

May 2006 | Mindful Living

Dairy Debate Sours

Last October, WLT reported on the “dairy debate”—the controversy swirling around so-called “organic” milk. The argument stems from whether dairy products labeled organic do indeed come from cows that are raised according to organic standards.

It seems not, according to a recent study done by watchdog group Cornucopia Institute. Even though consumers are paying premium prices for what they believe to be certified organic dairy, some of the biggest organic dairy brands—such as Horizon Organic and Aurora Organic—allegedly purchase the bulk of their milk from feedlots where cows have little or no access to pasture, according to the report. In addition, many of these feedlots import calves from conventional farms that use genetically engineered grains and antibiotics.

Unfortunately, the USDA and the Organic Trade Association seem to be turning a blind eye to the issue. Sign a petition to encourage the National Organics Standards Board to stop factory farm operations at organicconsumers.org/nosb2.htm and visit cornucopia.org to see how your favorite dairy products and outlets measure up. —*Jessica Ridenour*

Free To Be You and Tea

Chalk one up for religious freedom. In a time where citizens’ rights seem to be granted or revoked arbitrarily by the powers that be, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of New Mexico-based church O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal and their fight to use Hoasca tea in their devotional ceremonies (WLT first reported on the court case back in December).

The church, whose beliefs combine Christianity with native Brazilian teachings, says they use the ritually prepared tea to bring them closer to God. The only problem (according to the Feds) is that Hoasca is a mild hallucinogen containing DMT, a chemical component that happens to be regulated by the Controlled Substances Act.

Despite the Bush Administration’s claims that the tea is dangerous and illegal, the John Roberts-led court moved that the government should butt out of a church’s religious practices, citing the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act. —*JR*



Women Say No To War

On International Women’s Day (3/12), 500 LA women gathered at Arlington West—a cemetery created on Santa Monica Beach to commemorate the American soldiers fallen in Iraq—to stage a dramatic message of peace. Gold Star Mom Cindy Sheehan and Iraqi civil engineer and blogger Faiza Al-Araji were among those participating in the anti-war human art installation, which was organized by aerial artist John Quigley and photographed by David Crane. For more shots of the event, visit codepinka.org

WHAT COUNTS

- American children between the ages 8 and 16 who have a TV in their bedroom: 56 percent.

- Households with more than 100 old videos on their shelves: about 20 percent.

- Day care centers that have a TV on all day: 70 percent.

- Americans with at least one video recorder: 85 percent.

- People who think television is responsible for juvenile crime: 73 percent.

Courtesy of *Numbers*, by David Boyle & Anita Roddick (Chelsea Green Publishing Co., chelseagreen.com)

Mother’s Day Mania

Although the ancient Greeks used to celebrate a Mother’s Day of sorts—they honored Rhea (the mother of gods) with honey cakes—Mother’s Day didn’t become an official US holiday until 1914. President Woodrow Wilson signed the order, thanks to a woman named Anna Jarvis. Anna’s own mother had died

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