

It has always bothered me that our county supervisors voted on January 11, 2011 to maintain a 1947 ban on the sale of raw milk in retail stores. Their unanimous vote was essentially to take no action and any supervisor could revisit the issue if they choose. It is past time to revisit this issue and get rid of this law that is stifling potential economic growth and consumer demand.

As organic foods have risen in popularity, artisanal foods like raw organic cheese and milk are also undergoing a renaissance. More and more people are recognizing that the industrialization of our food system has dramatically reduced the quality of our food and is undermining our health.

Whether you believe raw milk is healthier than pasteurized is not my concern. My issue is simply choice! You can purchase certified raw milk in any retail store that chooses to carry it in all the counties in California except Humboldt, Trinity and Kings. New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Washington and Idaho also allow the sale of certified raw milk but in Oregon you can only purchase certified goat and sheep milk. While I have never heard of anyone going to jail for selling raw milk in Humboldt county, it is still a criminal act punishable by up to a \$1000 fine or up to 90 days in jail for each individual infraction.

The fuss about raw milk has to do with pathogens that can make you sick, sometimes seriously. The big four are E. coli, campylobacter, listeria and salmonella. It is important to understand that for raw milk to be healthy and safe it *must* come from healthy organically raised cows that graze on pasture. Grade A milk intended for raw certification in California must meet much higher standards than milk destined for pasteurization.

Is it possible to get sick from drinking raw milk? Yes! But it's also possible to get sick from eating a salad, a cheeseburger, pasteurized milk or a bowl of fruit. In fact, you're far more likely to be infected with a

foodborne illness when eating any number of foods other than high-quality certified raw milk. Today, green leafy vegetables are the most frequent cause of food-borne illness in the United States.

Humans drank raw milk long before the pasteurization process began. Most people don't know that raw organic milk from grass-fed animals was actually used as a medicine in the 1920's. Today, in Germany, successful raw milk therapy is provided in many hospitals. And get this, hundreds of small family farms currently supply over 1300 raw milk vending machines in Italy alone.

Let's get this issue on the Supervisors calendar at least by January of 2018. This 70 year old law needs to go!