



CATHOLIC WORKER HOUSE
OF HOSPITALITY



1131 N. 21st Street P.O. Box 05206
Milwaukee, WI 53205 Phone: 344-5745

8-28-00

Dear Commissioner,

We have much concern about the use of bovine growth hormone being used by dairy farmers. Our concerns are that there seems to be an increased cancer risk, severe animal health problems, antibiotic resistance with the use of the genetically engineered bovine growth hormone.

Aside from this, there is a great loss of family farms. Even a small increase in milk surpluses causes a big decline in family dairy farmers' incomes. Milk production has been shown to rise sharply in states where rBGH sales are highest, depressing milk prices nationally.

Because of the FDA's inadequate review, millions of American infants, children and adults are consuming milk and dairy products derived from cows injected with the growth hormone. We fear the result. Sincerely, *Don* Don Timmerman
Thank you for your interest in the Casa Maria Community. We are a community of people dedicated to living out the Gospel values of loving our enemies and doing good to those who do all manner of evil against us and attempting to take personal responsibility for the needy sisters and brothers in our society. We follow the tradition of the Catholic Worker movement started by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933 in New York. We believe in nonviolence as a way of life, gentle personalism (as opposed to rugged individualism) and the practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. We choose to live a life of voluntary poverty, to live simply so that others may simply live.

The Casa Maria Hospitality House, 1131 N 21st St., was started by Annette and Michael Cullen in 1966. It gives hospitality to four homeless families and two single women at one time, and they stay with us until they find places of their own. We provide food, clothing, used furniture, etc. which are donated to us by the public, to help our guests and others in need of such. We also try to root out the causes of poverty and violence by nonviolently protesting and refusing to cooperate with the military and the U.S. government. We refuse to pay for the making of weapons and war and choose to use our money to help those lacking the basics of life. We protest injustice, oppression and discrimination in the world and work for nonviolence to be taught and lived in our homes, schools, churches and institutions. Casa Maria's phone: 344-5745.

Pat's House, 1127-29 N 21st provides hospitality to homeless women seeking to recover from addictions to drugs and/or alcohol. They stay with us until such a time that they receive counseling, find work and find a decent place to live. Call 931-0199
We also offer clothing for babies and children from the house.

98P-1194

C 787

Mapendo House, 1124 N 21st St., provides hospitality to homeless single women who have disabilities that make them unable to gain employment and are not receiving any aid. Women suffering from sexual abuse are also accepted. They stay with us until they are able to find some kind of assistance. Call 933-1679.

We have two community houses where many of our volunteers stay and live in common. Lazarus House, 1120 N 21st., and Harmony House, 1149-51 N 21st St., both offer hospitality. Our community members do not receive compensation for working at our houses, and many of them have jobs on the outside to provide for their own personal needs and the needs of the houses. Anyone who wishes to live a life of voluntary poverty, dedicate his/her life to the needy and oppressed, live a life of nonviolence and gentle personalism and is willing to live in community is invited to join the Casa Maria Community. We accept volunteers of any race, religion or nationality.

We depend on donations of our volunteers and others wishing to help maintain the houses. All Donations received are used solely to help the homeless and needy who lack the basics of life. We receive no government, institutional church or corporate funds. We pick up used furniture, appliances, household items, etc. from those wishing to donate the same. We charge nothing for these items and our services to the needy. We attempt to create a society in which it is easier for people to be good and trust God will provide the means for us to continue our work with the economically and spiritually poor in our society.

We invite you to join our community or begin your own community in the Catholic Worker tradition of giving hospitality to the homeless, feeding the hungry, clothing the needy and working for a more just and nonviolent society. We invite you to our prayer service each Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Casa Maria House. If you wish to become a volunteer you are encouraged to come to our Monday night meetings at Casa Maria House starting at 7 p.m.

We put out a monthly newsletter, CASA CRY, which keeps interested people informed of our activities and needs of the time. If you wish to receive it, please let us know. We will send it to you free of charge.

God bless you for your care and concern. We ask for your continued prayers.

Peace and Love,



Don Timmerman
for Casa Maria Community

CASA *Cry*



August 2000

Casa Maria

SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!

A parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into a farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule "braying" or whatever mules do when they fall into wells. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule but decided neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened. He enlisted them to haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued to shovel dirt on his back a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that everytime a shovel load of dirt landed

on his back, he should shake it off and step up. This he did over and over again. No matter how painful the blows of dirt or how distressing the situation seemed to be the old mule kept right on shaking off the dirt and stepping up. It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well. When it seemed like the dirt would bury him now it proved to save him. As Christians, we will not be defeated. If God is for us then who can stand against us?
—Joe and Mary Hovel

Often when we demonstrate for non-violence we are met with obscene language, threats of violence, etc. When we protest military spending and use of force we are told that we could not do this if the military had not destroyed the enemy. Our response is that we never want someone to

harm another for our sake. We would rather die and be with God than to be responsible for the harm or death of another. We are called to love our enemies, not destroy or harm them. Are we really free when we take away someone else's freedom to "be free?" Freedom is obtained by loving all, even our enemies, and not by killing or threatening to kill others. We shake off the violence and threats, and step up.

"Certainly, in their 55 year love affair with the bomb, Americans have not measured the cost of this idolatry: spiritual numbing, social denial, moral paralysis. A 19 trillion dollar price tag since 1940 for past, present, and future wars reveals our addiction to war and bloodshed."
—Phil Berrigan

We are still collecting money to send needed children's books to Belize. Please help if you can. We also need dish soap and coffee as well as non-perishable food for the food pantry. If you are interested in offer-

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

ing hospitality to a homeless family or single person, please let us know. There is always a great need for this act of compassion. Michael, Lincoln Ryan O'Rourke and Don go to trial on July 21st for the

Tax Day demonstration at the IRS office asking people not to give 50% of the budget to the military and to fund human needs.

DONS JOKES

- ▲ Little Girl: Grandpa, make like a frog. Grandpa: Why should I do that? Little Girl: Mommy says we're going to make a lot of money when you croak.
- ▲ Patient: Doctor, I feel like a pair of curtains. Doctor: Come now. Pull yourself together.
- ▲ Patient: Doctor, my fingers hurt. Do you think I should file my nails? Doctor: No, just throw them away.
- ▲ What did the doe say when she came out of the woods? Boy, I'll never do that again for two bucks.

- ▲ Did you hear about the undertaker who closes his letters with: "Eventually yours?"
- ▲ Why was Isaac 12 years old when God called Abraham to sacrifice his son? Because if he had been a teenager, it wouldn't have been a sacrifice. (oops!)
- ▲ The average man has 66 pounds of muscle and about three pounds of brains - which explains a lot of things.
- ▲ Sponges grow in the ocean. I wonder how much deeper the ocean would be if that didn't happen?

INTERESTING FACTS

- ▲ Bonnie Urfer and Michael Sprong from Luck, Wisconsin cut down three wooden antenna poles for the United States Navy's Project ELF submarine transmitter. Project ELF sends coded one-way messages to deeply submerged Trident missile-firing subs around the world. Bonnie and Michael brought documents to the site charging the ELF/ Trident complex as illegal under international as well as domestic United States law against planning murder and indiscriminate warfare. They were arrested and now face time in prison.
—Call Nukewatch at 715.472.4185
- ▲ About 52% of the children in New York city live in poverty. God can be found on 5.6 million different internet websites. Some 27,000 species are lost to extinction each year. Writing off all existing debt owed directly to the United States by the most impoverished nations would cost no more than \$2.40 for each American.
—The Other Side, July/August 2000
- ▲ As of the end of the last fiscal year, in September 1999, the United States Agency for International Development, which administers the funding provision of the HelmsBurton Act, had provided some six million dollars in grants to some 18 organizations. An additional three million dollars plus was appropriated

- for the current fiscal year. These organizations for years have been trying to oust Castro from Cuba.
—The Nation, July 2000
- ▲ Hidden subsidies and tax loopholes to politically connected industry and rich people will cost the rest of taxpayers 3.7 trillion dollars over the next seven years.
—Mother Jones Magazine
- ▲ Each year, US taxpayers fund seven billion dollars in subsidies to weapons manufacturers who need to sell or give their weapons away to stay in business by asking taxpayers for more money.
—Peace Action 202.862.9740 They need wars.
- ▲ From October 1994 there has been an increase of 600% in deaths of migrants wanting to enter the United States. In 1998 there were 145 deaths along the California border with 475,000 migrants apprehended and sent back to Mexico.
—Amnesty International
- ▲ It is estimated that the world's 52 poorest nations, with a total population of 1 billion, alone owe an average of \$354.00 per person, to World Bank and IMF.
—Jubilee 2000
- ▲ Estimated barrels of oil illegally exported by Iraq last year: 8,100,000. Amount Shell Oil paid last year to sponsor the wed-

ding reception of the King of Buganda, Uganda: \$3,000.00 -
Harper's Index

▲ There were 29 media monopolies in 1987, 23 in 1990, 14 in 1992 and 10 in 1997. Now there are only six corporations that supply most of the nation's media fare.
-*Washington Spectator, June 2000*

▲ The largest "private prison" company, the 2.3 billion dollars Prison Realty Corp., owns and operates 47 prisons and manages 36 government-owned correctional facilities in 21 United States, Puerto Rico, England and Australia.
-*IAM Journal, May/June 2000*

▲ By one estimate, all the grain fed to United States livestock is equivalent to the amount needed to feed 400 million people. A 1997 study estimated that in the United States, 27% of all edible food for humans was lost at the retail, consumer, and food-service levels. It was wasted.
-*"Running Dry" by Jacques Leslie in The Nation, July 2000*

▲ According to DEA figures, 98% of the 7.3 million dollars the government spent on marijuana eradication programs last year went to kill ditchweed, a type of industrial hemp that grows wild.- *U.S. News and World Report, March 1999*

▲ What are the estimated total life-cycle costs (1989-2070) for cleaning up the environmental legacy of nuclear weapons research, production, and testing and DOE-funded nuclear energy and basic science research? 203 to 247 billion dollars in 1999 dollars. -
-*Center for Defense Information, Washington DC*

▲ Clinton approved an increase of 112 billion dollars over six years for the Pentagon while the General Accounting Office estimated that it would cost 112 billion dollars to renovate and update United States schools.
-*Council for a Livable World Education Fund*

▲ Under current *Milwaukee Public School* proposals the plan would require students to take 52 standardized tests.
-*MPS Division of Research, May, 2000*

▲ The no-fly zones enforced by the United States and British militaries in Iraq have not been authorized by the United Nations
-*Human Rights Action Service, 314.725.5303.*

▲ About 1,500,000 abortions are performed each year in the United States Worldwide, 80,000 women have died from unsafe abortions in 1998.
-*United Nations Report*

▲ There are 36,000 nuclear weapons on earth. Some 5,000 of these are ready to go off within minutes. As many as 40,000 homeless people could be adequately housed for the cost of one Trident submarine. One trillion dollars are spent by nations each year for their militaries. One quarter of one trillion dollars would be enough to provide clean water for all who need it, provide shelter for all who need it, eliminate starvation and malnutrition, provide health care for all, stop soil erosion and deforestation and stabilize world population.
-*Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York*

▲ Around the world, 300,000 children under the age of 18 are involved in armed conflict in more than 30 different countries on nearly every continent. Overall, children worldwide now account for 33% of all modern war casualties. The United States is the major supplier of military aid and training to conflicts that involve child soldiers. In 1997, the United States provided nearly a quarter of a billion dollars of military weapons and training to governments and government supported paramilitary groups that use child soldiers.
-*Amnesty International*

▲ In the United States there are eight times more miles of logging roads than the entire interstate highway system. The United States has lost 90% of its original ancient forests. -*Sierra Club*

▲ First quarter profits in 2000 for oil companies show 500% rise over the same period last year. Texaco's profits rose 473%, Conoco's rose 371% and Phillips rose to 257%.
-*Shepherd Express Metro, June 2000*

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IMPORTANT EVENTS

August 4, 2000

PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN FOR NONVIOLENCE, CATHOLIC WORKER DAY, in Washington D.C. with rallies at the Pentagon to protest violence and waste and at the Israeli Embassy to protest the continued imprisonment of Mordechai Vanunu, prisoner of conscience, in Israel. Call Kathy at 202.882.9649

August 5 - 7, 2000

NATIONAL MOBILIZATION TO END SANCTIONS ON IRAQ in Washington D.C. Don, Roberta and Michael from the *Casa Maria* Community will be doing civil disobedience with others there. Call *Voices in the Wilderness* at 773.784.8065. August 6th marks the 55 years since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, killing over 100,000 people. It also marks the 10th year of United Nations sanctions against Iraq which has killed over 1.7 million people, mostly children.

August 19, 2000

ANTI-GUN VIGIL AT BADGER OUTDOORS, 43rd and Lincoln, from noon to 1:00 p.m.

August 22, 2000

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LETTER WRITING and meeting at Lake Park Lutheran Church, 2647 North Stowell Ave. basement starting at 7:30 p.m. Join us to "write" the wrongs of the world.

August 28, 2000

ANTI-ROTC VIGIL at Marquette University, 12th and Wisconsin Ave., from noon to 1:00 p.m. No Christian community should be encouraging students to kill or be killed to get an education. On this date in 1963 Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have A Dream" speech to 250,000 marchers in Washington D.C.

Please join us in PRAYER each Thursday at *Casa Maria* House at 7:00 p.m.

Don't miss the *Defense Monitor* aired each Sunday at 5:00 p.m. on Channel 36.

Don's daughter, Jessica Boehlke, is doing artwork that can be seen in the *Heart 'N Home Treasures* store in Port Washington,

CASA MARIA CATHOLIC WORKER



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Black Farmers Rally Against Discrimination

by Rick Keilholtz
Family Farm Defender Member

Three Family Farm Defenders from Wisconsin came to Washington, D.C. to support the black farmers May 8, and two volunteered for arrest. The blistering weather could not long dampen emotions, as the third rally and group of arrests was able to get press coverage for the first time, and Congresswoman Maxine Waters called Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickmann on the carpet.

Thirteen were arrested in all, including Randy Jasper and Hank Rosenbalm of WI and Anna Marie Cadario of New Jersey. She is a white farmer in southern NJ, where many high-value truck crops are cultivated. This is the first instance of white farm people supporting the Black Farmers and Agriculturists Association by joining them in being arrested. Eleven were arrested at the first action March 11, and seven were taken in March 20, for trying to get in to see the Secretary. Under an agreement with Washington police, those arrested would be released with a \$50 citation, but warned not to be arrested a second time.

The Monday rally was preceded by one at Cadario's farm Sunday. "I'm a squatter, since 1984", she said there. She told of discrimination she faced as a woman, subject to insider deals by the local agricultural loan officers, who were part of a conspiracy to get her land. Other speakers emphasized the similarity to the experience of black farmers, faced with a local and national system designed to get them off the land.

Basis and History of the Lawsuit

What a sorry century in black farm country! From 1,000,000 black farmers in 1900, the numbers have dropped to under 18,000 today.

The lawsuit by 1,000 black farmers, *Timothy Pigford, et al vs. Glickmann*, was initiated in August 1997, with six claimants asking for \$3 billion. According to

Sherman Richards of Virginia, the claimants were declared a class in Nov. 1998. Judge Freedman signed the preliminary consent decree. Then was the time to make a start to put things right. But the actual numbers speak volumes.

Word is that the Congress appropriated \$3 billion to cover possible claims in the settlement, but the number works in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) decided that only 2,000 \$50,000 settlements would be about right.

President Ronald Reagan cut the USDA budget in 1983 by eliminating its civil rights complaint division which ended any federal investigation of complaints

When the number of possible claimants topped 60,000, measures began to be taken to impede the process, and to intimidate the few who were approved.

There were 14 complaints about the preliminary Consent Decree, raised by 600 farmers, and Freedman made changes, and signed the final version of the consent decree order April 4, 1999.

Two tracks are provided for: Track A, called "easy as tying your shoe", and Track B, where claimants presenting documentation would be eligible for larger amounts.

"We could file no complaints during the period of 1996 to April 4, 1999 on what they did to us then," said Sherman. "They kept on doing it to us," he said. 60,000 black people called the facilitator to get the packet to fill out. About 20,000 sent the packet in. The USDA has gone through most. Around 7,000 were approved, and 3,100 paid, but 3,700 or so are approved and waiting (50,000 black farmers went out of business from 1981-1992.) It appears all of the 3,100 black farmers paid are being investigated for fraud, by the FBI.

"\$50,000 is the amount. We were told we would get debt relief too, that \$150,000 would be the average write-off. But it hasn't turned out that way," Sherman said. "By 2005 there will be no black farmers left."



Waters comes through

Almost 200 protesters were in the park, kitty-corner from the massive Agriculture building, Monday morning beginning at 10 a.m. BFAA pres. and VP, Gary Grant and Eddie Slaughter respectively, opened the rally, with the speeches, first in testimony of the patterns of abuse and discrimination by the Ag and Justice Departments "The USDA has been trying to make my family squatters since 1976", said Grant. Then groups spoke in support of the actions and for enforcement of the Consent Decree. About 20 states were represented there.

Dr. Ridgely Mu'min, BFAA ag economist, had a penetrating rap and used props dedicated to the TERMINATOR GENES and their dangers.

The mass of people moved down the street to the entrance of the Ag Exec. Bldg., and carried signs and chanted, "No justice, no peace. No farmers, no food!"

Meanwhile, Rep. Maxine Waters had taken Grant and BFAA attorney Stephen Bowens into the USDA and sat down with the Ag Secretary and 4 or 5 of his top aides, including the Dept. Controller. Waters insisted on answers, and pledged to begin moving individual cases through the review process right away. Afterward, "Waters for President" was the chant.

Cosponsor of the rally were Food First/ Institute For Food and Development Policy. The National Family Farm Coalition, Family Farm Defenders, Progressive Challenge and Earth Rights Institute. Thanks were also extended to the Socialist Workers Party, which was one of the few organizations to support the black farmers from the beginning, and is organizing trips to Cuba for American farmers and workers.

Update: June 19 Rally

The Black farmers protested again on June 19. Family Farm Defenders Francis and Joe Goodman and Randy Jasper took part in the rally. The farmers plan to rally again before the Fairness Hearing scheduled before Judge Freedman on July 31, 2000.

Institute for Food and Development Policy / FoodFirst!

398 60th St. Oakland, CA 94618
phone: 510-654-4400

3/2/01

Today, genetically engineered bovine growth hormone continues to be used by dairy farmers throughout the United States. The numerous human and animal health and economic concerns about its use include:

Cancer Risks. Insulin-like Growth Factor I (IGF-1) is a hormone found at elevated levels in the milk derived from rBGH-injected cows. IGF-1 is known to survive in the digestive tract, plays a role in cancer in general, and may have significant effects on colon tumors in humans.

Severe Animal Health Problems. Significant animal health problems including a 50% risk increase of lameness (leg and hoof problem), over a 25% increase in the frequency of clinical mastitis (udder infections), and serious animal reproductive problems (including infertility, cystic ovaries and fetal loss) have been associated with rBGH use.

Antibiotic Resistance. Because rBGH use results in elevated mastitis levels, dairy farmers tend to use more antibiotics — residues of these drugs may end up in milk and dairy products. These residues may cause adverse (i.e. allergic) reactions in a few sensitive individuals and contribute to the growth of antibiotic resistance in bacteria, an ever important human health problem.

Loss of Family Farms. Even a small increase in milk surpluses causes a big decline in family dairy farmers' incomes. Milk production has been shown to rise sharply in states where rBGH sales are highest, depressing milk prices nationally.

Because of the FDA's inadequate review, millions of American infants, children, and adults are consuming milk and dairy products derived from cows injected with genetically engineered bovine growth hormone every day!

Write To:
Docket No: 98P-1194
Commissioner Jane Henney
Food and Drug Administration
5360 Fishers Lane
Room 1061 (HFA-305)
Rockville, MD 20852

Tell the FDA to remove this potentially dangerous product from the market!

The Udder Side

By Candis Gay

Rural America is a great place to live. Beautiful scenery, friendly neighbors, and room to breathe. You know what life is. Now you're going to hear about it from, "The Udder Side"

Communities are becoming more and more environmentally aware. We must take care of the Earth and it's resources or they will be unable to provide for us in the future. Farmers have always accepted their role as the Earth's steward. They care for the land, tend the crops, and nurture the animals, providing food for it's inhabitants. Farmers are an important environmentally friendly group.

It is with much pride, satisfaction, and dedication that these people work the land. With the sun on their backs, the wind in their faces, and fresh air to

breathe, they set out across the field determined to complete their task.

Challenges try to deter them. Torrential rains, drought, high prices for fuel, seed and machinery all attempt to discourage the farmer. But they are a determined bunch. Day after day and night after endless night, you'll see old dinosaurs and new sophisticated technology sweep across the land. Neither rain, nor sleet or snow or hail will keep a farmer from his work. (Well almost)

Let's not forget his biggest incentive of all. "John Smith is plowing his fields" or "Paul is planting his corn". Farmers are among the most susceptible to the "keep up with the Jones's" phenomena. Talk about peer pressure.

Wherever the motivation comes from, these devoted individuals deserve our appreciation, admiration, and support. With these renewable resources farmers can continue to survive. Commitment to a sound environment and a stable supply of quality food is ensured if we continue to endorse the family farm.

Field Work

*Ah tis the spring
The air is sweet
The ground is warm
Beneath my feet
The time has come
To work the ground
Satisfaction
I have found
I am to rest
A time seed
Then chase away
The loathsome weed
God is pleased
And so am I
To see what grows
Beneath the skin
It may not look
Like so much fun
But earth and I
Are tuned as one*



Governors Promote Genetically-Altered Food May 3, 2000

Thirteen Governors concerned that opposition to genetically engineered food could hurt farmers and biotech companies in their states announced plans to use their political muscle and coordinate their message with the biotechnology companies who launched a \$50 million advertising campaign to promote the industry.

North Dakota Gov. Ed Schafer, a Republican, is co-chairing the Governors Biotechnology Partnership with Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack, a Democrat. The governors forming the biotech coalition include Democrats Mel Carnahan (MO), Tom Carper (DE), Gary Locke (WA), Frank O'Bannon (IN), and Jim Hunt (NC). Republicans Tommy Thompson, (WI) Dirk Kempthorne, (ID) John Engler, (MI) Mike Johanns, (NE) Kenny Guinn, NV and George Ryan (IL).

On the Internet: USDA biotech:
www.aphis.usda.gov/biotechnology

..... FF&D Events to Come

September 8-10, 2000
Mid-Year meeting in Madison, WI

Food for Thought Festival
September 9 in Madison, WI
Contact Ruth Simpson 608-255-1124 or
rsimpson@terra.com.net

Taste, Technology and Terroir: A
Transatlantic Dialogue on Food
as Culture
September 8 in Madison, WI
Contact Ronnie Hess 608-262-5590 or
rlhess@facstaff.wisc.edu

Jubilee 2000 Outdoor Field Mass
in honor of Family Farmers
September 10, 10:30 am in Stanley, WI
Contact Paul Rozwadowski 715-644-5079

Farm Aid concert and benefit for Family
Farmers in Washington D.C.

vegetables were developed that could withstand drought, others did well in extremely wet conditions. Research projects were contracted with co-ops, which made it very inexpensive and very accountable under normal farm conditions. Co-op farmers, along with individual researchers, followed each project all through the process, and for many years, monitoring long-term results. In one research project, invasive chemical farmed research was compared to biological methods. Over the long term they found biological methods produced the highest yields with the best quality.

Several elements of the society were quite impressive to me. Foremost was the pride that the people had in their accomplishments under difficult circumstances. Whether a street cleaner, farm laborer or a high official, all had dignity and were treated with respect. The highest officials mixed readily with the people as equals. We were able to socialize with several of those officials. The courtesy and the warmth that people of all ages afforded us was overwhelming.

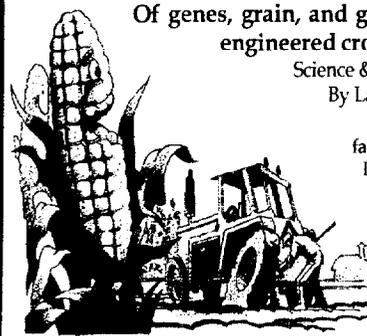
There was a strong spirit of constructive cooperation—a real contrast to the stress-inducing competition seen in some societies. We were also impressed with the general feeling of safety wherever we were. Even late at night in the middle of Havana there was no sense of impending danger when walking down the streets.

Those of us in the US have been led to believe a wide variety of distorted views on how Cuba is governed, what daily life is like for the average person, and the economy as a whole. Yes, the blockage has created some serious shortages of medicines, tractors, cars and many other needed goods. (Farm tractors were a mixture of so many parts that we often could not tell what make they were.) But compared to other Latin American countries, the Cuban people have much to be thankful for. I also believe they have many positive things to share with us in a free and open exchange, and I encourage our government to establish normal diplomatic and trade relations. All the distortions and lies needed to justify our present policies are hurting us as much, perhaps more, as the Cuban people.

There was unanimous hope among the US, Cuba and other foreign delegations to meet again and work together to keep farmers on their land and encourage healthy and prospering communities—wherever they are.



Family Farm Defenders



Of genes, grain, and grocers The risks and realities of engineered crops

US News and World Report

Science & Ideas 4/10/00

By Laura Tangley

It's spring planting time, and Dennis Mitchell faces a dilemma. On the one hand, the South Dakota farmer likes the hardiness of the genetically altered corn and soybeans he has sown on his 3,300 acres since 1997. Even so, Mitchell is thinking he'll cut back on the high-tech crops this season. Why? "We just don't know if customers are going to buy them," Mitchell says simply.

For the first time since the seeds burst on the scene four years ago, many American farmers are expected to decrease the amount of land they dedicate to genetically modified crops—now about 76 million acres. It's not because the plants have performed poorly—they haven't—but rather because consumers, who fear the crops are harmful to human health and the environment, may refuse to buy them. While final statistics will not be available until well after seeds are in the ground, internal surveys conducted by farming interest groups indicate that members may cut back on bioengineered crops by about 20 percent this year. According to Gary Goldberg of the American Corn Growers Association, farmers already have lost more than \$200 million in European exports. Now opposition to "Frankenfood" is intensifying in this country as well. Last week, some 1,500 biotech protesters demonstrated at a scientific conference in Boston. And while small amounts of altered crops already are found in a variety of U.S. foods, several major companies—including Frito-Lay, Gerber, and IAMS pet foods—say they will no longer use genetically modified ingredients in their products.

Time will tell. But are consumer fears about the safety of genetically engineered crops justified? Scientific evidence for either safety or risk is hard to come by—in part because large-scale, long-term trials have not been conducted. Yet recent controversy has spawned a flurry of new research, including a National Academy of Sciences study scheduled for release this week. Early results suggest that while some concerns about engineered crops are exaggerated, others, particularly worries about the environment, may be justified. Plant pathologist Jane Rissler of the Union of Concerned Scientists says, "We're discovering that when you look for evidence of environmental risk, you find it."

There is no evidence that any genetically modified food has harmed a human being. One of the critics' biggest concerns is that manipulating a crop's genome could enhance plant toxins in unexpected ways, by accidentally switching on or off another, nontarget gene. For example, a controversial study by Scottish researcher Arpad Pusztai, published last fall in the *Lancet*, found that rats fed potatoes that had been genetically modified to kill pests suffered health problems ranging from stunted growth to damaged immune systems. But industry scientists, who conduct their own trials before releasing a product, say they never would have commercialized the gene that Pusztai tested because it produces a protein known to be toxic.

Another concern is that people who suffer from allergies may inadvertently be exposed to a protein they react to—if a nut or shellfish gene ended up in corn, for example. Although the Food and Drug Administration requires companies to screen genetically modified products for known allergens, critics worry that new problem proteins could easily slip through the system, especially if they're produced by genes not naturally found in food.

Most biotech protests are fueled by such concerns over human health. But many biologists worry more about how genetically altered crops may affect the environment. One risk is that genes designed to give crops a competitive advantage—such as insect resistance—may be passed to related wild plants with which they interbreed, spawning new "superweeds." For example, biologists have found that a herbicide-tolerant canola cross-pollinates with a related weed, producing herbicide-tolerant descendants. And in a study recently published in *Molecular Ecology*, Allison Snow of Ohio State University reports that the physiological costs of this new trait are "negligible," suggesting that it may persist and spawn more troublesome weeds.

But the public worries more about biotech's impact on animals, even lowly insects. In a well-known study that ignited international controversy last year, John Losey of Cornell University found that monarch butterflies fed milkweed dusted with pollen from engineered

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT FESTIVAL



SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 9TH
WISCONSIN AVE.
OFF THE SQUARE
8:00PM - 1:00PM

The 2nd Annual Dane County Food for Thought Festival (FFTF) will be held September 9 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wisconsin Ave, off the Capital Square. The FFTF is an annual event that offers a fun and festive forum to explore and celebrate the joy of good food. FFTF is organized by Dane County REAP (Research Education Action Policy) Food Group. The Family Farm Defenders is a cosponsor and will have an informational table at the festival.

This year the FFTF has invited Frances Moore Lappé — author of "Diet for a Small Planet" and José Bové — French Farmer and Activist to speak at the event. (See story on the international food conference, Taste, Technology and Terroir.)

The FFTF offers a showcase of over 50 organizations and businesses promoting sustainably grown and produced food. Several events will take place throughout the day: a "Quick & Fresh" recipe contest, food demonstrations, food samplings, informational displays, farm animals, childrens' activities, music and entertainment.

Area cooks are invited to enter their easy-to-make seasonal recipes in the contest. Entrants can win shopping sprees, gourmet dinners, cookbook sets, kitchen equipment and culinary training. Contestants may enter five recipe categories: salas, pasta dishes, uncommon vegetables, wraps and roll-ups, and low-fat treats. Entries are due August 23. For entry forms, call (608) 244-2342 or e-mail tallen@globaldialog.com or Chris Rietz at 226-0300, x206.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT UW-MADISON FOSTERS TRANS-ATLANTIC DIALOGUE ON FOOD AS CULTURE, GENETICALLY-MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Internationally-known chefs, food producers, writers and scientists will gather at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Friday, September 8, for an all-day conference on the cultural importance of food and about questions concerning genetically modified organisms. The conference, entitled "Taste, Technology and Terroir: A Transatlantic Dialogue on Food as Culture," will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fluno Center, 601 University Avenue, Madison. The conference, being sponsored by the International Institute, is made possible, in part, with a grant from the Anonymous Fund.

The conference aims to explore the social and cultural contexts of "terroir," the idea of food as culture, and to examine the ways in which food, science and politics come together in the arena of GMF. The conference will focus on the changing relationships in these areas between France, the European Union, and the US, with a focus on Wisconsin.

Featured speakers in the morning include acclaimed American chef Charlie Trotter, owner of Charlie Trotter's Restaurant in Chicago; Robb Walsh, culinary essayist for National Public Radio and "Natural History" magazine; and Harriet Welty Rochefort, author of "French Toast," an irreverent examination of French and American cultural differences.

Afternoon speakers include José Bové, a French sheep farmer and leader of the radical farmers' union, the Peasants Confederation (Confédération Paysanne). Mr. Bové was arrested in France last year for sacking a McDonalds restaurant under construction in southern France to protest economic globalization. (Mr. Bové's trial began on June 29th.)

Other speakers include David B. Schmidt, Senior Vice President, Food Safety at the International Food Information Council; Rebecca Goldberg, head of the Environmental Defense Fund's Biotechnology Program; Julian Kinderlerer, Sheffield Institute of Biotechnological Law and Ethics, the University of Sheffield, UK; representatives from the European Union; and Jim Murphy, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative, Agriculture, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Washington, D.C.

The conference is free and open to the public. Advance registration, however, is strongly encouraged. Reservations for lunch are required. The cost for lunch at the Fluno Center is \$15, tax and tip included. For information, contact Ronnie Hess (608) 262-5590. E-mail: rlhess@facstaff.wisc.edu.

"Taste, Technology and Terroir" is sponsored by the International Institute of the UW-Madison and three of its member programs - the European Union Center, the Center for European Studies, and the Center for German and European Studies.

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corn either died or developed abnormally. In the Midwest, milkweed, the monarch's favorite food, grows in and around cornfields. Research is now underway to find out how often caterpillars and engineered corn come together.

Interrupting nature. Entomologists point out that the engineered corn contains a toxin derived from a soil bacterium and known as Bt-chosen for its lethality to moth and butterfly larvae, so the monarch results are not surprising. More unexpectedly, Angelika Hilbeck of the Swiss Federal Research Station for Agroecology and Agriculture recently published studies showing that Bt also kills larvae of green lacewings-beneficial bugs that feed on crop pests. By planting Bt crops, says Hilbeck, "we risk disrupting the regulatory mechanisms that naturally keep pests in check."

Other studies suggest that Bt crops may also disrupt the below-ground ecosystems that keep soil fertile. In research published last winter in Nature, Guenther Stotzky of New York University discovered that Bt corn leaches the toxin through its roots and that the poison remains lethal for months. In another report, Katherine Donegan of the Oregon-based Dynamac Corp. found inexplicable changes in both soil chemistry and microbial life after Bt crops decompose.

But for many farmers, the most frightening risk of insecticide-producing crops is that long-term exposure to high doses of Bt will help bugs develop resistance to the chemical, which has long been used in small amounts as a safe, natural pesticide.

To slow the evolution of resistance, the Environmental Protection Agency in January issued rules requiring farmers who plant Bt corn to sow at least 20 percent of their fields in traditional varieties. The agency also asked farmers to voluntarily plant conventional corn around the edges of their fields to protect monarch butterflies. Indeed, as evidence of risk and public jitters mount, more restrictions on altered crops are expected in the future.



Family Farm Friends march for Justice in Madison, WI