



## Happy Regime Change

The most important election in 100 years is finally over, with the overwhelming majority of organic consumers across the US standing together and voting for candidates like Barack Obama and a range of other progressive candidates advocating peace, justice, health, and sustainability. As we celebrate our hard fought and well-deserved victory, let's keep in mind that the battle for Organic Transitions has just begun. We need to press the new Obama administration, and all of our newly elected officials, in their first 100 days in office, to take decisive steps to address our interrelated climate, energy, food, health, war and economic crises. OCA's agenda for a new food and farming system is brilliantly articulated in Michael Pollan's recent article in the *New York Times*, "Farmer in Chief". Please read this inspiring essay: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_15101.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15101.cfm) and stay tuned to *Organic Bytes* and our website for important news, analysis, and Action Alerts.

### Alerts from Our Allies:

**Consumers Union:** A vote is scheduled in Washington in two weeks on what kind of fish can be labeled organic. Tell the NOSB that organic fish must meet the same high standards as all other organic products and livestock. Take action at [notinmyfood.org](http://notinmyfood.org)

**Health Freedom Foundation:** It's time to support wellness and healthcare reform. H.CON.RES.406 is an important resolution currently being debated in Washington, DC. It will sharpen the focus on the debate to reform US healthcare. Take action at [ga4.org/campaign/House\\_406](http://ga4.org/campaign/House_406)

### Organic Bytes Readers Talk Back

An *Organic Bytes* reader writes: "I am confused. In *Organic Bytes* issue #149, you say you are opposed to bringing heifers from conventional farms to organic farms? I choose organic milk because I don't want to cause suffering to milk cows. Surely allowing young cows to escape the confinement, subjection to rBGH, etc., of conventional farming is in those cows best interest?"

**OCA responds:** Yes, we do agree with you and would like to clarify. The USDA National Organic Standards include provisions that allow farmers to "transition" their herds from conventional to organic. Conventionally raised animals can be shifted to a pasture-based organic diet, and gradually transitioned into what would be considered "organic". These animals can be used for dairy production, but their meat cannot be marketed as "USDA Organic". Unfortunately, a number of larger scale producers, like Horizon and Aurora, have taken advantage of this loophole in the USDA Organic Standards by continually increasing or replacing milk cows on their farms with conventional calves or heifers from conventional farms. The OCA wants to close this loophole by stipulating that once a dairy is certified as organic all of its additional cows must then be raised organically from birth.



#### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We all blew it, including me as president... It is crazy for us to think we can develop countries around the world without increasing their ability to feed themselves." -Bill Clinton, speaking to the United Nations last week about the global food crisis. Clinton acknowledged that subsidies for chemical-intensive crops, such as corn, and the biofuels boondoggle (converting food crops into fuel crops) are a disaster, leading to spiraling grain and food prices and mass hunger. Sign OCA's petition calling for a moratorium on agrofuels incentives: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_15425.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15425.cfm)

## OCA's Organic Transitions Campaign

OCA is proud to announce the launch of a long-term North American campaign: **Organic Transitions**, designed to mobilize organic consumers and local communities to plan and implement food, transportation, energy, and education strategies that will enable us to thrive in the turbulent times ahead. Organic food and farming will provide the healthy cornerstone for a new, more localized, green economy. Contact OCA about organizing an Organic Transition committee in your community at the **Organic Transitions** web page: [www.organicconsumers.org/transitions/](http://www.organicconsumers.org/transitions/) and read the following essay by OCA director Ronnie Cummins, a call to action to begin this transition:

### Organic Transitions: Beyond the Gloom & Doom of Economic Depression, Climate Change, and Peak Oil

A critical mass of people are waking up to the fact that we must get organized and find holistic solutions, not mere band-aids, for our crisis. Millions of us are heartened by the indisputable fact that organic, green, commonsense solutions for all of our life-or-death problems are at hand, including appropriate technology and innovative public policy and legislation. We don't have to wait for Washington bureaucrats or corporate marketers to tell us what to do.

We can join together with our fellow citizens and begin the absolutely essential process of organizing Organic Transitions committees and campaigns in our local areas, starting with local organic food buying clubs, house parties, and study and action circles. Read the full essay: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_15140.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15140.cfm)

### Starbucks Doubles Fair Trade Coffee Purchases

For the past eight years, OCA has mobilized tens of thousands around the world to pressure Starbucks, the largest purveyor of coffee in the world, to get rid of rBGH-tainted milk and substantially increase its sales of organic and Fair Trade coffee. In early 2008, Starbucks announced it would no longer source milk from dairies injecting their cows with Monsanto's GE hormone, rBGH. Adding to this victory, the company announced it would be doubling its purchases of certified Fair Trade coffee to 40 million pounds in 2009. This is a major victory for OCA and our allies, as well as coffee farmers and consumers around the world. "This commitment from Starbucks could not have come at a better time for coffee farmers as they face the threat of climate change, higher prices and brace themselves for a global slowdown," said Rob Cameron, CEO of the Fairtrade Labeling Organization International. [organicconsumers.org/starbucks/index.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/starbucks/index.cfm)

### Gardening and Fitness

An OCA web forum participant posted this question: "Does anyone know a proven way to reduce weight?" Among the scores of suggestions from forum participants here's an interesting one: "Become an avid organic gardener. You will burn so many calories doing what you love, that you will reduce your weight and improve fitness. Also your new diet will include the fruits of your labor—which will make you healthier. A disdain for junk food will naturally ensue." Join in on this and hundreds of other discussions at [organicconsumers.org/forum/](http://organicconsumers.org/forum/)

### Please Donate

We need your support today to continue fighting for the rights of organic farmers & consumers! [organicconsumers.org/donations.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/donations.cfm)