Organic Bytes • Weekly Newsletter of the Organic Consumers Association

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Connecting the World Through Regeneration and Food Sovereignty

USDA Says Genetically Modified Hemp Plant 'May Be Safely Grown And Bred' In The United States

Ben Adlin writes:

"We reviewed the modified hemp plant to determine whether it posed an increased plant pest risk as compared to cultivated hemp," USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) said in a notice last week. "APHIS found this modified hemp is unlikely to pose an increased plant pest risk compared to other cultivated hemp."

In its request for the USDA review, Growing Together Research said the changes are intended to make the engineered plants free of THC and CBC and also boost resistance to the herbicide bialaphos. It says genes in the new hemp plants came from multiple donor organisms, including plants, bacteria, a virus and at least one artificial sequence. The company said in the request that it believes the intended resistance to the herbicide "is not expected to result in any other material changes to metabolism, physiology or development of the plant."

Read more: https://orgcns.org/3QfoqVB

Burgers and Fries with a Side of PFAS

Environmental Health News reports:

"OK, let's start with the bad news: a new report from Mamavation found evidence of PFAS chemicals in food packaging including a McDonald's filet-o-fish carton, a Starbucks' sandwich wrapper and a KFC bucket of fried chicken.

That's not good. But many of these fast-food and fast-casual restaurants have announced plans to ban the "forever chemicals" and for some — Taco Bell, Wendy's, Sweetgreen and others — it seems to be working. In total 35% of 81 pieces of fast-food packaging showed detectable levels of organic fluorine, an indicator of the group of chemicals known as PFAS, according to a new report from Mamavation."

Read more: https://orgcns.org/3rRPwK1

Is Your Honey Actually Honey? Here's How to Tell if It's Fake

Christina Manian RDN writes for Better Homes and Gardens:

"You probably weren't aware that much of the honey found on grocery store shelves is actually fake—in some cases, it contains little to no actual honey. In fact, honey is one of the most faked foods found in our food supply today. Here's why, and how it's affecting those who produce real honey—plus what it means for all the supposed health benefits of the so-called superfood...While the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has created a grading system for honey to let consumers know the quality of the product they're buying, there is no enforcement system in place, so producers can put just about whatever they like on the bottle."

Read more: https://orgcns.org/48VeiKa

A Bold Return to Giving a Damn: Will Harris's New Book

#822: October 5, 2023

From a pioneer of the regenerative agriculture movement, a memoir-meets-manifesto on betting the farm on a better future for our food, animals, land, local communities, and our climate.

At once an intimate, multi-generational memoir and a microcosm of American agriculture at large, A BOLD RETURN TO GIVING A DAMN offers a pathway back to producing food the right way. At a time when food supply chains are straining, climate-induced catastrophes are playing havoc with harvests, and concern around who owns America's farmland are more prescient than ever, Will Harris urges us to consider where the food we eat really comes from, and to re-connect to the places and people who raise what we eat each day.

With keen storytelling, a good dose of irreverence, and an unflinching willingness to speak truth to power, Harris shows us why it's never been more important to know your farmer than now.

Read more: https://orgcns.org/3Fglbb9

The Norwegian Secret: How Friluftsliv Boosts Health and Happiness

Rachel Dixon writes for The Guardian:

"Friluftsliv is not a specific activity. Hiking in the forest, kayaking along the fjords and skiing in the mountains could all be part of it, but so could picking cloudberries or simply sitting in the woods. "It is our goal to include everyone in friluftsliv, including people with disabilities and psychological challenges and those on low incomes," says Lier. I have opted for a hike with Stine Schultz Heireng, the general secretary of the Norwegian Guide and Scout Association.

An astonishingly high percentage of Norwegians report spending

time outdoors. A survey in June by the market research company Kantar TNS found that 83% are interested in friluftsliv, 77% spend time in nature on a weekly basis and 25% do so most days."

Read more: https://orgcns.org/3PX2uzq

Yes! The Push for 'Glyphosate-Free' Causes Market Risks

Good news! Consumers are voting with their forks and seeing changes in the marketplace.

Robert Arnason writes for The Western Producer:

"Glyphosate is registered for pre-harvest weed control in many Canadian crops. But with public and food industry attention on the herbicide, applying it to a crop in August is still a major market risk for farmers and Canada's grain trade...Federal regulators may believe glyphosate residues are not a concern, but grain buyers and food companies must keep their customers happy.

That's why dozens of food and ingredient companies have adopted the "Glyphosate Residue Free" label, created by an organization called the Detox Project."

Read more: https://orgcns.org/48OI1Eh