



WINNESHIEK COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

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The members of the Winneshiek County Board of Health are writing to express our opposition to House Sale of Raw Milk.

Public Health in the United States takes pride in the great strides we have made in the elimination and reduction of disease during the 20th century and pasteurization of dairy products is one of the main reasons. Raw milk and raw milk products can be contaminated with harmful bacteria such as *Brucella*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, *Mycobacterium bovis*, *Salmonella*, Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*, *Shigella*, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, and *Yersinia enterocolitica*. Infection with any of these bacteria can lead to serious illness and, in some cases, death. Although often strained for funds, Public Health Departments across the state continue to provide many services to prevent disease. The manpower needed to investigate and the potentially high numbers of people infected with disease from the consumption of raw milk does not exist within any Public Health Department.

Pasteurization is the only way to ensure that milk products do not contain harmful bacteria. Pasteurization is the process of heating milk to a high enough temperature for a set period of time to kill any disease-causing bacteria contained in the milk. Despite this processing, pasteurized milk remains rich in proteins, carbohydrates and other nutrients. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Dietary Guidelines for Americans, discourage the consumption of raw milk because of the serious health threats and cite pasteurization as an essential food safety tool.

Health care professionals are acutely aware that not all illnesses are diagnosed because some people do not have the means of seeking medical care for a variety of reasons. From 1998 to 2008, 86 outbreaks of human infections resulting from raw milk consumption were reported in the United States. Iowa had two of those outbreaks! The Des Moines Register reported that milk from a dairy in Pennsylvania was linked to 38 diseases in four states (Des Moines Register, February 4, 2012).

As Governor Branstad has publicly declared his goal for Iowa to be the healthiest state, we cannot afford to risk the health of Iowans and strongly urge you to defeat any bill allowing for the sale of raw milk in any form.