

# Milking Consumer Fears

By ACSH Staff — March 24, 2008

It's a pretty sad state of affairs when grocery sellers decide to market their wares by kowtowing to consumer fears. But that's what seems to be happening now. [Wal-Mart has decided not to sell milk from cows that have been treated with rBST \(recombinant bovine somatotropin, or growth hormone\)](#) [1] -- even though the FDA has said more than once that milk from such cows is no different from any other milk. Now the Kroger company is planning to do the same, and in addition [the company wants to label the milk](#) [2] as not from rBST-treated cows.

Of course, no one adds BST to milk -- except the cow who needs it in order to make any milk at all. The only thing the additional injected rBST does is maintain the levels of BST at early lactation levels for an extended period -- thus increasing the cow's productivity (see [other](#) [3] ACSH [examinations](#) [4] of rBST). The fact is that there has never been any substantiated scientific study showing that milk from cows treated with rBST is any different from milk from untreated cows. The hormones are so similar that you can't tell them apart, nor can the FDA.

Who really stands to gain from the sale of this "untreated" milk? Not consumers, surely -- but it certainly keeps the marketers busy and creates the false impression that the companies are looking out for consumers' welfare. If these companies really were concerned, they'd resist the temptation to pander to activist-inspired fears of biotechnology products such as rBST.

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[1] <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-walmart22mar22,1,5486647.story>

[2] <http://news.enquirer.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080323/BIZ01/803230359/1076/BIZ>

[3] [http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubID.320/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubID.320/pub_detail.asp)

[4] [http://www.acsh.org/factsfears/newsID.191/news\\_detail.asp](http://www.acsh.org/factsfears/newsID.191/news_detail.asp)

[5] <http://ACSH.org>

[6] <http://HealthFactsAndFears.com>