

Seamons, Colleen

From: Catherine Bender [catherine.bender@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2010 8:33 PM
To: submissions
Subject: Submission regarding Proposal P1007 - Primary Production and Processing Requirements for Raw Milk Products

Categories: Blue Category

Submission regarding Proposal P1007 - Primary Production & Processing Requirements For Raw Milk Products

Hi, My name is Catherine Bender and I am a naturopath, store manager and food lover. I work at Healthlands Nutrition Centre in Leichhardt NSW and can be contacted either on my mobile number: 0431 262 266 or on this email: catherine.bender@gmail.com.

I hope this email contributes to the permission of Australian raw milk products, particularly cheeses. In other modern parts of the world, raw dairy is the norm and pasteurization is seen as the abnormality. I do not suggest that all pasteurisation be stopped, however I do believe in the freedom of choice, and also supporting a local over an imported product.

Overarching questions:

1) The overarching scope of the Proposal is assessing the safety of raw milk products using the Category Framework. FSANZ has undertaken a Technical Assessment based on three Risk Assessments (Raw Cow Milk, Raw Goat Milk and Raw Milk Cheese), a Consumer Study and Nutrition Assessment - Can you identify any aspects we have not covered at this point?

The Proposals exaggerate the risks of raw milk products.

They state that "Because of the potential for raw milk to be contaminated with pathogens, raw milk and products made from raw milk present a high level of risk to public health and safety if there are no control measures to manage the microbiological hazards that may be present."

It is a false assumption that the risks are "high level" for raw milk products. A more realistic description for raw milk products is "they present an additional risk to public health and safety compared with products made from correctly pasteurised milk".

2) We have summarised the impacts by option in Table 1 in the Report. Do you have any comments on the overall assessment? Can you identify other benefits and costs to the affected parties?

For raw milk cheese, the overall assessment seems to be far more alarmist than the technical assessment suggests. I consider that the technical assessment indicates that all soft cheese should be placed in Category 2, reserving Category 3 for raw drinking milk alone.

I would be willing to pay top dollar for gourmet cheese products that were produced from raw milk. The choice is worth the extra price, even if this price is beyond current gourmet cheese prices. I understand it is a specialised market. I am also prepared to pay the additional price for the cheese required to cover costs of additional safety testing on raw milk products.

I would really like to support local farmers and producers over an imported product.
Please allow the freedom of choice!

Many thanks,

Catherine Bender

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