



OCA Announces Summer Study Tours in the Central Highlands of Mexico

The Organic Consumers Association invites you to join other organic activists this summer at the beautiful organic farm and eco-center of our sister organization, Via Organica. "The Organic Way", in the central highlands of Mexico. Meet OCA Director Ronnie Cummins and other staff members during these seven-day study tours at the Via Organica Farm School & Conference Center outside San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato. This unforgettable experience will inspire and energize you, providing tools, contacts, and knowledge for the challenges ahead.

Seven-Day Tours Include:

- ◆ Organic Farming and Green Building Workshops with Via Organica Staff and Mexican Organic Activists.
- ◆ Fresh Organic Meals, Beautiful Accommodations, Thermal Swimming Pool.
- ◆ Visits to Organic Farms, Stores, Restaurants, Green Buildings, and Community Organizing Projects.
- ◆ Visits to World Heritage sites and other attractions in nearby San Miguel de Allende and Atotonilco.

Learn more: www.organicconsumers.org/tours/

EPA to Mandate Endocrine Disruptor Tests

For the first time, the Environmental Protection Agency is requiring pesticide manufacturers to test a number of widely used chemicals to determine whether or not they disrupt the endocrine system. Although spokespeople for the pesticide industry claim they are not worried about the results, scientists like Dr. Tyrone Hayes of UC Berkeley have already discovered that exposure to small amounts of common pesticides can cause sex changes in frogs.

The EPA's mandatory review was set into motion in the late 1990s with the passage of the Food Quality Protection Act, but it has taken nearly a decade for the agency to take action. Now that the process is underway, 67 commonly used chemicals in pesticides will be tested over the next two years, and it will take approximately one year to assess the data and draw up recommendations.

The OCA has put heavy pressure on the EPA to review these chemicals, and we thank all of you who have taken part in our related action alerts. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17569.cfm

How to Avoid MSG

Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is one of the most common and hazardous food additives on the market. MSG is reportedly more toxic than alcohol, tobacco and many drugs. MSG is an excitotoxin, so it tricks your brain into wanting to eat more and more foods containing the ingredient, even if you are already full.

Side effects of MSG include: obesity, eye damage, headaches, depression, fatigue and disorientation. Food manufacturers know that health-conscious consumers try to avoid MSG, so it is oftentimes not listed in a product's ingredients. MSG is banned in organic foods.

www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17608.cfm

THESE INGREDIENTS ALWAYS CONTAIN MSG:

- ▶ Autolyzed Yeast
- ▶ Calcium Caseinate
- ▶ Gelatin Glutamate
- ▶ Glutamic Acid
- ▶ Hydrolyzed Protein
- ▶ Monopotassium Glutamate
- ▶ Monosodium Glutamate
- ▶ Sodium Caseinate
- ▶ Textured Protein
- ▶ Yeast Extract
- ▶ Yeast Food
- ▶ Yeast Nutrient

OCA Submits Comments on Organic Fraud to NOSB

In advance of the twice-yearly public meeting of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), May 4-6 in Washington, DC, the Organic Consumers Fund (OCF) submitted written comments on April 20 detailing fraud in the organic personal care products market. Unlike organic foods, many personal care products are falsely marketed as "organic" without meeting USDA standards. (Consumer Tip: Look for products with the "USDA Organic" seal). We are urging the NOSB to push the USDA to use its enforcement power to go after marketers of shampoos, cosmetics and other personal care products that are committing organic fraud. Thanks to each of you who have helped us develop the OCF's comments to the NOSB. We will continue to solicit your input until we present OCF's testimony. Issues the NOSB will be discussing include biodiversity on organic farms, inert atmospheric gases in organic food packaging, a peer review board to monitor the USDA National Organic Program, and whether current organic rules ban nanotechnology.

Another important issue is whether organic processors should continue to be allowed to use conventional soy lecithin now that organic soy lecithin is available. Organic consumers expect the highest percentage possible of organic ingredients in their organic foods, which is why the OCF wants the NOSB to remove the exemption for conventional soy lecithin. We want to know what you think. To have your thoughts incorporated into OCF's oral testimony at the NOSB meeting, please go to the OCA's Forum to post your comments: organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=2635

Headlines of the Week

The Recession Changes the Eco-Friendly Movement

Although many equate green consumerism with hefty expenses (i.e. hybrids, solar panels, high-priced organic foods, etc.), the truth is that with the right mind-set living green and living economically can go hand in hand.

Eating Local Means Figuring out Your 'Food Miles'

"Your green car may get 40 mpg, but how many miles per bite was your lunch? 'Food miles' are how far food travels from the producer to your home. Transportation of food requires copious amounts of fossil fuels and other resources that contribute to global warming and pollution, so the lower the food mileage we rack up, the better..."

Monsanto's Crops Spawning Superweed Epidemic in us.

"Superweeds" are plaguing high-tech Monsanto crops in southern us states, driving farmers to use more herbicides, return to conventional crops or even abandon their farms...

Monsanto's Herbicide Roundup Linked to Birth Defects

One of the most widely used pesticides in the world has been linked to brain, intestinal and heart defects in fetuses, according to the results of a scientific investigation released Monday. According to the study authors, the doses of herbicide used in the study "were much lower than the levels used in the fumigations," and so the situation "is much more serious".

Please Donate

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"The earn, spend, earn era has come to an end for us. The idea of living a fuller, more satisfying life seems simple to us now."



Money, cash, credit, maybe they don't matter. Maybe, just maybe, those are the things that impede our ability to be truly happy."

-Patrick Wojtowicz, An "economic survivalist" whose family recently gave up the consumerism addiction, simplified their lives and became homesteaders.