

Seamons, Colleen

From: Carolyne Buckhurst-Matravers [c.bm@bigpond.com]
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To: submissions
Subject: Regulation of unpasteurised dairy products

Categories: Blue Category

Carolyne Buckhurst-Matravers
476 Moggill Road, Indooroopilly, QLD 4068
0422 935 089
c.bm@bigpond.com.au
fax: 07 3878 4425

Please accept this as my position on the current legislation regarding the sale of unpasteurised dairy products in Australia.

Above all I find it is unacceptable and somewhat dictatorial to me as a free thinking, intelligent adult, that the choice of what I may or may not legally purchase and consume is made for me. Furthermore the system is flawed and full of double standards which allow me to legally purchase and consume raw seafood, raw meat products (including salami) and soft serve ice cream which is nothing more than a bacterial swamp which is semi frozen and thawed over and over again.

I may legally drink and smoke myself to death if I wish, but I am prohibited from purchasing a whole, natural and nourishing food.

It is hypocritical to legislate the dairy industry using public safety as the reason while at the same time poisoning the public by mass dosing us with fluoride in the water supply. Anyone who wishes to take fluoride can get it as a supplement from the chemist. The rest of us don't want it.

I have had to buy a water distiller to make my drinking water pure and perhaps I will have to buy a cow too so I can have access to pure dairy product.

- 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.

3) Would Australian consumers benefit from a greater range of cheeses and dairy products? Please provide details.

Absolutely. The slow food movement and the general appreciation of quality, natural product is growing all the time. You only have to have a look at the numerous farmers markets around the country to see that the public are ready to try and buy all sorts of new product.

4) FSANZ has received comments that raw milk cheeses are likely to be gourmet, high-end market products. Costs associated with ensuring the safety of products may also be passed on to the customer - if raw milk cheeses were permitted:

a. How much would you be willing to pay for such cheeses?

Whatever they cost. If I want them and they are more expensive I just buy a smaller piece. It is all about quality not quantity with this sort of food.

b. Are you willing to pay more than the cost of current gourmet cheeses?

Yes - in fact I generally don't bother with cheeses anymore because they are not of the standard I am looking for and are mostly disappointing

c. Are you prepared to pay more if there are added costs in ensuring the safety of raw milk products?

Yes. I always support organic and bio dynamic type producers already. Everything I buy costs more than the normal supermarket equivalent. I buy carefully, I don't waste and it all balances out in the end. It is a lifestyle choice.

d. Would you choose to purchase an Australian raw milk cheese over an imported equivalent?

Yes. I would prefer to buy local product. Unnecessary importation is bad at so many different levels - the obvious one being the 'carbon footprint'. I only buy imports if there is nothing similar available in Australia.