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Real Food Houston Newsletter - Nov 1, 2011, Latest posts and food news.

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Real Food Houston Newsletter - November 1, 2011

The latest posts from [Real Food Houston](#) . . .

[Study Shows Low Cholesterol in Women Is Associated With Higher Death
Rate](#)

A Norwegian University study questions the 'common knowledge' that total cholesterol is a strong risk factor for heart disease. The aim of the study was to determine the "strength and validity of total serum cholesterol as a risk factor for mortality as defined by current CVD (cardiovascular ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Could You Give Up Sugar?](#)

October 30, 2011, is the first annual Sugar Addiction Awareness Day, appropriately, since the next day is Halloween when most American children are allowed and even encouraged to stuff themselves with candy. Sugar addiction is real, and wide-spread, and, according to ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Biotech Industry Group Looks for Influential 'Ambassadors'](#)

The UK Guardian is reporting that leaked documents indicate EuropaBio, Europe's largest biotech industry group—members include Monsanto, Bayer, and other GM (genetic modification) companies—is “recruiting high-profile ‘ambassadors’ to lobby European leaders on GM policy.” A draft email among the documents claims to have “have interest” from Sir Bob ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Let's Go, Raw Milk Mamas!](#)

Go mamas! A group of mothers who feed their children raw milk are planning a peaceful demonstration to “defy FDA interstate commerce and food safety law on raw milk in support of farmers across the nation willing to supply fresh ... [Continue reading →](#)

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Real Food News and Food Issues, presented by topic . . .

Raw Milk and Food Rights

Defense Says Raw Food Raid Went Too Far

The investigation that led to the raid on Rawesome foods last summer included “hundreds of hours of manpower by 10 law enforcement and regulatory agencies using hidden video cameras and undercover agents to make covert buys.” All that effort looked more like a major criminal investigation than a raid on a private raw foods club. The defense attorneys have learned more about how the investigation was conducted. Six of the 13 charges against the three defendants are felonies-yes, felonies, for selling raw produce and raw milk to a private buying club. [More from the Los Angeles Times . . .](#)

Things We Take For Granted

The raid on Rawesome foods last summer has caused Ann Gentry to think about the “things we take for granted” like “reading, traveling, entertainment, eating.” “Our freedom to eat and share food is not a given. . .it may land you in jail.” She asks the question “Can it be illegal to eat healthy and share food?” She answers “yes, it can.” She says that the “health laws that close down raw food stores and small producers were designed to control health violations prevalent at factory farms, large scale feedlot operations and large scale distribution systems. They have little to do with the way a community of consenting adults might choose to eat, and whom they might want to share food with.” She must think the Rawesome raid is an isolated incident rather than a war on food rights. [More from the Huffington Post . . .](#)

Farmageddon Inspires Woman With Allergies to Try Raw Milk

Jessica Mosby has eaten almost exclusively organic all her life, but had been having serious allergies for about a year when she learned about Farmageddon's director Kristin Canty. She relates her experiences with buying raw milk and discusses food freedom issues. Since beginning to drink raw milk, she says she is feeling better and has fewer allergy attacks. [More from the WIP . . .](#)

Genetically Engineered Foods (GMOs)

Glyphosate Found in Rainfall

The US Geological Survey found Glyphosate "in more than 60% of air and rain samples taken in Mississippi, Iowa and Indiana, and its breakdown product aminomethylphosphonic acid (AMPA) in more than 50% of samples."

Glyphosate is the herbicide in Monsanto's Roundup. Do we really want our rainfall to be full of herbicide? [More from foodconsumer.org . . .](#)

Research Studies link GE Foods to Allergies, Cancer

Two independent research studies have demonstrated "that genetically engineered foods have resulted in allergenic reactions, fertility consequences and immune issues from GM Bt corn." A study on GM peas was discontinued when "it was learned that they [the GM peas] were causing lung damage in mice." The use of Monsanto's GM-derived rBGH, given to dairy cows to increase milk yield, increases the production of IFG-1 which is a powerful hormone that has been linked to human colon, breast, and prostate cancer.

[More from smashcancer.com . . .](#)

“The GMO Emperor has no Clothes”

A new report states that GM technology has failed based on ground experience in many countries. There is increased indebtedness in South Africa due to the high costs of GM seed and chemicals. Indian farmers have had increased suicides because of the costs of GM technology. There have been increases of Roundup resistant weeds and a dramatic increase in the use of glyphosate (the herbicide in Monsanto's Roundup) while use of more toxic chemicals has not declined. The GM promise of lower pesticide requirements has not proven true. [More from ENews Park Forest . . .](#)

GM Sweet Corn To Be In Stores Next Year

Monsanto's GM sweet corn was approved in August. The sweet corn is “Monsanto's first commercial combination of its biotechnology with a consumer-oriented vegetable product.” The USDA “didn't test it for safety or require it to be tested by Monsanto, since the three genetic modifications – Roundup Ready herbicide tolerance and two for insect resistance [corn borer and rootworm] – had been separately approved in other crops in 2005 and 2008.” The first distribution will target fresh corn market in the eastern U.S., or about 40% of the sweet corn market. Until now, only about 10% of sweet corn for sale in produce aisles at the grocery store were genetically modified; however, almost all corn used for processed foods and animal feed are already GM. In fact, here's a list of some of the products that already contain corn or corn derivatives: baby food, breakfast cereals, candies, canned vegetables, cheese spreads, chewing gum, chocolate products, corn chips, and instant coffee. [More from eatdrinkbetter.com . . .](#), [Human Events . . .](#) and [gmwatch . .](#)

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Petition Being Prepared to Ban Monsanto's GM Sweet Corn

A coalition of health, food safety and environmental organizations are petitioning to ban Monsanto's genetically modified sweet corn. Monsanto claims that "The safety and benefits of biotech sweet corn products—as well as other biotech crops—is well established." Opponents are worried about the environmental and health risks as well as the herbicide resistant crops causing the growth of superweeds. [More from Reuters . . .](#)

Mosquitos Genetically Engineered to Kill Offspring Have Been Released

The mosquitos have been "engineered to pass a lethal gene to their offspring, killing them before they reach adulthood." The intent is to use GE insects to control "insect-borne diseases, including dengue fever and malaria." There is concern that the mosquitos will not perform as intended. [More from the New York Times . . .](#)

Philippines Plans to Introduce GE Golden Rice

The Golden Rice has been genetically engineered to contain beta carotene and is intended (so they say) to reduce vitamin A deficiency. Along with the other potential problems of all GE foods, the government is apparently unaware that beta carotene does not have a high conversion rate to vitamin A. Since the conversion rate can be as low as 2%, a person would need to eat quite a lot of this rice to get any significant increase in vitamin A intake. A more likely motive for the introduction of the GE rice is to increase profit to the manufacturers who produce and sell the seed. [More from the The Los Angeles Times . . .](#)

Saturated Fats And Cholesterol

Debunking the Cholesterol “Science”

Dr. Mercola explains how the misinformation about high cholesterol and high-fat diets causing heart disease began. Apparently it all started more than 100 years ago with a German pathologist Rudolph Virchow who found arterial plaques in corpses and “theorized that cholesterol in your blood led to the development of plaques in your arteries.” He analyzes the Seven Countries’ Study, The Framingham Heart Study, the MrFit Study, and many more. He also explains how statins work and why they don’t prolong your life. [More from mercola.com . . .](#)

Writers of Cholesterol Guidelines Have Conflicts of Interest

A recent study found that “Half of experts who write clinical practice guidelines for diabetes and high cholesterol have financial conflicts of interest with the drug industry,” Of 288 panel members, 52% had conflicts of interest. A financial conflict was defined as “direct compensation to a guideline panelist by a manufacturer of a drug used to treat the disease of interest in the guideline.” The study looked at 14 guidelines published between 2000 and 2010. Other studies have shown similar bias. [More from American Medical News . . .](#)

Study Shows Association Between Impulsivity and Low Cholesterol

The study found “lower total cholesterol levels were significantly associated with increased attentional impulsivity, particularly among patients with levels below 165 mg/dl. Study author Alfonso Troisi writes in the journal Psychiatry Research that “attentional/cognitive impulsivity is a demonstrated risk factor for suicide, patients presenting with low cholesterol and mood symptoms may warrant increased clinical attention and surveillance.” [More from The Weston](#)

[A. Price Foundation . . .](#)

Sugar and Not Fat is the Problem

“Despite years of research and drug therapy, . . .heart disease remains the second leading cause of death, behind only cancer.” Two reasons are given. One, the drugs given to prevent heart disease treat only the symptoms, and two, there are “widespread misconceptions among doctors and patients alike about the causes of heart disease.” According to a medical research published in the American Heart Journal, “75 percent of heart patients have normal cholesterol at the time of the heart attack . . .In fact, people with low cholesterol levels, particularly the elderly, tend to develop plaque in the arteries and suffer heart attacks.” They say that the commonly believed culprit, saturated fats, are not the real problem and that “the main dietary causes of plaque in the arteries are sugar and trans fatty acids.” [More from the Scope . . .](#)

Food Safety

In the last week or so there has been a flurry of articles warning against unsafe conditions on small farms and bemoaning the ‘gaps’ in the Food Safety Modernization Act which exempts small producers from some of the new regulations. Wonder who or what is behind this? Here are some examples:

Food Safety Rules for Small Farms

Food Safety News discusses the difficulties of bringing big food safety rules to small farms. Although FSN is promoting “Bridging the GAP” it admits that these standards “are often daunting or even prohibitive to small and mid-size farmers.” GAP (Good Agriculture Practices) “is a set of protocols approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that farmers can follow to prove they're

growing and harvesting in a way that minimizes the risk of crop contamination.”

[More from foodsafetynews.com . . .](#)

Dangers Claimed for Local and Organic Foods

Many news media picked up an Associated Press article that warned about the dangers of local and organic food. The expressed concern is that small farms have been exempted from the Food Safety Modernization Act. The article quotes Erik Olson of the Pew Health Group saying, “Unfortunately, there are regulatory gaps, with some producers being completely exempt from FDA safeguards.” The [Pew Health Group](#) website says about Food Safety “Pew seeks to reduce health threats from food-borne pathogens by **strengthening federal government authority and enforcement of food safety laws.**”

[emphasis mine] In other words, they want more and stronger government control of the food system. Some of the prominent media that promoted the article are Fox News, USA Today Your Life, Yahoo!News, Onewnewspage. Read the complete article on [Fox News . . .](#)

Food Ingredient Safety Determined by Industry Alone

At least 3,000 food ingredients have been claimed to be safe by private companies and industry trade associations, without any federal review. “The ingredients include everything from artificially synthesized chemicals used in chewing gum to grape seed extract used in cheese and instant coffee.” The FDA puts responsibility for safety on food manufacturers, and the manufacturers are not required to tell the FDA everything they find out about the ingredients. Story found at multiple sources. [More from Google News . . .](#)

“Super Broccoli Health Warning”

Monsanto's *Beneforte*, super broccoli, has been engineered to have three times more glucoraphanin than normal broccoli. Researchers claim that glucoraphanin reduces cholesterol (do we really need to reduce it?) and helps fight cancer. There are potential dangers to excess glucoraphanin that the researchers either don't know about or are ignoring. Glucoraphanin is in a "class of substances called goitrogens . . . which were once blamed as a primary cause of goiter . . . Goitrogens can harm the thyroid by increasing the body's need for iodine, depleting its reserves, potentially causing other thyroid issues." The problem is of concern for those with thyroid issues and also for nursing mothers because goitrogens can limit the body's ability to transfer iodine into the milk for the baby. A study from the University of Chicago has suggested that an excess of glucoraphanin might cause "chromosome damage and not only to cancer cells." [More from economicvoice.com . . .](#) and [Chris Masterjohn . . .](#)

Fluoridation

US Cities Beginning to Reverse Water Fluoridation

Cities around the country are finally stopping the poisoning of their water supply by voting to remove fluoridation. Among those cities and counties that have recently ended their municipal water fluoridation are Fairbanks, Palmer City, and Juneau, AK; Pinellas county (Tampa, FL); College Station, TX; Hohenwald, TN; Pottstown, PA; and Spring Hill, TN. The move is on to healthier water. When will Houston wake up about the dangers of municipal water fluoridation? [More from Natural News . . .](#)

Veganism/Vegetarianism

Debunking the "Benefits" of a Plant-Based Diet

A post reviewing the vegetarian film *Forks Over Knives* provides an excellent explanation about what's wrong with the movie's "facts." Denise Minger says about the film: "Roger Ebert calls it 'a movie that could save your life.' I call it a movie that deftly blends fact and fiction, and has lots of pictures of vegetables." She subtitles her review "the longest movie review you'll ever attempt to read." To give just one example of how she examines the film's "facts," let's look at the film's description of "dietary cholesterol, which is only found in animal foods like meat, eggs, and dairy products, it tends to stay in the bloodstream. This so-called plaque is what collects on the inside of our blood vessels and is the major cause of coronary artery disease." Her response:

Yikes! Did we slip and fall back into the '80s?

For starters, cholesterol from animal foods does not have some magical ability to set up permanent camp in your bloodstream and turn into plaque, just by sheer virtue of its animal-foodness. This was a common line of thought decades ago, but as research progressed, we figured out that the body is actually pretty awesome at regulating cholesterol production in response to what we ingest from food. As this paper from 2009 explains, the supposed link between dietary and serum cholesterol stems from studies that had fundamental design flaws, failed to separate the effects of cholesterol different types of fat intake, or were performed on animals that are obligate herbivores (hey there, rabbits!). The doctors in "Forks Over Knives," it seems, are among the few stragglers who still believe dietary cholesterol is harmful.

You can see from this quotation that the review is written with lots of wit..

Denise also includes plenty of backup charts, references, and data. It's worth reading--it is long. [I found this review through Cheeseslave.com.] [Read the entire review at rawfoodsos.com . . .](#)

Poor Nutrition Advice

Cholesterol Less Than 200 Is Best

The FamilyDoctor.org says that total cholesterol below 200 is best, 200 to 239 is borderline high, and 240 or more means increased risk for heart disease. They do distinguish between “good” and “bad” cholesterol, but they never mention that these so-called “high” cholesterol levels have never been shown to correlate to heart disease in women, and that only a small correlation exists for middle aged men. They also don't mention the principle reason for designating 200 as the upper limit for safe cholesterol levels was to ensure enough people were eligible for testing of cholesterol lowering drugs. [See my [post](#) about about a study by Norwegian University.] [More from the FamilyDoctor . . .](#)

Dr. Oz Helps Woman Lower Cholesterol

Cheryl McPherson's doctor wanted to prescribe medication to lower her cholesterol; however, she was selected as a participant in an episode of “The Dr. Oz Show” in an experiment to lower cholesterol by eating only fresh raw foods, nuts, and drinking water. Dr. Oz was probably doing her more harm than good by trying to lower her cholesterol. Again see my [post](#) about the Norwegian University study. No study has ever shown high cholesterol to be a risk factor for women, and low cholesterol (under 193) in women is associated with a higher all-cause mortality rate. Would you want Dr. Oz to ‘help’ you lower your cholesterol? [More from MyCentralJersey . . .](#)

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