

Making America Organic...One Home At a Time!



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Organic News Roundup

Organic Consumers Getting Milked: Take Action To Save Organic Standards

The watchdog group Cornucopia Institute has published a long-awaited report ranking organic dairy companies in the USA, and the facts are rather sobering.

The good news is that most organic dairies in the U.S. are following strict organic standards, including giving animals regular access to pasture. The bad news is that several major players in the organic dairy sector are blatantly violating organic standards, with a wink and a nod from the USDA and the industry-controlled Organic Trade Association.

Two of the largest organic dairy companies in the nation, Horizon Organic (a subsidiary of Dean Foods); and Aurora Organic, a supplier of private brand name organic milk to Costco, Safeway, Giant and others, who together control 65% of the market, are purchasing the majority of their milk from feedlot dairies where the cows have little or no access to pasture.

In addition, a routine practice on these giant dairy feedlots, many with thousands of cows, is to continuously import calves from conventional farms, where animals have been weaned on blood, fed slaughterhouse waste and genetically engineered grains, and injected or dosed with antibiotics.

Consumer Demand For Organics Explodes While Supply Dwindles

Not enough U.S. farmers are finding it possible to make the transition to organic production, according to a January 2006 marketing report from the research firm Organic Monitor in London.

Domestic consumers are buying record amounts of organic foods, but farmers are unable to meet that demand, resulting in \$1.5 billion of organic crops imported into the

U.S. in 2005. This means that 10% of all organic sales in the U.S. today are imports. In comparison, U.S. organic exports amount to a meager \$150 million. In the European Union, government programs help conventional farmers make the transition to organic production with subsidies and technical assistance.

In contrast, the majority of U.S. agricultural subsidies are earmarked for large chemical-intensive and energy-intensive farms and genetically engineered crops, making it difficult for family-scale farmers and ranchers to afford the expensive and difficult three year transition from conventional to organic production.

"Unless more American farmers consider converting to organic practices, exporters are likely to capitalize on this lucrative market," the report said.

USDA Sued For Not Allowing U.S. Producers To Test For Mad Cow

Due to yet another confirmed case of Mad Cow disease in the U.S., foreign buyers remain skeptical about the safety of conventional, non-organic U.S. beef.

The USDA has refused to stop allowing the feeding of blood and slaughterhouse waste to cows and to require universal testing for the fatal disease, as required in the EU and Japan, causing overseas sales of U.S. beef products to plummet.

While 100% of cows in Japan, aged 24 months and older, are tested for the disease, only 1% of the 35 million cattle slaughtered annually in the U.S. are tested (and the USDA has announced it will be scaling back this level of testing).

As a result, a Kansas-based meatpacking company, Creekstone Farms Premium Beef,

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Harvest Blend Regular

- Jewell Sweet Potatoes
- Carrots
- Romaine Lettuce
- Green Onions
- Yellow Squash
- Tomatoes
- White Mushrooms
- Zucchini
- Fuerte Avocado
- Cilantro
- Granny Smith Apples
- Valencia Oranges
- Bartlett Pears
- Tommy Atkins Mango
- Grapefruit

See the web site for details on our other options. Produce bag contents are subject to change based on availability.

OO Reminder

Now that warmer days are upon us, please remember it is your responsibility to leave a cooler outside your door if you are not home to receive the delivery.

This is especially important if you are receiving dairy with your produce.

While we have, in the past, left the thermal bags at your door, we would really prefer not to do so, as the return rate on these bags is often a problem for us.

A cooler is also better for you because ice packs in the cooler will do a better job of keeping your food fresh in the ambient temperature than our bags without any ice.

Thank you for your business, and let us know if you have any questions.

announced last week that it will voluntarily test all of the beef it processes, in order to meet the demands of some of its foreign buyers.

In response, the USDA has filed a notice against Creekstone, saying the company is not allowed to test its meat for the brain-wasting disease. Creekstone believes it has a right to test its meat and is suing the USDA. "Our customers, particularly our Asian customers, have requested it over and over again," chief executive John Stewart said in an interview Wednesday. "We feel strongly that if customers are asking for tested beef, we should be allowed to provide that."

Another Organic Business Snapped Up By Corporate Buyer

Tom's of Maine, the popular maker of a variety of natural and organic body care products, has agreed to be bought out by the Colgate-Palmolive Company for \$100 million.

Although in past years Tom's of Maine has made negative comments about Colgate's use of artificial ingredients in its toothpastes,

co-founder Tom Chappell claims "We have a commitment from Colgate that our formulas will not be tampered with." Colgate says it can help Tom's of Maine increase sales and distribution in the current fast-growing \$3 billion US market for natural oral-care and personal products.

Calls For Lowering of Fluoride in Drinking Water

The National Academy of Sciences has released a report indicating that the current legal levels of fluoride in drinking water are dangerous and should be lowered. Although the U.S. government states that only 0.7 to 1.2 milligrams of fluoride per liter of drinking water is necessary to help prevent tooth decay, up to four times that amount is present in some municipal water supplies. Excessive fluoride ingestion is known to weaken bones.

The fluoride debate has raged on for over 60 years, with opponents pointing to data showing that it's effective when applied topically but not ingested. Consumers can learn how much fluoride is in their tap water by asking their local utility, and most of it can be removed through filtration.

Recipes

Mango Smashed Sweet Potatoes

- 1 large sweet potato
- 1 large mango
- 1/4 cup applesauce
- 1/4 cup vanilla soymilk
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp brown rice syrup

Peel sweet potato and cut into 2 inch slices. Boil for about 10 minutes or until soft (if you poke it with a fork and it goes right in, you're in business). Cut mango into 1 inch cubes. In a mixing bowl, mash mango and sweet potato together and add the applesauce, brown rice syrup, cinnamon, and nutmeg.

Scallops With Peppers, Tomatoes, Avocado & Mango

- 1 red bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 1/2 pounds sea scallops
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup gold tequila
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh basil
- 3 tbsp chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 1 cup diced, peeled, pitted avocado
- 1 cup diced, peeled, pitted mango
- cilantro sprigs

Char bell peppers over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Enclose in paper bag; let stand 10 minutes. Peel and seed bell peppers. Cut all bell peppers into matchstick-size strips. Set aside. Arrange tomatoes on baking sheet. Broil until tomatoes begin to turn brown and blister, about 5 minutes. Heat oil in heavy skillet over high heat. Add scallops and cook 2 minutes.

Remove from heat. Turn scallops over. Add lime juice to skillet, then tequila. Return to heat and simmer until scallops are cooked through and liquid is reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer scallops to plate. Stir roasted peppers, tomatoes, cilantro and basil into cooking liquid.

Add butter, one piece at a time, whisking just until melted. Return scallops to skillet. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon scallop mixture onto plates. Sprinkle with diced avocado and mango. Garnish with cilantro sprigs.

Yellow Squash Soup

- 3/4 lbs yellow squash, washed, trimmed and sliced.
- 1 scallion, chopped
- 1/2 qt water
- 1/2 tbsp honey
- 1/2 tbsp fresh dill, minced
- 1/2 tbsp salt
- 1/8 tsp fresh ground pepper

Place squash, scallions, water and honey in a large saucepan or pot and simmer gently for about 40 minutes or until the squash is tender. Stir in the dill. Put the squash through a food mill or puree in a blender until smooth. Return mixture to saucepan, season with the salt and pepper, simmer for 5 or 10 minutes. Serve hot or chill and serve cold.