

Public Health Alliance of Iowa

Affiliate Members

IOWA COUNTIES PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Julie Schilling, President

IOWA ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Dawn Jackson, President

IOWA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Dawn Gentsch, President

IOWA SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

Kim Tichy, President

Public Health Alliance of Iowa

February 5, 2010

To: Iowa General Assembly

From: Public Health Alliance of Iowa

Re: Opposition to HF 2290 – Permitting the Sale of Unpasteurized Milk

The Public Health Alliance of Iowa (PHAI) is united in its opposition to the sale of unpasteurized milk in Iowa. Every year, food-borne illnesses in the U.S. cause **5,000 deaths, 325,000 hospitalizations and 76 million illnesses**, at a cost of billions of dollars. Outbreaks of food-borne illness from contaminated food products and produce regularly make headlines. Food safety is critical to maintaining the health of the public. In many cases, food-borne illnesses are easily prevented through proper handling and preparation and processes such as pasteurization.

THE SCIENCE

Pasteurization is the process of heating milk to a high enough temperature for a long enough time to kill any disease-causing bacteria contained in the milk. Numerous dietary studies show that the nutritional effects of pasteurization are minimal, and the health risks posed by consuming raw milk are real. Raw milk and its products provide an ideal environment in which bacteria (e.g., *Brucella*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, *Mycobacterium bovis*, *Salmonella*, Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*, *Shigella*, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, and *Yersinia enterocolitica*) can grow.

From 1993 to 2006, 69 outbreaks of human infections resulting from consumption of raw milk were reported in the U.S. These outbreaks resulted in a total of **1,505 illnesses, 185 hospitalizations and 2 deaths**. Iowans have become ill after consuming raw milk that was donated for special events:

- **Jones County** (2004) - 30 people attending a dinner became ill with diarrhea and chills after consuming raw milk contaminated with *Campylobacter* bacteria.
- **Lyon County** (2005) - 31 people attending a fundraiser became ill after consuming raw milk contaminated with *Campylobacter* bacteria.

The Public Health Alliance of Iowa joins the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in **supporting evidence-based public policy that protects the health of Iowans through the pasteurization of milk.**

Contact Information: iowapha@gmail.com // 515.491.7804