

Another Organic Farm Has Killed Someone - This Time with Raw Milk



By *Hank Campbell* — March 29, 2016

A person in Florida who bought raw chocolate milk produced by Miller's Organic Farm in Pennsylvania [passed away after getting Listeria](#) ^[1], after thinking they were consuming something more "natural" that would make their immune system stronger.

Foodborne illnesses are far less common today than a century ago precisely because pasteurization is. Thanks to science, we learned over 150 years ago that heating something like milk to a high enough temperature would result in bacteria like *E. coli*, *Listeria*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* being killed. Milk products used to be responsible for numerous illnesses and death but now, second to vaccines, pasteurization could be argued as being one of the greatest health boons of the 20th century.

Yet for some reason avoidable diseases due to milk have come roaring back in fashion. Some of it is hipster rebellion against the elders -- if old people embrace vaccines, natural gas and food for the poor, those must be uncool. [It is apparently quite frustrating to younger](#) ^[2]scholars, who are annoyed at those in their generation who believe having a beard like 1864 means learning no science after that date either.

ANTI-SCIENCE IS HELLA ILL!

a guide to the new anti-science hipster

ANTI-VAXX

vaccinations are out and dank strains of retro viruses are in

1. SHIIICKLY PALLOR

that jaundice tan is lookin' fly

2. DOPE SLEEVE

all-natural measles tats are the illest

GMO? OH NO!

beat-generation style pesticide use is an uber cool alternative

3. CERTIFIABLY DOPE

non GMO-verified shoulder kitty because shoulder kitties weren't already dope enough

4. H₂Ooooooh SNAP!

GMO-free water in a sweet petro-bottle

CLIMATE DENIER

clima-nihilism is where it's at

5. WINTER BEARD

climate change? have you even BEEN to Brooklyn in January?

6. BURN N' TURN

keep up emissions even when you're biking around on the fixie: put a motor on it!



#HipsterScience

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Anti-science millennial hipster via [Science Ally](#) [3]

For some others denying science, from vaccines to pasteurization to GMOs and energy, is part of a modern day naturalistic fallacy -- as if people who didn't even have running water or know what germs were in the past somehow lived healthier and smarter than we do now.

In the 21st century, raw milk remains responsible for nearly three times more hospitalizations than any other foodborne disease and [the hospitalization rate](#) [4] for patients in outbreaks caused by raw milk is 13 times higher than the rate for people in outbreaks caused by pasteurized milk.

Thankfully, it is only a tiny, wacky part of the market today and is likely to remain so. Killing someone will not help increase its popularity. Worrisome is that more states are considering it despite another death, and [anti-science hippies are being aided in their efforts by misguided libertarians](#) [5] who would like to keep government out of something ... anything, and will take unsafe milk as a win if that's all that's available.

True Believers in all things woo about food say the CDC evidence against their raw fetish is "murky," but that is just codespeak provided by the well-organized marketing campaigns of those making money selling raw milk. They promote the same sort of nonsense that all organic marketing does (and pays Deniers For Hire like U.S. Right To Know and SourceWatch to attack anyone who disputes) -- gibberish like that raw milk reduces lactose intolerance and promotes a stronger immune system. [Science long ago determined that is not true](#) [6].

Is there an easy fix? Not really. Some people believe believe the island of Atlantis is buried under the ocean, possessing technology that far surpasses ours, some believe vaccines cause autism and [the Houston Museum of Natural Science even believes Thierry Vrain](#) [7] is right and every other scientist is wrong about genetically modified foods. In all those cases, their supporters say it is critical to "listen to all sides" and "teach the controversy" -- because they are in defiance of what everyone but homeopaths, naturopaths and all those other "-paths" selling something know to be evidence-based. So it goes for raw milk.

It's okay for people to have wacky beliefs, that is the delightful thing about human diversity. But unless you like playing Russian Roulette with a porcelain throne you shouldn't rush to embrace raw milk, raw sprouts or anything else proven to be dangerous. Buy organic if you feel you must, to be cool at California PTA meetings or retro D&D (no AD&D, Blackmoor only!) game night, but just make sure it is something where the feces and the toxic organic pesticides involved are making no difference -- like an onion or a pineapple or ... rock salt.



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Credit: [MNN](#) ^[8] and Shea Gunther's friend Jes, who took the picture.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/03/29/another-organic-farm-has-killed-someone-this-time-with-raw-milk>

Links

[1] <http://www.cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/raw-milk-03-16/index.html>

[2] <http://www.forbes.com/sites/gmoanswers/2016/03/18/find-common-ground-genetic-engineering/?source=acsh.org>

[3] <https://twitter.com/ScienceAlly/status/563898045449125889>

[4] <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/rawmilk/nonpasteurized-outbreaks.html>

[5]

http://www.science20.com/science_20/raw_milk_is_not_a_libertarian_issue_and_republicans_should_not_make_it_a_133509

[6] http://www.science20.com/news_articles/does_raw_milk_reduce_lactose_intolerance_no-131392

[7] http://www.science20.com/kevin_folta/pseudoscience_to_shine_at_houston_science_museum-168974

[8] <http://www.mnn.com/food/healthy-eating/blogs/facepalm-of-the-week-non-gmo-salt>