

Dear PASA Members,

The time has come to take action on the milk labeling debacle in Pennsylvania! We had planned to ask you in the week after Thanksgiving. But the time has come a bit sooner when we need an urgent flood of messages to let our leaders in Harrisburg know what you think.

Please take a few moments before the holiday, or perhaps just after, to write to Governor Rendell and let him know what you think of PDA's move to restrict product labeling claims involving artificial hormones and other substances many of us do not want used in the production of our food.

We are asking you, if at all possible, to write a REAL letter (it'll get more attention) to the governor at the following address:

Governor Edward G. Rendell
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

If time is short, you may use this email address and follow the instructions as prompted:

http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Governor/govmail.html

Or, just call his office at **(717) 787-2500** right now and make your feelings known to whomever answers.

Sending copies of any correspondence with the governor to your local legislators would make sense as well. We're also asking that you consider writing letters to the editors of your local papers or of the ag press (*Lancaster Farming, The Farmer's Friend, Farm & Dairy, etc...*) to let people know your thoughts about this issue. It's important that PASA members be heard at this critical time!

Perhaps no single issue in Pennsylvania agriculture during this first decade of the new century has run so contrary to

the goals of sustainability. Sure, labels can be misleading, and we do need state leadership in deciding how they can be consistently and fairly applied. But it is simply outrageous to think that keeping consumers in the dark on important matters involving their food is the better way to go. As always, it's important that you individually express your opinions in ways that demonstrate the diversity and thoughtfulness of the PASA membership. But for those who want some help in formulating those thoughts, I offer the following considerations:

- **Animal Welfare** – Cows treated with rBST have higher rates of mastitis and shorter lives in general.
- **Human Health** – The science is inconclusive as to whether or not there are long-term negative effects on humans who consume milk from rBST-treated cows.
- **Freedom of Speech** – Farmers need the ability to use truthful claims on labels that help them communicate with their customers and make a good living.
- **Consumer Information** – It's not irrelevant at all for consumers to know who uses artificial hormones and who doesn't.
- **Ethical Consistency** – Why are performance enhancing drugs banned in other aspects of our daily lives, but not in food production?

There are many other points that could be made, and I look forward to seeing what many of you come up with. **But the important thing is that you make your voices heard right now!**

Please send this action alert to your friends, neighbors, customers and any other group in Pennsylvania you can think of who might care about this issue. I'm also sharing

with you an op-ed written by me that was published in today's (11/20/07) *Centre Daily Times* – it is attached. Please feel free to distribute this as you wish, possibly even to your local papers.

Let's enjoy this week of Thanksgiving knowing full well that food is one of our most precious resources, and that we are united in defending the integrity of how it is produced and marketed to the public.

Yours sincerely,
Brian Snyder, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)