

Seamons, Colleen

From: Georgie Scott [georgie_scott@yahoo.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 24 February 2010 4:50 PM
To: submissions
Subject: RAW MILK proposal

Categories: Blue Category

) 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.

Include and answer below if you wish, otherwise delete Consumers:

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

Yes, and the ability to purchase Australian made raw milk products.

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?

Like all local, organic, 'real' food there is a cost that is passed onto the consumer. I would be willing to pay more for the farmer's effort and artisanship, just as I pay more for my fruit and veg.

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

Yes, for the reasons stated above. The consumer must have a choice, and cheese makers the opportunity to make the best possible product via their means and ability. To produce Australian cheese, from Australian cows / sheep/ goats, made by Australian owned companies and individuals.

c. Are you prepared to pay more if there are added costs in ensuring the safety of raw milk products? If necessary, however presumably FSANZ have such systems already in place for testing considering that listeria and other bacterias can live just as happily (some evidence suggests more happily) in pasteurised milk.

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