

## **“Rawsome.” Community Comment** Mike Goldsby July 5, 2016

**“Don’t eat that cookie dough. You’ll get sick.” I remember hearing that as a kid, usually right before I would eat a delicious spoonful of raw cookie dough or cake batter. Turns out, there is some truth to that warning.**

**The Centers for Disease Control report close to 50 people across several states have been stricken with e Coli illness from contaminated flour. And many of them ate raw flour in cookie dough.**

**Recalled products were sold in stores nationwide and may be in your pantry. The flour was sold under three brand names: Gold Medal flour, Signature Kitchens flour and Gold Medal Wondra flour. The varieties include unbleached, all-purpose, and self-rising flours.**

**General Mills has issued a voluntary product recall. So far, no one has died but many have been hospitalized.**

**As a kid, I was always told it was the raw eggs that were the problem. We often had chickens and either gathered our own fresh eggs or got them from neighbors. We would dutifully wash the eggs before we used them, but in our family, we never ate raw eggs, except of course, in cookie dough.**

**I worked in local dairies through high school and college. I drank a lot of raw milk and never died. But there are very good reasons to pasteurize raw milk. I am a former Public Health employee, so you can call my opinion biased if you wish. Selling raw milk is illegal in 18 states, because of the small risk of contamination even from very small, clean, grass pasture organic dairies. Selling raw milk is legal in California but Humboldt County wisely has an ordinance prohibiting its sale.**

**Pasteurization is supported by the CDC, The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and the American Academy of Pediatricians.**

An amusing story came out of West Virginia recently, when their legislature approved the sale of raw milk through shares in dairies. One of the sponsors, Delegate Scott Cadle, celebrated by bringing a gallon of raw milk into the capitol. Three people got ill and went to the hospital after they drank the milk. The Health Department there could not find a conclusive link between the illnesses and raw milk, in part because they could not obtain a sample of the milk to be tested.

Cadle, the guy who distributed the raw milk, said quote, "It ain't because of the raw milk. With that many people around and that close quarters and in that air and environment, I just call it a big germ. All that Capitol is is a big germ." End of quote.

For more information on the raw flour recall, go to the General Mills website: <http://www.generalmills.com/flour>

And a very interesting article on raw milk can be found in Mother Jones, the October 2012 issue.

<http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2012/09/is-raw-milk-safe-e-coli>

This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment.