

OPPOSING LEGISLATION PERMITTING  
THE SALE OF RAW MILK PRODUCTS

Raw milk represents a well-documented source of foodborne disease. Some of these infections can be life threatening. Prior to the establishment of routine pasteurization, the consumption of raw milk products accounted for approximately 25% of all reported foodborne illness. Today, this exposure accounts for less than 1% of reported illness. This success is a testament to the quality of pasteurized products and the impact of restricting raw milk products.

Earlier this year, the Centers for Disease Control released analysis of 121 dairy-related disease outbreaks between 1993 and 2006 affecting 4,413 people and causing 239 hospitalizations and three deaths—60% of these outbreaks and nearly all of the hospitalizations were directly attributable to non-pasteurized milk products which represent approximately 1% of all dairy products consumed. Infants and children are more likely than adults to get seriously ill. Outbreaks related to pasteurized dairy products are usually caused by relatively mild infections like norovirus, whereas raw milk outbreaks are caused by bacteria, such as E.coli o157, which tend to produce more serious illnesses.

Perceived increased health benefits to raw milk compared to pasteurized products have not been substantiated scientifically. Pasteurization of milk does not reduce nutritional benefits. Pasteurized milk is fortified with additional nutrients including vitamins A and D, increasing the health benefits of pasteurized milk products.

In October 2011 the Board of Health for Madison and Dane County reviewed and affirmed the policy statement of Public Health—Madison and Dane County opposing the consumption of raw milk.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors opposes legislation which would legalize the sale of unpasteurized milk products and encourages its elected officials to oppose the same.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors directs county staff to alert the County's state legislative delegation about the need to oppose legislation to legalize the sale of unpasteurized milk products