



Alert: Farm Workers' Rights Now!

Farm workers should have the same labor rights that other workers are guaranteed, including overtime pay, a minimum wage, restrictions on child labor, and the right to join labor unions and bargain collectively. Unfortunately, farm workers are denied most of the basic protections that our state and federal labor laws guarantee other workers.

This could change in California, where farm workers are literally dying in the fields because they often have no water to drink nor shade to rest under and where agribusiness as usual routinely involves lack of enforcement of laws on pesticide poisonings and sexual harassment. SB789 "CA Employee Free Choice Act for Farm Workers" has reached the Governor's desk. This bill will make it easier for farm workers to organize a union and protect themselves. No deaths from heat or thirst have ever occurred on any farm where farm workers have a union contract. CA residents take action: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18970.cfm National: Give the same rights to farmers that other workers are guaranteed: organicconsumers.org/fairtrade.cfm

Obama and USDA Finally Speak Out for Local

"What we've got to do is change how we think about, for example, getting local farmers connected to school districts because that would benefit the farmers delivering fresh produce." -

President Obama, Health Care Forum, 8-20-09

"There are so many new producers cropping up in America. Their best opportunity to expand is a local market. It's enhanced if they can be joined together with other local producers so sufficient quality and quantity can be established for schools, hospitals, jails and other purchasers."

-Agriculture Secretary Vilsack, The Washington Post, 8-26-09

"Imagine an NGO receiving USDA grant money to construct a community kitchen where farmers drop off produce and families join cooking classes that teach about healthy eating while everyone prepares fresh nutritious meals to bring home... Imagine a community using USDA money to construct an open-sided structure to house a farmers market... Imagine a school using USDA loan money to set up cold storage as part of a larger effort to retrofit the school cafeteria to buy produce directly from farmers and return cooking capacity for school lunch... Imagine..."

-Deputy Secretary Merrigan, 8-26-09

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18990.cfm

Monsanto's Profits in Iraq and Afghanistan

From the start of George Bush's (and now Obama's) wars for oil and Empire in Iraq and Afghanistan, OCA has been tracking the machinations of Monsanto, a well-known war profiteer (Agent Orange in Vietnam and currently massive Roundup spraying in Colombia), to take advantage of the current occupations. Monsanto's moves include pushing the toxic herbicide, glyphosate (Monsanto's Roundup herbicide), for poppy eradication in Afghanistan, promoting GMO seeds, and forcing Iraq to allow the monopoly patenting of plants and seeds—essentially preventing farmers from saving and exchanging traditional heirloom seed varieties.

Monsanto's latest business opportunity in the US's occupied territories has been created by the National Guard's "Agri-Business Development Teams." The Missouri National Guard, which has maintained Agri-Business Development Teams in Nangarhar Province in Afghanistan since fall 2007, hosted Safi Mohammed Hussein, agriculture director of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, on a recent visit to Missouri. While in St. Louis, Safi toured the headquarters of biotech giant Monsanto.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18999.cfm

Forced Vaccinations Bill Passes MA Senate

A new bill, the "Pandemic Response Bill," s. 2028, has passed the Massachusetts state Senate and is now awaiting approval in the House. This bill suspends virtually all Constitutional rights of Massachusetts citizens and sets fines up to \$1,000 per day for anyone "suspected" of being infected with swine flu who refuses to submit to "decontaminations," vaccines or quarantines, or who won't follow other orders by state-licensed law enforcement or medical personnel. **If you live in MA, take action to stop this bill from becoming law:** organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18993.cfm **If you live outside MA, take action here:** organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18994.cfm

USDA Disowns "Organic-Biotech" Report

Last week, we asked you to take action to oppose a cynical attempt on the part of the USDA to promote GE as potentially allowed in organic production. The target of our ire was a report issued by the USDA Foreign Agriculture Information Network, *The Unexplored Potential of Organic-Biotech Production*, that argued, "Governments should change their regulations to allow producers to gain organic certification for biotech crops grown with organic methods."

Thanks to thousands of letters of protest, the report was removed from the USDA Web site and replaced with a disclaimer announcing that "the report does not represent the policy of the US Government."

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18878.cfm

Little Bytes

Vermicomposting Is More Than Wiggle to a Worm

Jane Tunks, a novice gardener, is using her office's rooftop garden as her classroom, with Fred Bové and Kevin Bayuk from the San Francisco Permaculture Guild as her teachers.

Aurora Continues Violating Organic Standards

The Cornucopia Institute filed a formal legal complaint with the USDA in Washington alleging that one of the five industrial-scale dairies operated by Aurora is failing to graze their dairy cattle as required by the federal organic standards. OCA has called for a boycott of Aurora's cheap feed-lot milk, marketed under private labels as "organic" by Wal-Mart, Target, Costco, Safeway, and others.

ArborGen to Plant 260,000 Frankentrees Across the US.

International Paper's ArborGen joint venture with MeadWestvaco Corp. and New Zealand's Rubicon Ltd. is seeking permission from the USDA to sell the first genetically engineered forest trees outside China.

Pollution Causing Cancer in Animals, New Report Warns

Dumping of toxic wastes is contributing to cancer among wildlife, a new report says. Scientists say that tumors on beluga whales, sea lions and other animals are a warning signal.

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

Internship Opportunity with the OCA!

OCA is offering an internship in our national office in Finland MN, for 4 months beginning October 1, with option to stay on for 8 months. This is an unpaid internship but lodging and a small stipend for food and living expenses is included. The internship will consist of basic office tasks such as answering phones, interacting with members, website work, and specific projects that we will work with you to develop. Opportunities for local community involvement with CSAs, dairy farms, and other sustainable agriculture and community venues in the region will be provided.

Help the OCA while gaining experience in the workings of a national nonprofit campaigning for health, justice and sustainability.

For more info please visit our internship page:

organicconsumers.org/intern.cfm