



News Release

2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201
703.243.6111 • www.nmpf.org

"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, November 1, 2011

Contact: Christopher Galen
(703) 243-6111 ext. 356
E-Mail: CGalen@nmpf.org

NMPF Urges Food and Drug Administration to Defend Laws Against Raw Milk Sales As States Waver in Face of Pressure, Feds Need to Hold Fast in Defense of Food Safety

ARLINGTON, VA -- The nation's top public health organization needs to stand firm in the face of mounting pressures to further legalize the direct sale to consumers of a potentially dangerous product: raw milk, the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) said today, as it urged the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) not to waver in the face of pressure tactics from raw milk supporters.

Those supporters were out in force today at the FDA headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, urging FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg to cease federal efforts to ban the trafficking in raw milk sales across state lines. Current FDA law prohibits the interstate sales of raw milk, although the majority of states allow some form of in-state sales and/or distribution of raw milk.

Raw milk supporters have increased their criticism of the FDA interstate sales restriction "in spite of the clear and compelling documentation that raw milk is a proven means of transmitting serious human pathogens, including *E. coli* O157:H7, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Salmonella*," said NMPF President and CEO Jerry Kozak. "We hope that Commissioner Hamburg looks at the evidence, and doesn't just listen to the noise from those who would weaken public health protections."

While raw milk advocates have made numerous statements touting the benefits of consuming raw milk, these claims mislead consumers and have not been supported by science-based studies, Kozak said.

"Raw milk consumption is inherently dangerous because the product can contain pathogens that are capable of causing foodborne illness," Kozak said. "Pasteurization is one of the most effective food safety tools developed and, when properly conducted, is the only way to ensure that milk is free from disease-causing microorganisms."

-more-

NMPF RELEASE///PAGE TWO

Kozak said it is particularly concerning that a key constituency in the raw milk movement includes mothers who wish to purchase the product to feed to their children. He noted that more than three-quarters of foodborne illness outbreaks associated with raw milk or milk products involve a child.

“Kids are particularly vulnerable to the diseases caused by the pathogens that may be consumed with raw milk. There are numerous cases where long-term illnesses have resulted from the ingestion of raw milk,” Kozak said. “The FDA needs to stand on the side of protecting public health, especially the health of minors whose parents may not fully grasp the potential consequences of the hazards they are exposing their kids to.”

“Many diseases are not preventable, but where there is a clear and effective prevention against milk-transmitted foodborne illness, why would we allow the myths and untruths to remove that protection?,” Kozak asked.

The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF’s 31 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 32,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. Visit www.nmpf.org for more information.