

Written by Kimberly Hartke
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The Weston A. Price Foundation
Kimberly Hartke, Publicist
For Immediate Release 703-860-2711, cell 703-675-5557

FDA CONCEDES RAW MILK ACROSS STATE LINES OK FOR PERSONAL CONSUMPTION

But continues to broadcast misinformation about unpasteurized dairy

Washington, DC (November 17, 2011)—In a statement issued on November 1, concurrent with a raw milk freedom rally held outside FDA headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, the agency conceded that it “has never taken, nor does it intend to take, enforcement action against an individual who purchased and transported raw milk across state lines solely for his or her own personal consumption” [

www.fda.gov/Food/Food

[Safety/Product-SpecificInformation/MilkSafety/ucm277854.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/Product-SpecificInformation/MilkSafety/ucm277854.htm)

]. This statement reverses FDA’s prior position in which the agency reserved the option of taking action against individual consumers crossing state lines with raw milk. Federal regulation 21 CFR § 1240.61 prohibits the introduction of raw milk for human consumption into interstate commerce.

A caravan of moms brought raw milk across state lines on November 1 and served it to rally participants in front of FDA headquarters.

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“Unfortunately, FDA’s announcement allowing individuals to transport raw milk across state lines is filled with the same misinformation that the agency has spread in the past,” says Sally Fallon Morell, president of the Weston A. Price Foundation, an organization that sponsors A Campaign for Real Milk, aimed at universal access to clean raw milk. “FDA continues to insist that raw milk is dangerous, when even the agency’s own exaggerated list of outbreaks shows that raw milk is safer than other foods.”

“FDA lists outbreaks associated with raw cheese, produced in less than sanitary conditions, as ‘outbreaks caused by raw milk,’ thereby inflating the number of illnesses associated with raw milk,” says Fallon Morell. “The actual number of illnesses associated (but not necessarily proved) with raw milk is about forty-two per year, which makes raw milk a very safe food given the large number of raw milk consumers. No deaths have been associated with raw milk during the past twelve years, but three people have died from tainted pasteurized milk.”

FDA insists that raw milk drinkers constitute less than 1 percent of the population. Yet a 2007 government survey found that about 3 percent of the population consumes raw milk, or about nine million people. This number is likely to be higher today as raw milk consumption is growing rapidly. Even in the state of Maryland, where raw milk sales are illegal, over 3 percent of respondents stated that they drank raw milk. “This milk is coming from Pennsylvania, where raw milk sales are legal,” says Pete Kennedy, president of the Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund, “to the great detriment of Maryland farmers.” According to Kennedy, hundreds of thousands of dollars of farm sales each year flow from Maryland to Pennsylvania.

The Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund is currently representing citizens challenging the interstate ban on raw milk in an Iowa federal district court .

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According to Fallon Morell, “FDA continues to insist that no science exists to substantiate the nutritional and health benefits of raw milk, yet we now have five European studies, published in peer reviewed journals, showing that raw milk provides powerful protection against asthma and allergies. And there is copious scientific research showing that pasteurization of milk denatures and diminishes the effectiveness of enzymes and vitamins in the milk.”

Moreover, raw milk is designed to build the immune system—the components that do this are denatured by the heat process of pasteurization. FDA claims that the elderly, the immune-compromised, children and pregnant women especially should avoid raw milk. “These are the very people who need it the most,” says Fallon Morell.

The [Weston A. Price Foundation](http://westonaprice.org) is a nutrition education non-profit with 550 local chapters worldwide, and close to 13,000 members. The organization works to educate the public about the health benefits of unprocessed milk from grass-based dairies through its Campaign for Real Milk, <http://realmilk.com> .

CONTACT: Kimberly Hartke, press@westonaprice.org , 703-860-2711, cell 703-675-5557

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