



USDA Wants GE Allowed in Organic

“In reality, the divide between organics and biotechnology is an artificial construction maintained by ideology rather than science. A governmental decision to change organic regulations to permit the use of biotechnology could have far-reaching policy implications for global agriculture. Allowing producers to gain organic certification for biotech crops could encourage the development of a new type of environmentally sustainable agricultural production with greater benefits for the consumer.” - USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, “The Unexplored Potential of Organic-Biotech Production,” May 26, 2009. Learn why GE can't be organic: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18878.cfm

Whole Foods Market Faces Boycott

Whole Foods Market CEO John Mackey set off a fire storm of controversy in a recent *Wall Street Journal* article, arguing against health care reform and the so-called “public option.” Mackey contends that the us can fix our health care crisis not by reining in insurance companies and improving access to comprehensive health care and affordable organic food, but by patronizing his overpriced WFM and further deregulating the insurance industry. In fact, Mackey believes that health care is not a human right, but a commodity that only the wealthy should have. Tens of thousands of organic consumers and health care advocates have responded by calling for a boycott of Whole Foods Markets.

Over fifteen thousand OCA members have contacted WFM in recent months, urging the nation's largest retailer of organic products to increase organic food access, implement comprehensive testing for GMOs in their private label products and eliminate dangerous chemicals from their body care products. WFM responded by bowing to OCA pressure and has promised to sell significantly more organics in 2010. We are having an impact! Tell Whole Foods to support their stated mission of promoting organics, health, justice, and sustainability: organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=1455

OCA's Via Organica EcoTours to Mexico

OCA's sister organization in Mexico, *Via Organica* (the “Organic Way”), organized our first Agro-EcoTour to Mexico on August 2-9, bringing us organic consumers to beautiful San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, for a first-hand look at the budding organic Movement in Mexico. Tour leaders included Ronnie Cummins, OCA Director, Alexis Baden-Mayer, head of OCA's Washington, DC office, Luc Monzies, organic farming expert, and Ana Maria Quispe, *Via Organica*'s staff dietician and translator.

Trip highlights included an all-day Organic Agriculture workshop at the *Via Organica* farm and conference center, attended by 250 small farmers from the area who are working with our staff to make the transition to organic agriculture; visits to regional organic farms and permaculture sites; a rural community organizing center; as well as organic retail stores, restaurants, and farmers markets.

Learn more about OCA's EcoTours, and sign up for the next *ViaOrganica* tour. October 4-11: organicconsumers.org/tours/

Alert: Factory Pig Farms & Big Pharma Vaccines

The propaganda machine of the us government and Big Pharma are busy force-feeding Americans a dubious, dangerous message: don't worry about filthy, disease-ridden factory farms and drugged-out farm animals incubating infectious diseases like the Swine Flu, because Big Pharma will protect us, starting with quasi-mandatory mass vaccinations of schoolchildren this fall. Not only is the Obama Administration ignoring warnings by the world's scientists that factory farms are the source and direct cause of the Swine Flu and Bird Flu epidemics, but they are preparing to allow drug companies to inject you with ineffective Swine Flu vaccines that contain hazardous viruses and chemicals. As organic consumers know, there are practical alternatives to factory farms, and there are clear alternatives to hazardous Swine Flu vaccines: strengthening our body and immune systems with healthy organic diets, medicinal herbs, and homeopathy. Learn more and take action!

salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/642/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=27144

Bytes Readers Stand Up for Meat-Eating

Last week, we reported on a *Washington Post* article summarizing a number of recent reports indicating that one of the best things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint and greenhouse gas pollution is to reduce your meat consumption. We also included a line in a sample letter to Whole Foods, asking them to stock organic soy...

Several *Organic Bytes* readers wrote us to stand up for meat-eating and against soy. We've included their comments and our response in our Web forum where OCA members are engaged in a vibrant debate on the pros and cons of vegetarian and vegan diets. organicconsumers.org/forum/

Headlines and Articles of the Week

The Common Security Club Network

These are uncertain times. The economic crisis has reminded us of our vulnerabilities. We can face these changes alone – or come together. Common Security Clubs bring people together to explore ways to increase our economic security through mutual aid and shared action.

Ancient Farming Techniques to Save the Campo

Poor farmers in Mexico are experimenting with a sustainable way of growing food crops that their ancestors used. It could provide them with better protection against the extremes of climate change, reduce deforestation, improve food security and even promise a better diet.

Why Organic Must Replace Chemical & Energy-Intensive Agriculture

The sustainable-food movement must start grappling with big questions: *Soil Fertility*—How are we to build soil fertility on a larger scale? *Labor*—Who's going to work our farm fields, and at what wages? *Access*—How can we make sustainably grown food accessible to everyone?

Michael Taylor: Monsanto's Man in the Obama Administration

In collusion with the Rockefeller and Bill and Melinda Gates foundations, Taylor is once again the go-between man for Monsanto and the us government, this time with the goal to open up African markets for genetically-modified seed and agro-chemicals.

Vandana Shiva: India's Looming Food and Water Crisis

Chemical agriculture has depleted ground water, mined soil fertility and contributed to climate change. The solutions for the climate crisis, the food crisis, and the water crisis, under which India is reeling, are biodiversity based organic farming systems.

Read these articles & many more: www.organicconsumers.org

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“Let's bring into our country a genetically-engineered, non-native tree that is known to be wildly invasive, explosively flammable, and insatiably thirsty for ground water... Yes, this would be irresponsible, dangerous, and stupid—but apparently ‘Irresponsible, Dangerous, and Stupid’ is the unofficial slogan of the USDA.” Read more & take action against GE trees: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18881.cfm