

COUNTERPOINT - To the MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE June 28, 2010 EDITORIAL entitled "Recklessly Ignoring Raw Milk's Danger- Ban on raw milk sales is needed to protect families"

I am a person who has been a healthy and happy customer of Minnesota's farm-fresh, organic and clean raw milk products for at least a decade, and, in addition, I grew up with it. As such, I've been mystified and stunned by the knee-jerk reactions and hostility expressed by the media. Especially since the writers of inflammatory articles such as this one, show no sign of being scientists themselves nor do they seem familiar with the production, distribution and actual safety record of raw milk. Allegations are suddenly "facts", incomplete and inconclusive investigations are now "indictments".

In the same week as the the raw milk outrage, we have seen another similar example of harsh and simplistic judgements. Note the torrents of easy rage unleashed towards at the parents of the 16 year old girl who attempted to sail solo around the world. Meanwhile, throughout her sail many of these same critical parents may have mindlessly bought their own children their daily supply of Skittles and Sugar Pops (somebody is buying them!). A third of the children in America are pathologically obese with type two diabetes raging in our midst. Why no screaming headline "Reckless Parent Ignoring Sugar's Danger!" .

The recent staff editorial "Recklessly ignoring raw milk's danger" came off as a critical scientific statement excoriating "internet idiots", know-nothings who, like lost sheep wander into the clutches of bad farmers who want to poison them. According to the editorial, these easily bamboozled fools clearly need the government to "protect them". But yet there wasn't a shred of scientific backbone to the article. Science begins with a literature review and there was no evidence of that. Robert S. Mendelsohn, MD wrote "the opposite of 'dirty' milk is not 'pasteurized' or 'homogenized'. The opposite of 'dirty' is 'clean'." We all want clean, wholesome, humane, sustainable food, be it milk, meat or lettuce.

I've been deeply involved with the production, distribution and legalization of clean, wholesome raw milk in the Twin Cities area. The typical raw dairy customer is vastly more knowledgeable than, say, the average supermarket shopper. They are for the most part well-read parents who duly note the well-documented facts regarding the declining safety and nutrient density of "conventional" food. We are realistic. We know there is no 100% safe food. We know that if every category of food that ever caused an occasional incidence of food poisoning were made illegal, there would be no hamburger, no lettuce, no eggs, no cheese, no hot dogs, no spinach. Virtually nothing to eat! We also know that improvements are always appreciated and necessary. We welcome those changes.

True "food bio-security" can only come from organic, sustainable family farms. Never from imported food, never from a factory farm, never from a huge corporation. The interpersonal connection of a group of consumers to a family farm builds trust and relationship. We want to shake the hand that feeds us. This way, if a health problem is

suspected, at worst, only a few are exposed, and the problem can be stopped quickly, then corrected. A year ago, one contaminated batch of commodity hamburger from a factory farm-sourced, mass-produced facility caused a recall of over 120 million pounds of potentially-dangerous hamburger! Tens of thousands of school children had already eaten most of it! US Food Service had to deal with nearly 400 food recalls last year alone! The rare small family farm outbreak, while also tragic, affects only a few families at the most, and is very easy to trace and correct.

Raw milk is historical and global. It may come from cows, goats, sheep, donkeys, camels, llamas, horses, water buffalo, or yaks, but it's almost always consumed raw or fermented. Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine prescribed raw milk to cure TB. The Bible extolls the virtues of wholesome nourishment as when God led the enslaved people out of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, promising Moses a "land of flowing milk and honey". Raw milk is still consumed all around the world in vastly greater amounts than pasteurized milk. It was never considered a potential pathogen-source in the United States until we had "factory" dairies that employed tubercular and sick immigrants who milked by hand. We never had an epic problem with pathogens in milk until East Coast dairy cattle were fed by-product feeds from whiskey by-product grain. These weakened animals produced dirty milk that was made slightly safer by heating it. Pasteurization was offered as a "band-aid" in order to continue the business of selling dirty milk. It's gotten worse.

There is a tremendous difference between milk produced for pasteurized markets and milk that is produced to be consumed raw. Since pasteurization has become law, the standards for bacteria, white blood cells and even coliform organisms has been seriously watered-down. Deadly pathogenic bacteria are NOT routinely found on small family farms using pasture-based farming, clean facilities, and the opposite of feedlot/concrete/factory standards. Milk no longer touches dirty hands nor an open milk bucket but runs through glass and stainless steel pipes to the bulk tank. Deadly pathogens come from cities, off-farm workers, the use of feedlot-runoff irrigation water, and from confinement and unsanitary conditions. Pathogens take root when the animals are under-nourished, indoors, confined and over-worked. Hundreds of thousands of people who think they are "allergic" to milk or have "lactose intolerance" can almost always thrive on wholesome, pasture-based, organic raw milk! Their "allergy" or "intolerance" was merely a perfectly normal immune reaction to "cooked" bacteria and pus, to artificial hormones, to traces of genetically modified grains, to traces of mold from bad grain, to feed-based antibiotic residues, and to denatured proteins from the modifications done to "modern milk" such as pasteurization and homogenization.

There is a mountain of rock-solid (non-industry funded) scientific study showing that wholesome raw milk IS actually a powerful health tonic and elixir! Books have been written about raw milk by medical doctors such as the founders of our very own Mayo Foundation, where medical care using the European "milk cure" was practiced. The terrible diseases of the day (TB, Brucellosis, and chronic degenerative disease) were routinely cured by inpatient treatment at the Mayo, using nothing but their own "certified" raw milk for cure. Staff physician J.E.Crewe ruefully wrote at the time, that after 15

years of seeing more cures with the milk cure than any other form of medicine that “the medical man is disinterested in this natural cure”. It was apparently “too simple to believe”. There is only one “perfect food” in the world, meaning a food that would sustain your life (in excellent health) alone, eating nothing else. That is raw milk. Pasteurized milk will not do that.

The Hartmann farm has been selling raw milk to hundreds if not thousands of people for at least a decade and yet there have been no reports of illness until recently. I have been on the farm many times, and, in contrast to the reports, found it to be far closer to a “pastoral utopia” than a filth pit. The Hartmann cows are truly loved and babied. This is a farm family that have devoted their lives towards making the best milk humanly possible. Likewise, if problems exist, they will do whatever necessary to correct the problems. The article states that “responsible dairy farmers would blanch” if they saw the Hartmann farm. In actuality, I have been on dozens of commercial dairy farms in my work, farms that sell milk that could only be sold as pasteurized milk. Milk that would definitely sicken you if you tried it raw. These farms made me sick. I can’t even describe here the cruelty and shortcuts taken in the corporate desire to manufacture massive quantities of a super cheap white liquid that vaguely resembles milk.

Unit for unit of milk, far more consumers have been made ill by pathogens found in contaminated pasteurized milk than by raw milk. In fact, there are fewer cases of food poisoning by raw milk than by any other food of animal source. Bagged lettuce is actually the most-likely food to cause illness from food poisoning. Pasteurization does not kill all pathogens, the bacteria that may be associated with Crohn’s disease is not destroyed by pasteurization. Raw milk has enzymes and immune cells that destroy pathogens via a natural preservation system.

In recent years at least 5 other states have looked at the science behind both sides of the issue and decided to legalize the sale of raw milk. More states are expected to ratify sales in the future. For factual scientific information about the decision to drink raw milk, I recommend the books THE UNTOLD STORY OF MILK by Ron Schmidt, THE MILK DIET AS A REMEDY FOR CHRONIC DISEASE by Dr Charles Porter, and THE MILK BOOK-HOW SCIENCE IS DESTROYING NATURE’S NEARLY PERFECT FOOD by William Campbell Douglass, MD. There is also excellent information on www.rawmilk.com, www.realmilk.com, www.westonaprice.org, and www.ftclfd.org, The Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund sells a book called RAW MILK PRODUCTION HANDBOOK by Tim Wightman, that explains exactly how farmers can raise healthy, nutritious, safe and totally delicious raw milk.

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