



ORGANIC BYTES

October 4, 2007 · Issue 119
www.organicconsumers.org

Food and Consumer News Tidbits with an Edge... From the Organic Consumers Association
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Alert: Aurora Threatens OCA with Lawsuit

Just when we thought it couldn't get any hotter (or any more mind-boggling), the "organic" dairy factory farm controversy reached a new level of intensity over the past week.

The USDA announced, to the disappointment of the organic community, that they were not going to take further disciplinary measures against Aurora Organic Dairy, a company that just a few weeks ago had a portion of its organic certification suspended by the USDA for "willfully" violating National Organic Standards since 2003 by failing to pasture its animals and by bringing conventional calves onto its feedlots and then declaring them organic. But caving in to pressure from Aurora and other big corporate players in the organic sector, the USDA now says the #1 organic private label dairy processor in the US can continue selling milk produced on its factory farms as "organic" to its long-standing customers including Target, Wal-Mart, Costco, Safeway, and Woodstock Farms.

In a mind-twisting manipulation of logic, the new acting Secretary of Agriculture, Chuck Connors, a notorious cheerleader for biotech and corporate agribusiness, announced last week that this issue, regarding Aurora's violation of the USDA National Organic Standards, falls outside the scope of the USDA National Organic Standards. "I know there is controversy out there on a number of issues that really fall outside the bounds, if you will, of what constitutes that organic standard that is necessary in order for the product to have our seal," said Connors.

Now that they have the USDA in their pocket, Aurora is threatening to sue the Organic Consumers Association and Cornucopia Institute for educating and mobilizing consumers to oppose Aurora's blatant violations of organic integrity.

In related news, the recent issue of *Fortune Magazine* reports Aurora's factory farms generated a record 100 million dollars in "organic" dairy sales to consumers this year. In other words, when it comes to suing the OCA, Aurora has plenty of money, from selling its cheap "organic" factory farm milk to Wal-Mart, Target, Costco, and Safeway.

Given this David versus Goliath situation, OCA needs your financial support today, to defend this attack by Aurora and to expose the ongoing negligence of the USDA, and to safeguard organic standards and protect the rights of organic consumers and family farmers.

Donate online at: www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm



Aerial photo of Aurora "organic" dairy factory farm
courtesy of Cornucopia Institute

Grassroots Victory: Kellogg Cleans Up Its Act

Caving to the threat of a lawsuit over the company's marketing practices, Kellogg has announced a new sweeping policy that will shift the company's nutritional guidelines and set a new standard for the food industry.

Under the new guidelines, all products marketed to children under the age of 12 must contain a maximum of 200 calories, 2 grams of saturated fat, 230 milligrams of sodium, 12 grams of labeled sugar and 0 grams of labeled trans fat per serving.

Currently, 50 percent of Kellogg products marketed to children fail to meet their new criteria. The company says implementation will begin immediately. Twenty-seven percent of Kellogg's advertising budget goes to marketing to children under the age of 12.

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_5651.cfm

Quote of the Week: Inner City Youth Working Towards Sustainability

"I agree with you that there aren't any throw-away species or resources, but you agree with me there aren't any throw-away children or neighborhoods, right? So we need to get these movements working together."

-Van Jones, speaking to Julia Butterfly Hill about a new bill he helped pass that trains inner city kids in the solar, wind, and other sustainability-related industries.

WEB VIDEOS OF THE WEEK

• Turning from Oil to Organics

Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous elected leader since the Spanish conquest 470 years ago, has nationalized his nation's oil and gas revenues to fund a radical shift towards sustainable agriculture and programs to assist the impoverished. And he's accomplished all of this in eight short months in office. Of course, the White House and multinational corporations vehemently oppose Morales' populist platform, but, for the rest of us, nationalizing oil and cutting military spending to fund a country's shift towards sustainability is truly inspiring. Watch this interview with the *Daily Show's* Jon Stewart: www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7437.cfm

• True Lies

How are organics, health, justice and sustainability tied to the "War on Terror", global warming, and us foreign and domestic policies? Let Taalam Acey show you in this inspiring three minute spoken word piece: www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7435.cfm

• Breaking the Chains, Fighting Global Warming, & Ending the War

Hello Artists, Revolutionaries, Costumed Rabble-Rousers, Puppetistas, Radical Cheerleaders, Freeway Banner-Makers, Political Thespians, Cultural Creatives, Filmmakers, Photographers, Musicians, Singers, Dancers, Poets & All! Introducing OCA's new creative partner, **The Backbone Campaign**. Watch the short *Meet the Backbone Campaign* video to learn more about their exciting work. We look forward to working together to create a future worthy of our children. To get involved, join the Lumbar Club: <https://secure.groundspring.org/dn/index.php?aid=19548>

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Air Fresheners Found to Contain Toxic Chemical

A recent study by the Natural Resources Defense Council found that 12 out of 14 air fresheners tested positive for harmful levels of phthalates, which are known to cause reproductive problems and hormone disruption in humans. Neither the FDA nor the EPA conducts any spot checking of toxic chemicals in air freshener products. Of the tested products, the only two products that did not contain phthalates were Febreze Air Effects and Renuzit Subtle Effects. The other twelve products tested positive even though some of the products were labeled natural. www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7326.cfm

Getting Involved with Creative Actions

Hop into the OCA Forum to join the discussion about how to plug into creative actions already underway, including,

- Reverse Trick-or-Treating (October 31)
- Step It Up (November 3)
- International Day of Action Against Big Box Stores (November 17)
- Focus the Nation (January 31)
- Today's Opportunities to Plant Peace

Every day is a new opportunity to plant peace and take action to put an end to war and military madness while greening and re-localizing the global economy. Today, Organic Consumers Association urges you to ask your Senators and Congressperson sign on to the Peace Pledge and bring a rapid end to the bloody trillion dollar war in Iraq by refusing to give President Bush any more money than he needs to bring the troops home now.

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7455.cfm

When you get a chance, please take a look at OCA's **Planting Peace** homepage where new articles are posted daily: www.plantingpeace.us and join the discussion in the Planting Peace Web forum:

organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showforum=32

Please Donate to the OCA

As a nonprofit, we need your donations so we can continue to move forward.

You can donate online at: www.organicconsumers.org/donations.htm

Or mail your tax deductible donation to the OCA:

Organic Consumers Association

6771 South Silver Hill Drive · Finland, MN 55603

Or by phone: 888-403-1007 (toll free).

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