He says avoid fast-food restaurants; they are the worst offenders since most of their processed food items usually contain soy and corn derivatives. For other restaurants, avoid corn products and tofu, as well as sugar, including most desserts, because plain sugar is mostly from GMO sugar beets. [More from mnn.com . . .](#)

### **GM Seeds and Crops Fail To Deliver**

A new report demonstrates that “genetically modified (GM) seeds and crops have failed to deliver on its advertised promises.” Although advocates of GMOs claim increased crop yields, reduced requirements for pesticides, and better control of weeds, the real experience in many countries has shown that biotechnology has “failed on all fronts.” Since Monsanto owns at least 90% of GM seeds and more than 5,000 patents on GM products, it is viewed as the leader in biotechnology and its role is featured in the report. [More from centerforfoodsafety.com . . .](#)

### **Graphic Illustration of GMOs**

Grist.org has a graphical illustration explaining GMOs. What are GMOs? Why GMOs? GMO Ingredients, etc. [More from grist.org . . .](#)

### **Genetically Engineer (GE) Cotton Genes Found in the Wild in Mexico**

GE cotton genes have been found in the wild in Mexico. This is the third genetically engineered species that has been found established in the wild. The article says that the first two are Brassica and bentgrass, which may indicate that the GE cotton is the fourth, since they may not have been aware of the GE canola recently found in the wild in North Dakota. The GE cotton seeds were found in about a quarter of the 270 samples that were assessed. “One of the contaminated seeds came from a wild plant located 755 kilometres away from the nearest GM cotton plantation.” Other wild GE cotton seeds showed signs of interbreeding because they

had genes from multiple GE plants. [More from environmental-expert.com . . .](#)

### **FDA Approves GE Salmon, Submits Evaluation to White House**

There are several reports that the FDA has approved the commercial production of genetically engineered salmon and submitted an environmental impact evaluation to the White House for its approval. The fish, known as “AquAdvantage” or popularly called “Frankenfish” by many, is produced by Massachusetts-based AquaBounty Technologies. The GE salmon has faced opposition from environmental groups and members of Congress. Since it is not typical to submit FDA approvals to the White House this may be an attempt to address the political controversy of the issue. If approved by the White House, the salmon would become the first GE animal approved for human consumption. More at multiple sources: [American Council on Science and Health](#), [Takepart.com](#), [Openmarket.org](#), and [Supermarketnews.com](#)

### **American Voters Favor Labeling GMOs**

More than 90% of American voters favor labeling of genetically engineered foods; however, under current law, none of these foods will be identified as GMO to the consumer: Monsanto’s Roundup Ready GMO alfalfa, GMO sugar beets, and Syngenta’s GMO ethanol corn, which have all been approved within the last year, and as mentioned above, approval of GMO salmon is under evaluation. [More from ibtimes.com . . .](#)

### **Center for Science in the Public Interest Says GE Products are Beneficial**

Biotechnology Project Director Gregory Jaffe, who works at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, thinks “genetically engineered products are beneficial on the whole.” He also says “the industry has succeeded in improving many food products so far.” Director Jaffe thinks that “regulations governing these products are outdated . . .the full potential of genetic engineering is currently hampered by the system’s regulations.” CSPI is the same organization that was instrumental in pressuring for the removal of coconut oil for popping corn in theaters and the change from beef tallow to vegetable oil for fast food French fries. The organization’s name is misleading at best—Center for Science *in the Public Interest*. [More from yaledailynews.com . . .](#)

### **Houston Farmers Markets**

**Two New Urban Harvest Farmers Markets Open**

Two new Urban Harvest farmers markets are opening. The new market at Sugar Land Town Square debuts November 4-7. The other new market will open Friday, October 28 at Houston Community College Southwest Campus. Although there will be fresh produce, the emphasis appears to be on ready-to-eat foods, a place to take the family for a snack or dinner. The HCC farmers market will have more food trucks and lots of locally prepared foods. [More from yourhoustonnews.com . . .](http://yourhoustonnews.com) and [houstongreenscene.org . . .](http://houstongreenscene.org)

### ***Saturated Fats Are Good!***

#### **Yahoo Answers Says Saturated Fat Doesn't Cause Heart Disease**

Not all Yahoo pages miss the point. [See below, Poor Nutrition Advice] Yahoo Answers actually has good advice about saturated fats. It says “The link between saturated fats & heart health was based on faulty science & has been disproven. Dietary fat, whether saturated or not, is not a cause of obesity, heart disease, or any other chronic disease.” They give 7 reasons to eat more saturated fat, including improved cardiovascular risk factors, stronger bones, and improved liver health. The article gives links to resource material for their statements. [More from answers.yahoo.com . . .](http://answers.yahoo.com)

#### **Myths About Fats Debunked**

Chiropractor Dr. Kevin Lau debunks eight myths about fats. He shows the truth about several misunderstandings about fats. His myth #1: “Heart disease is caused by consumption of cholesterol and saturated fat from animal products while a low-fat, low cholesterol diet is healthier for people.” His answer: “Truth: During the period of rapid increase in heart disease (1920- 1960), American consumption of animal fats declined, but consumption of hydrogenated and industrially processed vegetable fats increased dramatically (USDA-HNIS). The Framington Heart Study is often cited as proof of this myth where residents of Framington, Massachusetts, who ate more saturated fats, cholesterol and calories had the lowest serum cholesterol levels.” Among other myths debunked are that saturated fat clogs arteries, animal fats cause cancer and heart disease, and children benefit from a low-fat diet. [More from health.asiaone.com . .](http://health.asiaone.com)

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#### **What's Really Wrong With Denmark's 'Fat Tax'**

Mens Health News comments on Denmark's new 'fat tax' by saying “the real problem that no one is talking about is how they're targeting the wrong thing.” “Saturated fat isn't bad.” The article refers to the study published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition that “found no

strong association between dietary saturated fat intake and increased risk of cardiovascular heart disease.” I wrote about this study in a [post](#) July 28, 2011. [More from news.menshealth.com . . .](#)

### **The Healthier Life Sees the Real Problem**

UK website, The Healthier Life, comments on the UK’s intent to evaluate Denmark’s ‘fat tax’ for implementation in the UK. As does Mens Health News, this website sees the real problem. “if the mainstream . . . had an inkling of what really sits behind obesity, diabetes and heart disease then they would change their tune from the old 'saturated fat chestnut' and start focusing on refined sugar (high fructose corn sugar included), refined carbohydrates and high-calorie fast foods, as the real culprits!” They go on to say “there is no good evidence that saturated fat increases heart disease or the risk of death!” [More from thehealthierlife.co.uk . . .](#)

### **Poor Nutrition Advice & Other Bad News**

#### **Yahoo Lifestyle's 10 "Healthy" Breakfast Options**

Yahoo Lifestyle gives us 10 ‘healthy’ breakfast options. The choices aren’t all bad, but they do include unwise nutritional recommendations such as using skimmed or low-fat milk, low-fat yogurt, iron-fortified cereal, soy milk, and avoiding butter. Also most of the top 10 items are heavy on low nutrition items like bagels, toast, and cereal. Among better choices are smoked salmon, scrambled eggs, and bacon. [More from uk.lifestyle.yahoo.com . . .](#)

#### **South Beach Diet Author Knows Why We Are Fat**

Dr. Arthur Agatston, author of The South Beach Wake-Up Call, says he knows why “Americans are fatter, and sicker, than ever.” His number one reason is right on—“We eat too many sugary and starchy bad carbohydrates.” However, his number two misses by a wide margin—“We eat too much bad fat” and he defines bad fat as “saturated fats, found predominantly in red meats and full-fat dairy.” He claims that saturated fat is associated with heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. He does understand that “the really bad fats” are trans fats. Other recommendations are better—get more quality sleep and exercise. [More from huffingtonpost.com . . .](#)

#### **World's Largest Nutrition School Says Saturated Fat Contributes to Heart Disease**

The Institute for Integrative Nutrition says that “it’s best to limit the amount of saturated fat you eat—it raises LDL or “bad” cholesterol and

contributes to heart disease.” And this organization claims it’s the World’s Largest Nutrition School! [More from blog.integrativenutrition.com . . .](http://blog.integrativenutrition.com)

### **UK Develops Miracle Milk**

Milk suppliers in the UK are congratulating themselves because they have developed a new “super healthy” milk they call miracle milk. The claim is that the cows are “fed only a natural diet, reducing the amount of harmful fat in their milk.” It’s unclear if the cows are really being fed a natural grass-fed diet as the only specific dietary change is the switch from palm oil to natural seed oils. They conclude the report by saying “Slashing the amount of saturated fat in our diet could drastically reduce the toll of Britain’s biggest killer, heart disease.” [More from express.co.uk . . .](http://express.co.uk)

### **More Info About UK Miracle Milk**

AllAboutFeed.net in reference to the new milk describes a dietary energy supplement Dynalac for dairy cows developed by Ufac-UK to be free from palm oil and palm kernel oil. They say that Dynalac can be “easily incorporated into farm-mixed diets, compounds and blends.” This doesn’t sound like the more natural diet the miracle milk producers are touting. Apparently UK dairies had switched from tallow (yes, beef tallow for dairy cows) to palm oil following the crisis with mad cow disease. Now they’re switching to vegetable oils. There doesn’t appear to be much natural about the cows’ diet. [More from allaboutfeed.net . . .](http://allaboutfeed.net)

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



**Twin Persimmons Farm – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in Grimes County**

I’ve just learned about a vegetable CSA program in the Houston area—Twin Persimmons Farm. If you’re not familiar with a CSA, here’s the Wikipedia definition: A CSA consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farming operation ... [Continue reading →](#)

### **What Does Genetically Engineered (or GMO) Mean?**

After my last post on GMO labeling, I was asked “What are GMOs?” Most people don’t really know much about it, and they certainly don’t know how extensively these organisms have already affected our food supply. To help avoid possible confusion, in this post ... [Continue reading →](#)



## 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 ...

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