

OCA Goes After Body Care Fraud

OCA representatives Ronnie Cummins, Alexis Baden-Mayer, and Molly Blakemore “walked the beat” at Natural Products ExpoEast in Boston this week, putting personal care and cosmetic companies on notice that OCA will soon be launching a boycott of brands that claim to be “organic” but aren’t certified. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_19246.cfm. Which organic personal care products do you use? Join the discussion in the OCA forum: organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=1056

OCA joined the **Teamsters** and **Jobs with Justice** at ExpoEast to pressure Whole Foods Market and its leading supplier, UNFI. OCA and the Teamsters startled and delighted the crowd at the annual Organic Spirit Awards ceremony by sending aloft a helium balloon-powered banner designating Whole Foods as the recipient of the “Mean-Spirited 365 Days a Year Award” for 2009. Leaflets distributed to the crowd criticized Whole Foods and UNFI as companies that supposedly support Fair Trade, but oppose workers’ rights and health care for all; and pay lip service to organics when two-thirds of their sales are not organic, but conventional products green-washed and sold at premium prices as “natural.” The protest was cut short when the police forced OCA staffers to leave the Convention Center. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_19232.cfm



Sigg Lied About BPA

Sigg, the maker of a hip and supposedly non-BPA metal water bottle, recently confessed that the liners of their bottles made before August 2008 actually do contain the dangerous chemical ‘bisphenol A’ (BPA)! In early 2007, when the dangers of BPA began getting a lot of media coverage, OCA wrote in *Organic Bytes* about BPA, water bottle brands we recommended, and which to avoid. Sigg was one of the ones we recommended avoiding. Almost immediately we heard from Sigg, saying that they had changed the liner of their bottles to be free of BPA. We issued a retraction in our next newsletter, saying, in effect, “Oops, sorry, Sigg bottles are safe.” Now, come to find out, that wasn’t exactly true. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_19182.cfm

In breaking news, Gaiam is suddenly behaving very strangely about their water bottles as well. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_19249.cfm Have you purchased a Sigg or Gaiam water bottles? If so, it’s quite possible that the liner of that water bottle contained BPA. (For Sigg, it’s the ones made before August, 2008.) Feeling defrauded? We want to hear from you on our forum: organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=3337

Organic Valley Launches Toxic Calculator

Organic Valley, America’s largest organic farmers’ co-op, has launched an online calculator called *Organic Counts!* which shows how Organic Valley farmers and consumers collectively kept 89.5 million pounds of synthetic fertilizer and 1.25 million pounds of synthetic pesticides from America’s soil and water from 1988 to 2008. To create the calculator, Organic Valley entered its production data from the past 20 years, and parallel data from the USDA to show the average amounts of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides used in industrial agriculture per acre each year. Public health costs directly associated with pesticide poisoning amount to billions of dollars per year. Exposure to pesticides and synthetic fertilizers have been linked to infertility, Parkinson’s, cancer, birth defects, obesity, and learning and behavioral disabilities. More than one million children in America age five and under ingest at least 15 pesticides daily. Early childhood exposures to pesticides are a leading cause of autism, obesity, asthma, brain cancer and other childhood diseases.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_19214.cfm

Victories of the Week and Ongoing Campaigns: Victory #1 - Stop GMO Sugar!

OCA congratulates longtime ally **Center for Food Safety** for gaining a federal court ruling against GE sugar beets. Despite the ruling, American Crystal, the nation’s largest sugar beet processor, is still planning on using Monsanto’s GE sugar beets. American Crystal President David Berg told the *New York Times* he thought customer acceptance of GE sugar was “a big non-event.” Tell American Crystal that you’re joining the boycott. Avoid Monsanto’s GE sugar by buying certified organic food (GE is banned from organic) and boycotting all non-organic brands that refuse to take a GMO-free stand: organicconsumers.org/articles/article_7031.cfm

Victory #2 - NOSB Appointments

The first appointments to the National Organic Standards Board under the Obama administration are the best in recent memory. The thousands of letters sent by OCA members and allies to the USDA, asking for the appointment of genuine organic advocates (rather than representatives of Big Food) have made a difference! While OCA is happy with the overall quality of the appointments, we’re disappointed that there is still no one on the NOSB representing the organic personal care sector. Appointee Joe Dixon of Whole Foods has consistently opposed the idea of the National Organic Program regulating cosmetics that claim to be made with organic ingredients.

Learn more about the NOSB appointments and send a letter to the NOSB and the USDA asking them to crack down on labeling fraud:

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18569.cfm

Little Bytes

Mandatory Swine Flu Vaccines for New York Health Care Workers

Health-care workers are protesting at the NY state Capitol against mandatory swine flu vaccinations. Nurses said they don’t think they should be forced to get a vaccine that has been fast-tracked and that they don’t believe has been tested appropriately as a condition of keeping their jobs.

Mexican Peasants Pay the Price for us Energy Consumption

Mexico exports 40 percent of the energy that it produces. A proposed energy project, the La Parota dam, would drown rural communities to supply energy to Mexico’s insatiable northern neighbor.

Organic Advocates Slam Food Safety Plan at USDA Hearings

The National Organic Coalition says the creation of a national version of California’s “Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement” would be “crippling to small- and medium-scale farmers, confusing to consumers, and a highly inefficient and ineffective way to address food safety concerns.”

Cape Town Turns Its Garbage Into Organic Compost

Cape Town, South Africa, is creating carbon credits under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by transforming its urban green waste into high-quality organic compost for farmers.

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

Quote of the Week

Organic Can Save the World from Climate Chaos

“...carbon sequestration is the best way to buy time in a warming world. Cutting emissions will help, but not as immediately as sequestration. ... food production must be fundamentally restructured to simultaneously preempt and react to the devastating effects of climate change. ...organic agriculture presents an untapped solution, an under-utilized carbon sink at the ready. ...if the world’s 3.5 billion tillable acres could be transitioned to organic agriculture now, land could sequester almost 40 percent of our current carbon emissions. No other proposed carbon mitigation solution comes close to that potential impact, particularly using existing and readily available technology.” -Rodale Institute, February 2009