

tmp34[1].txt

From: Jane Donnell [jkdonnell@ameritech.net]
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 4:05 PM
To: AGSEC -USDA
Subject: milk concerns

Dear Tom Vilsack,

I have jsut learned that you are considering issues regarding the handling of milk products and related regulations and fees. I ask that you, and your staff, thoroughly consider the issues and implications prior to proceeding.

My partner and i are two of many in my community and across the US that are becoming more aware the food choices we make and the implications for animals, our environment and the health of our bodies and communities. We are shifting to buying more locally produced food that contains the most nutrients, comes the shortest distance and with the least amount of packaging, .

For the past several years, I have been buying milk (and butter and eggs as well) almost exclusively from a local, small scale NE Ohio dairy. I do this because i can buy it from them in glass returnable bottles, I know they pasture their cows, avoid growth hormones and antibiotics, and employ people from our region.

I understand there are some policies being considered that may have dramatically negative impact on me and my local dairy. Large scale farms are in a position to absorb fees and regulations that could put the small farm under. If the milk lobby is coming from a big-farm perspective, they may be advocating action that benefits large companies and on the surface appears positive for US citizens, but could limit my options for purchasing freshly bottled, in a BOTTLE, milk from a small dairy that is only 60 miles away and that i trust.

Please proceed with care and be sure to consider the implications to small farms and consumers such as myself who are moving away from buying "cheap" food without regard to the real "price" that is paid by all concerned.

It seems to me that a very effective way to ensure food safety is to know the people who are providing it, and i hope you and your office take that into consideration in this matter.

Thank you,

Jane K. Donnell

Cleveland, OH 44120