



Raw Milk Supporters to Hold Rally on Capitol Steps Tuesday, May 18th at Noon

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Madison, WI

Supporters of raw (unpasteurized) milk announced today that they will be holding a rally on Tuesday, May 18th, on the Capitol steps, urging Governor Jim Doyle to sign the so called "raw milk bill." The bill, which passed both the Assembly and the Senate, would allow dairy farmers to sell raw milk directly to consumers on their farm. Farmers would be required to have a Grade A dairy license, and a special permit from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Monthly testing of the milk would be required, and farmers would have to keep a customer list and log of who purchased milk. Frozen samples of every batch of milk would also be required.

"Raw milk is a health building traditional whole food." said Andrew Mastrocola, the Jefferson & Waukesha County chapter leader of the Weston A. Price Foundation, which supports the consumption of raw milk. "Many people who believe they are lactose intolerant are able to consume raw milk without problems, because it has not been de-natured by excessive processing and the high temperatures of pasteurization."

Mastrocola elaborated on the history of pasteurization and raw milk. "Pasteurization was first used in the United States in the 1890's to control the hazards of highly contagious bacterial diseases from confinement type operations in the major cities, where cows were fed heavy diets of grains from the local brewers. It is not the 1890's anymore. Raw Milk can be safe, even safer than processed foods. Consumers today are well informed and educated. Pasture based, grass fed animals produce nutrient dense, safe, and highly palatable food. Please let us have the liberty to make these educated decisions for ourselves and our families."

Governor Doyle indicated he would likely sign the raw milk bill in late April, but has back pedaled in the last week because of pressure from several dairy business interest groups. "I represent a new generation of Wisconsin cheesemakers, and I support the aims of this legislation," said Bill Anderson, a 25 year old apprentice Wisconsin cheesemaker. "The best cheeses in the world are made with high quality raw milk from pasture grazed animals. I believe that the dairy industry lobbyists who oppose this legislation do not represent the best interests for the future of Wisconsin dairy. Countries such as France, Italy, and Switzerland, which consume large amounts of dairy per capita, have long and respected traditions of consuming raw milk and raw milk cheeses produced on an artisanal scale." Added Anderson, "Hopefully the next time this legislation is visited, we can include other raw dairy products as well, such as butter, cultured cream, yogurt, and raw milk cheeses aged less than 60 days such as brie or camembert."

The legislation has a sunset clause at the end of 2011, so the issue will likely be revisited. "Governor Doyle has an opportunity to help usher in a new golden age of Wisconsin dairy," said Scott Trautman, an organic dairy farmer. Trautman was selling raw milk on his farm, before DATCP's crackdown on raw milk sales in late 2009. "We take great pride in the quality of the milk that we produce here, and take cleanliness and food safety very seriously." Trautman also sells grassfed beef, pastured pork, chickens, and eggs at his farm in Stoughton, WI.

More consumers looking for organic, local, and healthy foods have taken an interest in raw milk. "I want the choice to feed my family clean raw milk from grass fed cows," said Rosanne Lindsay, a Fitchburg mother of three. "The beneficial bacteria and healthy fats in raw milk promote a strong immune system and healthy bodies. Why mess with nature's perfect food?"

The rally will begin at noon on Tuesday, and will include testimonials from consumers about the health benefits they have experienced from consuming farm-fresh whole unprocessed (raw) milk. It will be held on the Capitol steps, at the State Street corner.

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