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Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2011 4:00 PM
Subject: Real Food Houston Newsletter - October 25, 2011

Real Food Houston Newsletter - Oct 25, 2011, Latest posts and food news.

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Real Food Houston Newsletter - October 25, 2011

NOTE: The newsletter mail service and format are being upgraded. Hope you like the changes.

The latest posts from [Real Food Houston](#) . . .

[Biotech Industry Group Looks for Influential 'Ambassadors'](#)

The UK Guardian is reporting that leaked documents indicate EuropaBio, Europe's largest biotech industry group—members include Monsanto, Bayer, and other GM (genetic modification) companies—is “recruiting high-profile ‘ambassadors’ to lobby European leaders on GM policy.” A draft email among the documents claims to have “have interest” from Sir Bob ... [Continue reading](#)

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[Let's Go, Raw Milk Mamas!](#)

Go mamas! A group of mothers who feed their children raw milk are planning a peaceful demonstration to “defy FDA interstate commerce and food safety law on raw milk in support of farmers across the nation willing to supply fresh ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[CSPI's Advice is NOT in the Public Interest](#)

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) has long been an advocate of controversial food policies. Since the 1970s they have attracted media attention to many of their campaigns. Two reports brought my attention back to CSPI. The first was ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Twin Persimmons Farm – Community Supported Agriculture \(CSA\) in Grimes County](#)

I've just learned about a vegetable CSA program in the Houston area—Twin Persimmons Farm. If you're not familiar with a CSA, here's the Wikipedia definition: A CSA consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farming operation ... [Continue reading →](#)

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Real Food News and Food Issues, presented by topic . . .

Raw Milk

Michael Schmidt Faces Additional Charges

Canadian raw milk advocate Michael Schmidt will face additional charges after he distributed raw milk at a rally last week. The Grey Bruce Health Unit insists that raw milk is unsafe to consume. [More from the Toronto Sun . . .](#)

Canadian Comment: "New Dairy Laws Udder Nonsense"

A letter to the editor of North Shore News in British Columbia says "New dairy laws udder nonsense." The author says he owns a share of a dairy cow and chooses to consume raw milk. He expresses disbelief that the Canadian government would provide heroin, crack cocaine and methamphetamine addicts with drugs, needles, and pipes but make raw milk illegal. That seems to me a difficult position to defend. Wonder why the Canadian government finds it so easy? [More from North Shore News . . .](#)

Natural News Will Cover Raw Milk Freedom Riders

NaturalNews.com plans to cover the Raw Milk Freedom Riders on November 1. [More from Natural News . . .](#)

Genetically Engineered Foods (GMOs)

Top Five Myths About Genetic Modification

Greenpeace responds to an attempt to allay fears about genetic engineering. The original article insisted that “scientists can very precisely select genes and introduce them into their target species.” Greenpeace” counters “inserting DNA can cause additional fragments to be inserted and can also delete and rearrange the plant’s own DNA. Unexpected and unknown fragments of genetic material have been found in commercial GM crops;” therefore, “GM crops could produce unintended novel proteins, or altered plant proteins. Because most allergens are proteins, this raises concerns about these crops’ potential to cause allergies.” [More from Janet Cotter at the Conversation . . .](#)

Monsanto Markets GM Corn Sold Directly to Consumers

Monsanto is marketing a genetically modified corn that will be sold directly to consumers. They already control 60% of the US corn market, but most of that goes to animal feed or processed foods like oil and corn syrup. Now they want their corn on your plate. “The new GM sweet corn is engineered to kill insects with Bt toxins and to resist heavy spraying with Roundup herbicide.” [More from the JoplinIndependent.com . . .](#)

GM Plants Unlikely to Increase Food Security

The Epoch Times says that “The evidence is clear that GM plants are unlikely to play any effective role in increasing food security. In fact, the expense and risk of GM crops could actually decrease food security. GM seeds are subject to patent claims which will indirectly increase the price of food; this will not alleviate poverty or hunger and will pose a threat to food sovereignty.” The article goes on “supporting farmers and farm workers in eco-agriculture systems that minimize dependency on external inputs, such as artificial

fertilizers and pesticides, is a major option to fight hunger and improve food security worldwide.” The article concluded with “We simply do not know if GM crops are safe for animal or human consumption.” [More from the The Epoch Times . . .](#)

Monsanto Wants to Dominate Vegetable Seed Market

Monsanto is quietly moving into the produce aisle of your grocery store. “Monsanto’s goal: to dominate today’s \$3-billion global market for produce seeds, much as it already has done with corn and soybeans.” Monsanto moved into the vegetable arena in 2005 when it bought seed company Seminis Inc. in Oxnard, CA. It has since bought four additional vegetable seed companies “opened 57 research centers worldwide and hired a slew of seed geneticists and agricultural researchers.” Monsanto claims that these vegetables are not genetically engineered; however, “the probability is very low that it would have happened in nature without human intervention.” So far, Monsanto has avoided introducing genetically engineered produce partly due to the years required to clear government regulatory systems. They are also concerned with public controversy. [The claim in this article that Monsanto has not yet marketed GM produce contradicts the Joplin Independent article. We'll be watching for more on this subject.] [More from the The Los Angeles Times . . .](#)

Americans Don't Understand the Problem With GMOs

The Right2Know march has arrived from Brooklyn to the White House to protest the fact that Americans don't have the right to know that GMOs are in the foods they eat while many other countries already have that right. The author, Maria Rodale, doesn't understand why so few people were there to greet the marchers when thousands showed up for the Martin Luther King

dedication and many others are protesting against the Occupy Wall Street movement. She says “Meanwhile, GMOs, which represent the absolute WORST of corporate American and effect [sic] EVERYONE, black, white, teens, men, women, and especially babies, just aren’t getting the attention they deserve. Why? Is it too complicated? Or are Americans just blinded by their focus on cheap food—and not understanding that the food is cheap because they pay for it with their taxes.” [More from the Huffington Post . . .](#)

Biotech Whistle Blowers

Jeffrey Smith reveals that scientists and former biotech industry representatives are “now blowing the whistle in regards to the corruption . . .the fraudulent ‘science’ that continues to be used to thrust GMOs on the public, and the revolving door between the biotech industry and politics that allows it to continue.” Several scientists have had their careers destroyed for conducting independent scientific research into GMOs. One scientist spoke of a 1996 Monsanto study that was rigged to dilute the feed in a supposed feeding study so that it contained almost no GM soy. [More from infowars.com .](#)

[. . .](#)

Big Business and Government Collusion About GMOs

The Huffington Post has a good article about food freedom and genetically engineered foods. The author, Dave Murphy, of Food Democracy Now! compares the GMO food issue to the Occupy Wall Street demonstration, which he says is “born out of a legitimate frustration with the collusion between Big Business and elected officials of the U.S. government.” He continues, “nowhere is that collusion so great as in food and agricultural production where four firms control 84 percent of beef packing, 66 percent of port production and one company, Monsanto, controls patents on more than 93 percent of

soybeans and 80 percent of corn grown in the U.S.” The new biotechnology is less than twenty years old but already GMOs appear in 75 to 80 percent of processed food that we eat in the U.S. [More from the Huffington Post . . .](#)

GM Crops Promote Superweeds

UK's The Guardian reports that “GM crops promote superweeds, food insecurity and pesticides.” This is the conclusion of a report by 20 Indian, south-east Asian, African and Latin American food and conservation groups. GM crops first sold about 20 years ago are now grown in 29 countries and have promised many miracles, including as a solution to world food shortages, climate change and soil erosion; however, this report finds that the crops have not lived up to these promises. The report claims that benefits such as drought resistance and salt tolerance have yet to yield significant improvement. The authors are most concerned about is the “greatly increased use of synthetic chemicals, used to control pests despite biotech companies’ justification that GM-engineered crops would reduce insecticide use.” The article continues listing many additional problems found with GM crops in countries around the world. [More from The Guardian . . .](#)

Saturated Fats Are Good

We Shouldn't Be Demonizing Saturated Fat

Ronald M. Krauss, MD, a lipid specialist and director of atherosclerosis research at the Children’s Hospital Oakland Research Institute, is quoted by the article’s author as saying that “we shouldn’t be demonizing saturated fat.” The author says “Eating fat is essential. More than 200 functions in the body are dependent upon dietary fats to work.” When we demonized fat, Americans turned to sugar to replace the flavor lost with the fat, and, because “refined

carbohydrates don't satiate us like fat does, we consume enormous amounts of it to compensate." "So this whole thing has been just a big fat mistake!"

[More from Coeur d'Alene Press . . .](#)

NYC Mayor Bloomberg to UN: Government Should Control Citizen's Diet

Jens F. Laurson and George A. Pieler discuss the Danish 'fat tax' calling it "one of many egregious recent examples of state interference in personal decisions that extend well beyond our food." They are responding to a statement by New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg who told the United Nations that state control of our diets is "ultimately the government's highest duty." The authors point out that the Danish tax on saturated fat "assumes citizen-consumers are infants incapable of making choices. . . . it relies on pseudoscientific 'findings' and gross simplifications." They say that saturated fat is not worse than unsaturated fat and that nutritionists now think non-complex carbohydrates are the "real drivers of obesity." They explain the real reason for the 'fat tax' "as with tobacco, alcohol, carbon and flight-fuel taxes, deterring politically and socially incorrect behavior is the *raison du jour* to justify higher taxes because it's a tax raise that 'means well' and won't likely rouse much opposition." The law is not "about steering people as much as milking them." [More from The Washington Times . . .](#)

Study Recommends Attention Shift to Carbohydrates

A new study published in the Netherlands Journal of Medicine looked at dietary intake of saturated fatty acids (SAFA) and the association with cardiovascular disease (CVD). The conclusion of the study is "that avoidance of SAFA accumulation by reducing the intake of CHO [carbohydrates] with high glycaemic index is more effective in the prevention of CVD than reducing SAFA intake per se." "The total body of evidence suggests that attention

should be shifted from the harmful effects of dietary SAFA per se, to the prevention of the accumulation of SAFA in body lipids. This shift would emphasise the importance of reducing dietary CHO, especially CHO with a high glycaemic index, rather than reducing dietary SAFA.” [More from The Netherlands Journal of Medicine . . .](#)

Poor Nutrition Advice

American Dietetic Association Says Vegan Diets OK for Children

The American Dietetic Association says vegetarian or vegan diets, “as long as they are well-planned, are appropriate for all phases of life, including childhood and adolescence.” They continue saying that vegetarian or vegan diets “are healthful, nutritionally adequate and may provide health benefits and treatment of certain diseases.” The article at [cnn.com](#) provides advice from several registered “dieticians” who all appear to agree that even a child can be healthy on a these diets. [For the true story about these diets, see [Vegetarianism: What the Science Tells Us](#) and [Myths of Vegetarianism](#).] It seems unethical to me for a registered dietician to approve such an unhealthy diet especially for children and young adults. [More from cnn.com . . .](#)

Food Rating System Would Rate Diet Coke Tops

A food rating system being studied by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) would give a diet coke a three, while 1% milk would be rated 2. The rating system would evaluate each food for “acceptable” levels of three nutrients that are “of concern”—sodium, added sugars, and trans fats or saturated fats. Notice that they lump harmful trans fats and beneficial saturated fats together. Also notice that the system doesn’t give points for nutrition content such as protein, vitamins, minerals, etc. What kind of system would give diet Coke “three points

for having low levels of fats, added sugars and sodium”? The Huffington Post calls this system “very ugly indeed.” HuffPost says “if it propagates the perception that high-calorie walnuts and almonds and avocado and yogurt are less good than 0-calorie diet sodas ... it will take ugly to a whole new place.”

[More from Healthland . . .](#) and [HuffingtonPost . . .](#)

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