

THE FDA HAS NO INTEGRITY!

FDA Suppresses Information

The controversy surrounding BGH has renewed public concern about the integrity of the FDA. The very agency which should be protecting the nation's food supply has actively worked with the drug companies to suppress information about BGH that would put the hormone in a negative light. The FDA violated its own internal policies in helping the pharmaceutical industry reap the profits of genetic engineering.

Dr. Richard Burroughs was a staff veterinarian and senior scientist at the FDA overseeing the analysis of industry-sponsored tests on BGH. He raised a number of questions about the safety of BGH and about the approval process his agency was using. Dr. Burroughs reported that:

- Cows treated with BGH have higher than normal levels of reproductive problems.
- Their udders show an increased tendency to become infected.
- The FDA did not assign reviewers with the expertise needed to evaluate the data.
- Adequate human health studies of the effects of BGH had not been conducted.

Dr. Burroughs was fired on November 3, 1989. "I was told that I was slowing down the approval process. It used to be that we had a review process at the FDA. Now we have an approval process. I don't think the FDA is doing good, honest reviews. They've become an extension of the drug industry."

The firing of Dr. Burroughs sent a powerful message to others working within the FDA who might have raised similar concerns.



According to the FDA, industry data indicates, "There may be an unacceptable level of tissue reaction with prolonged use of bovine somatotropin [BGH]."

Human Test Tubes

Due to public exposure of its behavior, the FDA has been forced to slow down its attempts to put BGH on the market. Many people, however, have already unwittingly consumed milk containing genetically engineered BGH.

In 1986 dairy farmer John Kinsman discovered that the University of Wisconsin was selling milk from genetic engineering experiments to the school's own dairy plant. There the milk was quietly made into ice cream and sold on campus.

In another case, after a California supermarket chain refused to accept milk from BGH-treated cows, the experimental milk was made into cheese and distributed to unsuspecting low-income families through a federal food giveaway program.

Some dairy processing companies have refused to accept milk containing BGH. According to one major California plant, Alta Dena, "Our position is firm with reference to [hormone] treated milk.... The only one that will gain if BGH is allowed will be the drug manufacturer. The consumer has nothing to gain, and the dairy farmer will lose in the long run...."

At the University of Wisconsin, a large-scale BGH test had to be called off when researchers found that they could not find a processing plant that would accept their experimental milk.

But in many states, BGH-laced milk has been making its way into the homes of unknowing consumers for several years.

SCANDAL!

SUCH AUDACITY!

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Drug Money

Major drug companies have spent enormous sums of money on the development of genetic engineering. The industry is extremely anxious to get son positive results for its investors and has unleashed powerful forces in Washington to achieve this goal.

While he was Secretary of the USDA, and at the request of Monsanto, Clayton Yeutter personally lobbied Wisconsin Governor Thompson to veto a bill that would have banned BGH use Wisconsin. Coincidentally, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu headed a fund-raiser for the Governor just days before he went on to veto the state legislature's ban on BGH.

The head of the USDA incited a major battle with the European Economic Community when he attempted to force EEC to lift its ban on U.S. meat from cows treated with BGH and other hormones. Unwilling to bow to U.S. agribusiness pressure, the EEC refused to lift its ban.

And there are continuing allegations that political influence was used to get the job of Dr. Gerald Guest, the top official at the FDA who deals with the approval process for BGH. Guest was the official responsible for firing Dr. Burroughs from the FDA.

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5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061

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