



## Swine Flu: Reprieve or Lull Before The Storm?

Scientists and health officials, who scared the wits out of us last week, are today trying to reassure us that the first wave of the Swine Flu—now spreading across the Northern Hemisphere—is apparently not as virulent and life-threatening as future mutated waves of this H1N1 virus might be in the Fall. Mexican health officials and the *Wall Street Journal* also revealed a few days ago that the pigs in Mexico that likely set off the epidemic are not native Mexican pigs, but rather pigs from Smithfield Foods' factory farms in the US that were shipped to Mexico. The rather alarming bottom line, however, is that CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) pose a deadly threat to our health.

Swine CAFOs, such as Smithfield, as well as giant poultry operations, such as those operated by Tyson Foods and Perdue, produce cheap food by cramming thousands of animals together inside hellish disease-ridden factory farms, injecting pigs and chickens with powerful vaccines and antibiotics to keep them alive, thereby putting enormous pressure on swine and bird viruses and pathogens like MRSA to evolve into dangerous killers. Filthy and disease-ridden factory farms for pigs and chickens, maintained by exploited and often unhealthy farm workers, kept in operation only with massive injections of animal drugs, are a biological time bomb set to explode. Experts are hoping a mutated H1N1 Swine/Bird Flu virus will not kill millions when it returns to the Northern Hemisphere later this year. Unfortunately, many scientists warn us that it is not a question of if, but rather when, a future swine/bird/human virus will kill millions—unless we shut down the CAFOs and transform the current insane global industrial/factory farm agriculture system into a chemical and drug-free organic system, whereby local and regional organic farms produce healthy food for local and regional markets. Tell President Obama to shut down factory farms now, before it's too late. Use the Action Alert link at the top of OCA's home page at [organicconsumers.org](http://organicconsumers.org).

## Homeopathy and 1918 Flu Victims

A recent comprehensive epidemiological study of some 61,000 confirmed cases of Spanish Flu from 1918-19 by Canadian physician, Dr. Andre Saine, shows that patients treated with a form of alternative medicine called homeopathy had death rates of 0.7% compared to death rates in the untreated and from conventional care of 30 percent or more. Is homeopathy something that we should be looking into as a possible source of prevention and cure for the H1N1 virus? Learn more: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_17822.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17822.cfm)

## Organic & Sustainable on a Budget

Although the organic food movement has been criticized for selling expensive food, organic sales are still increasing, despite the economic crisis. A surprisingly large percentage of organic enthusiasts are low to middle-income consumers who were not born with a silver spoon in their mouth. Documenting how this can be done, Siobhan Phillips and her husband embarked on an experiment to eat only SOLE foods—sustainable, organic, local or ethical foods—on the government-defined, food-stamp minimum: \$248 per month for two people. Read their story: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_17726.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17726.cfm)

## Alert: Safeguard Organic Standards

The National Organic Standards Board is supposed to serve as the organic community's watchdog on organic standards. Twice yearly, the NOSB holds public meetings. The Organic Consumers Fund, the voice of organic consumers in the nation's Capitol, has already submitted written comments, and we will also present testimony in person at the May 4-6 meeting, in Washington, DC. Our comments cover several topics the NOSB will be discussing and voting on in May, including:

- ✂ Biodiversity
  - ✂ Modified atmospheric packaging that creates an appearance of freshness even after food has spoiled
  - ✂ Organic fraud in the personal care products market
  - ✂ Needed oversight of the USDA NOP by a peer review panel
  - ✂ Nanotechnology
  - ✂ Phasing out non-organic versions of ingredients when organic becomes available
  - ✂ On-farm burning of elemental sulfur (and the resulting emission of sulfur dioxide, a source of acid rain) to create sulfurous acid for crops like wine grapes that like acidified soil
- Please endorse OCF's comments and add your own: [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_17780.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_17780.cfm)

## QUOTES

### ON THE CONTEMPORARY CRISIS



- ✂ "The economy, as the structuring axis of all the social life, has become hostile to life and to the integral development of the peoples. It has to be rerouted to its true nature, that of guaranteeing the material basis of life and of society." -Leonardo Boff
- ✂ "If you wanted to create global pandemics, you'd build as many of these factory farms as possible. That's why the development of swine flu isn't a surprise to those in the public health community. In 2003, the American Public Health Association—the oldest and largest in world—called for a moratorium of factory farming because they saw something like this would happen. It may take something as serious as a pandemic to make us realize the real cost of factory farming." -Dr. Michael Greger, Humane Society of the US

## Headlines Of The Week

### Parabens Hidden on Product Ingredients Labels as 'Honeysuckle Extract'

Some companies are tricking consumers into thinking their products do not have Parabens, but the potential toxin is actually present and hidden in the ingredients list as "Japanese Honeysuckle", a natural source of Parabens but chemically identical to the synthetic variety.

### Study Finds Food-Wrapper Chemicals in Blood

A new scientific study has for the first time found a new group of chemicals used in coatings on food wrappers in human blood.

### Honeybee Collapse Strikes Japan

The phenomenon is known as colony collapse disorder, in which large numbers of worker bees simply vanish. This wide scale collapse of bee populations could mean food shortages...

### When Big Business and Academia Mix

Monsanto has appointed a new member to its board of directors. David Chicoine will receive nearly a half million dollars for his new position with Monsanto, and, at the same time, he will continue to serve as the Land Grant president with the University of South Dakota, overseeing academic ag research funded, in part, by Monsanto. Is it enough for him to claim there will be no bias?

Read these articles and many more at OCA's website:

[www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)

## The Power of Music—Pete Seeger at 90

Watch this American Masters piece from PBS on Pete Seeger, who is celebrating his 90th birthday this week. Seeger has spent his lifetime and his musical career focusing on issues of peace, social justice and the environment. His birthday serves as a good opportunity to showcase how this individual has used the power of music to affect millions for a better future.