

BODY, MIND, AND SOUL

The Campaign for Real Milk

With Simone Gabbay, RNCP

Toronto, Ontario



On December 20, 2006, Ontario farmer Michael Schmidt ended a nearly month-long hunger strike during which he had consumed

nothing but water and one glass of raw milk each day. Schmidt stopped eating on November 21, after his farm in Durham, Ontario, was raided by the Ministry of Natural Resources, his equipment was confiscated, and he was charged with operating a milk processing plant without a licence. The real grievance, however, was that Schmidt's milk was not pasteurized.

The sale of raw, unpasteurized milk is illegal in Ontario, but farmers are allowed to drink raw milk from their own cattle. And by extension, those who own cows or shares in a "cow-share" program may do so as well. Taking full advantage of this loophole, Schmidt's loyal customers have become part-owners by purchasing a share in one of his cows. They pay him \$2 a litre for raw milk from the co-owned cows.

My friend Andrea has been drinking Schmidt's organic raw milk for several years, and she is convinced of its health benefits. Having once suffered from serious allergies and dairy intolerance, she now has no problem digesting and assimilating raw milk. In fact, she believes that drinking the raw milk from Schmidt's grass-fed cows has helped her overcome her allergies. She tirelessly drives several kilometres

each week to pick up her supply of milk, eggs, and butter from Schmidt's farm.

Lack of time and inability to commit to a regular milk pick-up prevented me from following Andrea's example, but I fully support Schmidt's efforts to make raw, unpasteurized milk available to those who want it. I had the good fortune to grow up on raw milk, which was ubiquitously available in the small mountain village in southern Bavaria where I spent my childhood. Everybody drank raw milk, and allergies were virtually unknown. And no one became sick because they consumed unpasteurized milk.

Raw milk is one of nature's perfect foods, containing important enzymes that facilitate the digestion of the nutrients in milk. The denatured, pasteurized version most of us are forced to purchase today is devoid of these natural components and is one of the reasons why so many people are unable to digest milk products and develop allergies and various other health problems. *When properly handled, raw milk is not contaminated and does not pose a health risk.*

Although pasteurization ensures that the potential risk of pathological bacteria present in raw milk is eliminated, it does so at a cost. It also kills beneficial bacteria and thereby effectively *promotes* pathogens. In addition, it destroys vitamins C, B12, and B6, and it denatures milk proteins. One of the enzymes destroyed by pasteurization is lipase, which helps to

digest the fats found in dairy products, which in turn are essential for the assimilation of important nutrients such as calcium.

Proponents of raw milk, for instance the respected Weston A. Price Foundation in the U.S. (www.westonaprice.org), claim that modern sterilization and refrigeration procedures make pasteurization unnecessary. The sale of raw milk is allowed in several countries around the world, including parts of the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, and Italy. In many cases, it is regulated, and the raw milk being sold in those countries must be certified. Certification and regulation of production would legalize the sale of raw milk in Ontario, and it is towards this goal that Michael Schmidt had committed to a hunger strike.

Although he failed to achieve his objective, he is convinced that his protest was successful in drawing attention to the issue, which will ultimately result in change. Indeed, Schmidt's raw milk campaign was widely featured in the media and drew the support of such notables as Ontario's Finance Minister Greg Sorbara, who is one of Schmidt's customers. Several celebrity chefs, including Jamie Kennedy, also publicly supported Michael Schmidt's raw milk crusade.

I applaud the courage of Michael Schmidt and those who are willing to stand up for choice and endorse his natural farming practices and products. Our governments give their blessing to

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Campaign for Real Milk *(Cont'd from page 4)*

countless toxic chemicals being dumped on our farm fields and into animal feed every day, with terrible consequences for consumers' health. But they go after one small farmer who produces a simple, organic food that supports human health instead of destroying it. Where is the logic and justice in this? It is appalling that those of us who want natural, unprocessed foods for ourselves and our families are facing constant harassment from uninformed government agencies forcing their blind agendas on the public.

Until Canadian consumers are given a real choice for real milk, what options do we have? If the milk you buy is pasteurized, even if it is organic, you may want to consider consuming most of your dairy in a form that is lactic acid bacteria (LAB) fermented, such as yogurt, buttermilk, or kefir. The protein, fat, and milk sugar in yogurt and other fermented milks are predigested, and the lactic acid bacteria help to recolonize the intestines with beneficial

bacteria. Cayce reading 404-2 agrees that if raw milk is not available, LAB fermented dairy is preferable:

"Raw milk to be sure, is better - but pasteurized milk needs to have that added that will make for a better activity with the gastric juices ... Those like the Bulgarian forces, as make for the proper reaction of the bacilli that becomes active with the gastric juices."
(404-2)

A number of traditional European cheeses, as well as certain cheeses produced in Quebec, are also made from raw milk. Choose these whenever possible to derive maximum benefit from dairy's outstanding nutrient profile.

And let's look forward to the day when Ontario's dairy farmers will have the option to offer their customers a real choice for real milk! ♡

Simone Gabbay, RNCP, is the nutrition columnist for A.R.E.'s Venture Inward magazine and the author of Nourishing the Body Temple: Edgar Cayce's Approach to Nutrition and Visionary Medicine: Real Hope for Total Healing.

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