

Grass Fed Dairy Study Shows How Much Better It Really Is



By Dr. Joseph Mercola | mercola.com

If you've heard about omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, you may be aware that while they're essential human nutrients, consuming too much omega-6s and not enough omega-3s can raise your risk of developing heart disease, obesity and diabetes. The trouble is, the majority of Americans eat 10 to 15 times the amount of omega-6s compared to what they eat in omega-3s.

According to a recent study¹ published in Food Science & Nutrition, cows fed a diet based on 100 percent organic grass and legumes produce milk with more omega-3 and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA, another extraordinarily heart-healthy fatty acid), which provides a substantially healthier balance of fatty acids. The improved fatty acid profile in [grass fed organic milk](#) and dairy products brings the omega-6 to omega-3 ratio to a near 1-to-1, compared to 5.7-to-1 in conventional

whole milk.

Studies have previously determined that eating organic beef or dairy lowers omega-6 intakes and at the same time increases omega-3 intakes as well as CLA, another extraordinarily heart-healthy fatty acid. Collaborative clinical studies conducted in four countries, including the U.S., have concluded that cows on a 100 percent organic grass- and legume-based diet produce milk with higher omega-3 and CLA levels, which makes for more balanced levels of fatty acids.

Undertaken at Newcastle University in England, Southern Cross University in Lismore, NSW Australia, the University of Minnesota and Johns Hopkins University, the studies further indicated that the superior fatty acid profile in grass fed organic milk and dairy products, which the researchers refer to as “grassmilk,” is far preferable to the ratio of fatty acids found in [conventional whole milk](#). Science Daily noted other benefits:

“Daily consumption of grassmilk dairy products could potentially improve U.S. health trends. In addition to the well-established metabolic and cardiovascular benefits of omega-3 fatty acids and CLA, there are additional benefits for pregnant and lactating women, infants, and children.

Various forms of omega-3 fatty acids play critical roles in the development of eyes, the brain, and the nervous system. Adequate omega-3 intakes can also slow the loss of cognitive function among the elderly.”²

The benefits of consuming grass fed milk over the conventional kind are quite dramatic when you examine the nutritional benefits, because they translate to health in a big way. Study coauthor Charles Benbrook, a visiting scholar at the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University, noted the “near-perfect balance of [omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids](#) in grassmilk dairy products” in helping consumers find a fairly

quick and easy way to reduce their cardiovascular and metabolic disease risks.

[Related Article: Beef Industry Rife with Corruption, But New Grassfed Dairy Standard May Help \(Be Informed\)](#)

How Cow's Milk Is 'Managed' in the U.S

Science Daily noted that the colleagues involved in the study, "Enhancing the Fatty Acid Profile of Milk through Forage-Based Rations, with Nutrition Modeling of Dietary Outcomes," compared the fatty acid profile of U.S. cow's milk produced using one of three production systems:

- "Grassmilk" cows, for the most part, consume a 100 percent organic grass and legume-based diet, which they either forage themselves in pastures or are fed via stored silage or hay.
- Organic cows' feed is made up of around 80 percent Dry Matter Intake, aka DMI from forage-based feed, along with 20 percent grain and feed concentrates.
- Conventional feeding systems for cows consist of around 53 percent DMI and the remaining 47 percent from grain and concentrates, a combination that takes in more than 90 percent of all milk cows in the U.S.

However, Bradley Heins, researcher, associate professor of dairy science at the University of Minnesota and coauthor of the study, suggests that converting from [conventional feeding systems](#) to grass-based pasture and forage-feeding to meet increased consumer demand for organic dairy products may boost profitability and market share for producers.

Grass fed milk offers the most omega-3s – 0.05 grams per 100 grams of milk as opposed to the 0.02 grams in conventional milk. That's a 147 percent increase in omega-3s, making it the

obvious choice for anyone interested in eating (and drinking) to benefit their health. As for the omega-6 content, grass fed milk delivers 52 percent less compared to conventional cow's milk and 36 percent less than organic milk.

Grass fed milk also provides the most CLA, with 0.043 grams per 100 grams of milk compared to 0.019 grams in conventional milk and 0.023 grams in organic. When you do the research and discover such vast differences in the nutritional profiles of milk depending on how it's "managed," it doesn't take long to surmise that the conventional approach to milk production may fast be approaching obsolescence, which has caused a major ripple in the dairy community.

Ripples in the Dairy Industry

It's probably not hard to see that the dairy industry could be impacted by the release of the nutritional superiority of grass fed over conventionally raised milk, and even the milk wearing an organic label, but the ways it's been impacted probably weren't anticipated. However, as the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) observes, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) still has a ban on the interstate sale or distribution of raw milk.

To remedy that, the Real Food Consumer Coalition (RFCC)³ submitted a petition April 26, 2017, requesting that the FDA lift its ban on raw milk and allow raw milk dairy farmers to "distribute unpasteurized milk in interstate commerce, as long as it bears a warning label and instructions for safe handling." The Coalition calls the present ban an unnecessary burden on family farmers and notes:

"There are only seven states – Montana, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, Louisiana, Iowa and Delaware – where raw milk is expressly illegal. Still, FDA regulations make raw milk contraband whenever it crosses state lines. Even though the

threat of federal prosecution has pushed most farmers away from raw milk sales, 3 percent of the public (approximately 9.4 million people) still regularly consume unpasteurized milk.”⁴

The RFCC contends that raw milk could be a big boost to the economy. In fact, one study found that if Wisconsin had just 100 raw milk dairy farms and each served 50 families, it would pour \$10 million into the state’s economy.⁵ More importantly, such a boost would be the encouragement U.S. farmers in rural areas need, especially since they’ve been closing their proverbial doors at unprecedented rates.

An example from Vermont is cited by National Public Radio (NPR) in an article titled, “As Big Milk Moves In, Family-Owned U.S. Dairy Farms Rapidly Fold.” It tells the story of a small milking farm that went under in early 2017: “They are the last remaining dairy herd in Weathersfield, and they’ll be auctioned off this week. This is a growing trend in [the changing dairy industry](#) – in the state and beyond.”⁶

Between 1950 and 2012, the number of farms with milking cows, NPR reports, plunged from 3.5 million to around 58,000. The problem is that milk prices aren’t high enough to sustain the business. In fact, they’re not much higher than they were 40 years ago, even while the cost of living has risen exponentially. But it’s become a global trend, as something similar is happening in China, Australia and New Zealand.

[Related Article: The Dirty Habits of the Dairy Industry and Why Pasteurized Products May Be Worse Than Raw](#)

Meanwhile, Problems Flourish in the Dairy Industry

It’s not just plummeting milk prices that have caused

problems. Northeastern farmers are suing their co-op, Dairy Farmers of America, and Dean Foods, the latter being the largest milk producer in the U.S., saying they conspired to monopolize the market and drive down prices, even though it was clear the milk producers involved would have no buyers. According to Bloomberg:

“Dairy farmers are suffering because the companies that send their milk to the grocery store refuse to pay them what it costs them to produce the milk. On the West Coast, cooperatives created to sell dairy products have been accused by their members of pocketing millions of dollars in an elaborate accounting scheme.”⁷

Tellingly, one dairy co-op even provided [suicide](#) hotline numbers to the farmers in its network, according to Valley News,⁸ based in New Hampshire. Supporting this scenario, a recent NPR article reports that three farmers in one relatively small dairy cooperative took their own lives; most in the industry put it down to the emotional and financial toll, depressed prices, more milk than there is a demand for and lower prices overseas. One farmer noted that he’s making about 75 percent of what he needs in order to breakeven.

While organic dairy farmers are making more money for their product compared to conventional dairy operations, prices are still below production costs. Still, farmers are reluctant to throw in the towel because of an “agrarian imperative” and other factors, from financial pressure to “a sense of powerlessness in an industry where prices are set by the government, combined with social isolation, and a self-reliant spirit that may make them loathe to seek help,” NPR reports.⁹

OCA notes that for a while organic dairy farmers were selling raw milk directly to consumers, which helped them stay flush through price fluctuations until, it adds, “Organic Valley banned the practice.”¹⁰

Why Opt for Raw Grass Fed Milk?

Besides modern testimonials regarding the health advantages of drinking raw organic grass fed milk over cartons of CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) milk from standard grocery stores, medical books from the early 1900s cite case studies associated with improvements and remedying chronic disease and disorders, including:

Crohn's disease	Asthma
Lyme disease	Acne
Urinary tract infections	Psoriasis
Migraines	Lactose intolerance
Allergies	Cancer

A study of around 1,000 infants in rural areas of France, Germany, Finland, Austria and Switzerland followed their milk consumption throughout their first year of life, specifically in regard to the types of cow's milk they drank and their susceptibility to respiratory infections. Researchers found that those who drank [raw milk](#) had a 30 percent lower risk of developing such infections and fever.¹¹

There's something called the "farm effect" that may help explain why about 50 percent of Americans suffer from allergic sensitization, which makes them more susceptible to allergic disease. Meanwhile, the OCA notes that the Amish, 80 percent of whom purportedly drink raw milk compared to 3 percent of Americans at large, are among the least allergic populations in the developed world.

"In Europe, the consumption of unpasteurized milk also correlates with protection against allergic disease. European children who consume raw milk have more T-cells, which help the immune system restrain itself when facing substances that are not true threats. A healthy population of these and other 'suppressor' cells is important in preventing allergies and

asthma. The higher the quantity of those cells, the less likely is a diagnosis of asthma.”¹²

The implication is that the “farm effect” is synonymous with a “raw milk effect,” as children’s immune systems seem to be protected, especially when they’re young, when they’re exposed to raw milk and microbes commonly found on farms.

That’s one reason why the OCA is asking the FDA to acknowledge the [health advantages of raw milk](#) and to begin allowing dairy farmers to produce and distribute unpasteurized milk via interstate commerce, even as it complies with warning labels and safe handling instructions. If you’re interested in helping with this endeavor, here’s your chance. [Click here to ask the FDA to lift its ban on raw milk.](#)

[Related Article: Big Dairy Continues War Against Farmers & Raw Milk](#)

Help Support GMO Labeling

GMO proponents claim that genetic engineering is safe and beneficial, and that it advances the agricultural industry. They also say that genetically modified organisms, aka GMOs or genetically engineered (GE) foods, help ensure the global food supply and sustainability. But is there any truth to these claims? I believe not. For years, I’ve stated the belief that GMOs pose one of the greatest threats to life on the planet. Genetic engineering is NOT the safe and beneficial technology that it is touted to be.

The FDA – which considers “genetic engineered” to be the more precise term – cleared the way for GE Atlantic salmon to be farmed for human consumption. Thanks to added language in the federal spending bill, the product will require special labeling so at least consumers will have the ability to identify the GE salmon in stores. However, it’s imperative ALL GE foods be labeled, which is currently still being denied.

The FDA is threatening the existence of our food supply. We have to start taking action now. I urge you to share this article with friends and family. If we act together, we can make a difference and put an end to the absurdity. Thankfully, we have organizations like the [Organic Consumers Association](#) (OCA) to fight back against these corporate giants. So, please, fight for your right to know what's in your food and help support the GMO labeling movement by making a donation today.

Donations TRIPLE-Matched During GMO Awareness Week

I have found very few organizations that are as effective and efficient as OCA. It's a public interest organization dedicated to promoting health and sustainability. OCA and I thank you for everything you've done to further this cause, and hope you stick with us as we move forward. I strongly encourage you to give OCA your financial support, because we are making a huge difference.

Food companies have to start being honest and truthful in telling us what's in our food, and we will not quit until they do. We can't do it alone, however. We need your help and, this week, you can seriously maximize the impact of your generosity, because I will match each and every dollar you donate to the OCA with \$3, up to \$250,000.

Non-GMO Food Resources

As consumers worldwide become increasingly aware of the problems linked to GE crops and the toxic chemicals and pesticides used on them, more and more people are proactively refusing to eat these foods. There's also strong [growth in the global organic and grass fed sectors](#). This just proves one thing: We can make a difference if we steadily work toward the

same goal. I recommend visiting these trustworthy sites for non-GMO food resources in your country:

<u>Organic Food Directory (Australia)</u>	<u>Eat Wild (Canada)</u>
<u>Organic Explorer (New Zealand)</u>	<u>Eat Well Guide (United States and Canada)</u>
<u>Farm Match (United States)</u>	<u>Local Harvest (United States)</u>
<u>Weston A. Price Foundation (United States)</u>	<u>The Cornucopia Institute</u>

Monsanto and its allies want you to think that they control everything, but they do not. It's you, the masses, who hold the power in your hands. Let's all work together to topple the biotech industry's house of cards. Remember – it all starts with shopping smart and making the best food purchases for you and your family.

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