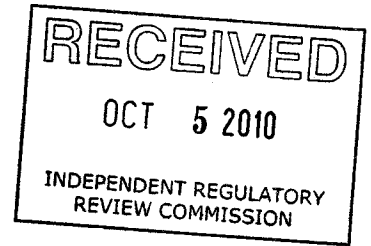


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Shomper, Kris

From: Maren Leyla Cooke [maren@huarp.harvard.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, October 05, 2010 9:21 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: Milk regulations



Dr. Maren Leyla Cooke
6745 Forest Glen Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
4 October 2010

Greetings.

I am a consumer (as well as a scientist, science educator, and beginning urban farmer), and am glad that I live in a state where I can buy raw milk for my family.

The assumption that pasteurization is necessary for safe dairy products is based in part on the prevalence of poor agricultural practices (cattle evolved to roam freely and eat grass, not to stand in their own manure in crowded conditions and be fed grain and mastitis-inducing hormones) and in part on historical misconception (the reduction in milk-borne diseases like tuberculosis in the first half of the last century was due mainly to improved hygiene among dairy workers and closed mechanical milking systems that eliminated things like hand-milkers coughing onto their hands or into open milk reservoirs). Pasteurization is necessary when the milk is contaminated -- but it is far better to produce milk in such a way that it does not become contaminated!

The dairy industry is a long way from the universal adoption of humane, hygienic, and biologically appropriate methods; I hope that new regulations help move the majority of Pennsylvania dairy farmers toward those practices. In the meantime, however, please do not make it even more difficult for those that have already made the transition to the more clean and natural methods to produce and sell their products. Regulations are great when they create a level playing field and ensure public health and safety along with that of the workers and the animals involved. Please don't tie the hands of earnest and careful farmers who are willing and able to provide a safe and nutritious product! These farmers are often small operators that would be unable to comply with some of the provisions of the new rules (*e.g.*, new packaging requirements) -- and the consumers of their milk are hardly clamoring for the change.

I recommend that the PDA withdraw the proposed final regulations so that they can be reworked to enable the inclusion of better sanitation guidelines (or, failing that, that the IRRC reject the current version).

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Maren Leyla Cooke