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peting milk. In 2003, Monsanto sued Oakhurst Dairy in Maine over a label statement that read, "Our farmers' pledge: no artificial growth hormones." The suit was settled out of court, when Oakhurst added the language: "FDA states: No significant difference in milk from cows treated with artificial growth hormone."

Last year, Monsanto appealed to the FDA to review the approved label wording for rBGH and also sought action from the Federal Trade Commission regarding advertising of rBGH free milk.

The FDA declined to act, noting that it would only intervene in cases where fraudulent claims – as opposed to product descriptions – were made on the milk label. In dismissing Monsanto's complaint, the FTC also found no instance where a national company made false claims about rBST.

Having failed in the federal arena, it now appears Monsanto is lobbying state governments to cover up the labels and reduce consumer choice. Pennsylvania was the first to fall, but in a particularly encouraging development, many consumer groups joined with dairy processors objecting to the action. Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture also initiated a letter writing campaign to the governor, who was caught off-guard by the Agriculture Commissioner's decision.

The governor put on the brakes in December, reconvening a committee to consider the matter. Any action of label would be delayed for at least another month. But if Pennsylvania decides to go forward in February – and other states follow suit - a farmer's right to free speech and consumer's right to choice will be dealt a blow. Expect more news on letter writing campaigns and possible law suits ahead.

Samuel Fromartz is the author of Organic, Inc.: Natural Foods and How They Grew (Harcourt, 2006). His website is at <http://www.fromartz.com> and he blogs at <http://www.chewswise.com>. ♦



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The AgroFuels Craze

By John Kinsman, Adapted from the June 2007 magazine "GRAIN" (www.grain.org)

What is behind the rapid expansion of biofuels across much of the globe? In the process of gathering material from colleagues and social movements from around the world, the editors of GRAIN discovered that the stampede into biofuels is causing enormous environmental and social damage, much more than they realized earlier. Precious ecosystems are being destroyed and hundreds of thousands of indigenous and peasant communities as well as family farmers are being thrown off their land. Many of us believe that the prefix bio, which comes from the Greek word for "life", is entirely inappropriate for such anti-life devastation. So, following the lead of non-governmental organizations and social movements in Latin America, they will not be talking about biofuels and green energy. Agrofuels is a much better term to express what is really happening: agribusiness producing fuel from plants to sustain a wasteful destructive global economy.

The agrofuels lobby and the Inter-American Development Bank are targeting several hundred million hectares of land for agrofuels production in Latin America, Southeast Asia and Africa. We are talking about expropriation on an unprecedented scale. With millions of people hungry and starving in these countries, diverting land away from food production is a crime of horrifying proportions.

We must all be taking a closer look at the way corporations are using this stampede into agrofuels to extend their takeover of world farming. We are experiencing a veritable frenzy of investment as companies from different sectors leap on the bandwagon. An unparalleled process of mergers, takeovers, and alliances is tightening the grip of a relatively small group of huge interlinked agri-industrial groups. Many analysts believe that the market is heading for a crisis of over production. Once the bubble has burst, only the most powerful groups will remain, thus furthering the process of concentration.

The conclusion is pretty much the same around the world: the push for agrofuels amounts to nothing less than the reintroduction and reinforcement of the old colonial plantation economy, redesigned to function under the rules of the modern neoliberal globalized world. Recent studies show that the slave-like working life of sugar cane workers in Brazil is 10 to 12 years; the same as overworked slaves during the slave era in the United States.

One of the main causes of global warming is agro-industrial farming itself, and the global food system

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associated with it. Although it is scarcely ever mentioned, farming is responsible for almost 14% of greenhouse gas emissions. Within farming, the largest single cause is the use of chemical fertilizers, which introduce a huge amount of nitrogen into the soil and nitrous oxide into the air. And a large part of global transport, which is responsible for a further 14% of emissions, stems from the way in which the agro-industrial complex moves large quantities of food from one continent to another. It is abundantly clear that we can halt climate change only by challenging the absurdity and the waste of the globalized food system as organized by the transnational corporations. Far from contributing to the solution, agrofuels will only make a bad situation worse.

John Kinsman is a 4th generation farmer from Saul County in Southwestern Wisconsin. He presently serves as secretary of the Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (MODPA) board, president of Family Farm Defenders, secretary of the National Family Farm Coalition and board member of American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association. An organic dairy farmer, his operation also includes managed organic forestry acres. Rotational grazing has been part of the operation for over 40 years. ♦



More Organic Milk Sought in Northeast

Farms should be sure to have a market secured before beginning the 12 month herd transition.

CROPP Cooperative~Organic Valley Family of Farms, the nation's largest farmer owned organic marketing cooperative continues to grow its dairy producers base now and into the future in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and all of the New England States. Current market conditions underscore the need for our founding principles of supply management. Near term, we have ample milk supply and we are now directing producers interested transitioning to organic dairy production to begin their 12 month transition no sooner than the Fall of 2007. We offer a stable, competitive organic milk pay price once certified organic and a complete year of Transitional Funding for new farmers during herd's transitional year as well as Staff Veterinarians, Farmers Relations staff support, the Organic Trader, and inclusive communications. In addition, our Farm Resource department can help refer, source and finance feed purchases for your operation.

In New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia contact Peter Miller, Northeast Region Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888) 444-6455, x3407 to leave a voice message, or mobile at (612) 801-3506, peter.miller@organicvalley.coop. In New England States contact John Cleary, New England Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888)-444-6544 x3330 to leave voice mail, or mobile at (612)-803-9087, or email at john.cleary@organcivalley.coop

HP Hood continues to look for high quality farms for our organic milk supply. We are eager to talk to farms that are ready to begin their herd transition in the fall of 2007. Our routes encompass a number of Northern Tier States (ME, NH, VT, NY, PA, OH, MI, WI, MN, IA) and we would like to hear from you. Our support of sustainable agriculture, a signing bonus and transition assistance have helped many already. Please call Karen Cole, HP Hood Milk Procurement, karen.cole@hphood.com or at 1-866-383-1026.

Upstate Niagara Cooperative, a dairy farmer owned, full service cooperative headquartered in Buffalo, NY is continuing to **grow** its supply of organic milk. The members of Upstate Niagara Coop

own and operate 4 milk plants in Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Rochester. Our members are interested in producing organic milk and processing organic dairy products. We currently process & package fresh, not ultra-pasteurized organic milk in our Rochester Milk Plant. If you are interested in learning more about Upstate Niagara Coop, please visit our website at www.upstatedfarms.com or contact me. Enjoy your day.....Bill Young 800-724-6455 byoung@upstateniagara.com

LOFCO continues to look for milk in PA/MD, particularly southeast PA. The market is strong. Please contact Levi Miller at 717/661-8682 or Jerry McCleary at 717/577-8809.

Dairy Marketing Services (DMS) continues to market more than 50 percent of organic milk in the Northeast. DMS was established to deliver efficiency in services and enhance returns from the market directly back to producers at a minimal cost. It offers a wide range of services to producers such as health insurance and workers compensation through Agri-Services Agency, leases and loans from Agri-Max Financial, farm inputs and supplies through Eagle Dairy Direct, and herd management software from Dairy One. For more information, please contact Dave Eyster at 1-888-589-6455, ext. 5409 or david.eyster@dairymarketingservices.com.

Horizon Organic continues to grow its producer partner network in the East and Midwest. Horizon Organic offers competitive pay, transitional funds during the 12 months transition of the herd and long-term contracts. Producers in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Michigan, Virginia and Kentucky contact Cindy Masterman 888-648-8377; New York, Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania contact Peter Slaunwhite 800-381-0980; Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana contact Mike Bandstra 877-620-8259.

United Ag Services in Seneca Falls, NY is looking for organic milk in NY and northern PA. Please call 800-326-4251. *Any buyers looking for organic milk who would like to be listed in this column for the March 2008 issue, please email the desired text to Ed at ednodpa@comcast.net or call 413-772-0444 by February 18th 2008*