



Alert: Domestic Fair Trade Means Supporting Workers Rights

The economy is in shambles, poverty is on the rise, and corporate exploitation of labor is still the norm, even in the \$70 billion organic and natural food and farming sector. In comparison to Europeans, American workers—especially in the farm and food sector—are routinely underpaid, deprived of healthcare and childcare benefits, and kept in line by pro-corporate, anti-worker labor laws that make it next to impossible to organize a union and provide a countervailing power to billion dollar corporations. The Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), introduced in Congress this week, would provide a simple European-style "card check" union sign-up for workers, including penalties against companies that refuse to engage in collective bargaining, or illegally fire or intimidate employees in an attempt to prevent them from forming a union.

Fair Trade is not just something that should apply to workers overseas. The Organic Consumers Association (OCA) believes that Fair Trade is for everyone. That's why OCA is educating and campaigning for "domestic Fair Trade" and a "sustainable supply chain," that includes greening American commerce and employment and advancing workers rights. The Employee Free Choice Act, supported by President Obama and the majority of both houses in Congress, is an important first step to strengthen our economy and promote social justice. Visit OCA's Employee Free Choice Act action center:

www.organicconsumers.org/efca.cfm

Congress to Pass Bill Outlawing Organic Farming?

This week, we received numerous calls and emails from OCA supporters who came across alarming YouTube videos and emails circulating on the internet that claimed a new food safety bill (HR 875) introduced in Congress would make "organic farming illegal." Although the Bill certainly has its shortcomings, it is an exaggeration to say that is a secret plot by Monsanto and the USDA to destroy the nation's alternative food and farming system. In actuality, HR 875, the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009, is a limited-vision attempt by moderate Democrats and Republicans to craft food safety legislation to address the out-of-control filth and contamination that are inherent in our industrialized, now globalized, "profit-at-any-cost" food system.

This being said, OCA does not support HR 875 in its present form, given the fact that, if the bill's regulations were applied in a one-size-fits-all manner to certified organic and farm-to-consumer operations, it could have a devastating impact on small farmers, especially raw milk producers who are already unfairly targeted by state food-safety regulators.

Although the OCA deems this bill as somewhat well-intentioned, we are calling on Congress to focus its attention on the real threats to food safety: globalized food sourcing from nations such as China where food safety is a joke and domestic industrial-scale and factory farms whose collateral damage includes pesticide and antibiotic-tainted food, mad cow disease, E.coli contamination and salmonella poisoning. And, of course, Congress and the Obama Administration need to support a massive transition to organic farming practices.

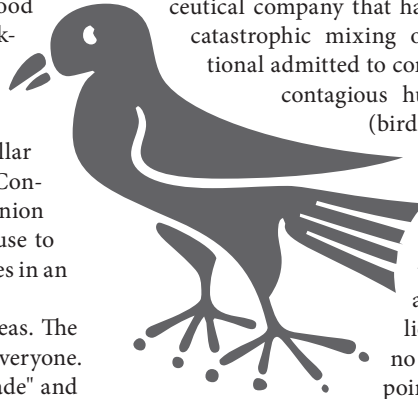
Pocket Guide to Safe Personal Care Products

As noted in last week's *Organic Bytes*, the OCA released a new study that exposes levels of the petrochemical carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane in leading conventional as well as "natural" brands of personal care and household cleaning products. This cancer-causing contaminant is all too frequently found in products directly applied to the skin, but it is not listed on ingredient labels, making it difficult for consumers to avoid potentially dangerous products. To help protect the health of your family and the environment, the OCA's study results have been put together in a user-friendly printable consumer pocket guide that fits neatly into any wallet. Find your 1,4-Dioxane Pocket Guide at: organicconsumers.org/bodycare/ShoppersSafetyGuide.pdf

Avian Flu Virus Contamination in Lab Nearly Sets Off Pandemic

The World Health Organization is investigating a European pharmaceutical company that has confessed to carrying out a potentially catastrophic mixing of experimental viruses. Baxter International admitted to contaminating a mix of common and highly contagious human flu viruses with a deadly avian (bird) flu virus. The resulting mix was allegedly accidentally mislabeled and shipped out of the company's facilities where it was used to intentionally create infections. If left undiscovered, this scientific malfeasance could have triggered a pandemic that would have killed millions of humans. Investigators say there is no threat of further contamination, at this point, but that the investigation will continue.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17198.cfm



Web Video of the Week

Faulty Drug Tests Trigger Arrests of Organic Consumers, Producers

Before there was a war on raw milk producers and non-GMO farmers, there was a war on drugs. As the new study *False Positives Equal False Justice* explains, because field drug tests used by police officers are so faulty, it's likely that something in your pocket, home, or car could be used by a malicious or ignorant cop to trigger a false-positive drug test and provide the basis for your arrest. It's happened to a consumer of organic soap and makers of organic raw chocolate. Unless we get the police to stop using faulty drug tests, it could happen to you.

Read the full story and watch the video at organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17136.cfm

Depression Survivor Offers Sustainability Advice

C. Ruth C. posted the following comment in OCA's web forum:

"I eat all natural foods and I'm still active and healthy at age 86... Last week I planted three more dwarf fruit trees so I now have 12 of various kinds. I cook my food and don't eat out of a box. I home can, dry, and freeze my surplus summer foods. Just like your great-grandmother used to do. I grow a small vegetable garden and also a medicinal herb garden. Everything is organic. I've studied herbs for some years. I grew up during the Depression of the 30s and I can do it again. People can be surprised how many things they can do without when it comes down to food. But we need the small organic farmers. I'm thankful I found your web site. Keep up the good work."

Read more and join the discussion: organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php

Your OCA Support is Bringing Positive Change

The Organic Consumers Association is your voice and advocate for progressive change. OCA takes great pride in providing you with success stories, nearly every week, showing you how your online activism and financial donations are directly bringing about positive change. Our success stories are the common victories of our 850,000-strong national network.

In order to continue pushing for positive change in the realms of health, social justice, and sustainability, we need your contributions. If you are unable to donate, please help spread the word about OCA to friends, family and colleagues. Please donate today! organicconsumers.org/donations.cfm