

## Don't be myth-informed

**SOUTHAMPTON** — Have you heard?... Or Read?...

The constitution guarantees freedom of speech and the press so you probably have heard or read numerous accounts regarding food and nutrition. Unfortunately, says Dairy Council Inc., a nutrition education organization in Southampton, Pa., some of these interpretations are untrue—myths created to capitalize on the consumer's growing concern with health and physical fitness.

Long ago people made up stories as explanations for events they didn't understand. For instance, the Vikings believed that thunder and lightning were caused by the god Thor throwing hammers at his enemies.

This myth sounds no less strange than some of today's misunderstandings about nutrition and health care. These stories either exaggerate the truth or fabricate falsehoods that offer simple and easy answers to questions that have no simple or easy scientific solution. Not only is it foolish to believe modern myths about nutrition, but it can also be dangerous.

For instance: ... have you heard that food manufacturers destroy all the nutrients and put additives in our food? or ... "health" store and "natural" foods are better for you than regular foods?

If you have, you've been myth-informed, says Dairy Council.

It's true that some nutrients are lost during food processing, but key nutrients in many products are put back during processing, too. So these foods have as many or more nutrients than they did before processing.

It's also true that additives are used to improve a food's nutritional value, its freshness, its preparation, or its appearance.

Before a new additive can be put into foods, the U.S. government requires that the manufacturer prove the addition is safe.

As far as health foods vs. natural foods go, don't be myth-taken. Foods may be labeled "natural," or "organic," or "health food." But, the federal government has no legal definition for the terms. Therefore, manufacturers can use these words to describe almost any product. And, they often use them to justify a higher price.

Make no myth-take: you don't need special foods to stay healthy. You can safely get all the nutrients your body needs from regular foods found in your supermarket.

One place you will not find nutrition myths is on actual food packages. Companies that put false nutrition claims on food packages are prosecuted by the FDA. If you see or hear a nutrition claim that sounds "too good to be true," check the product's package. If you don't see the claim, don't believe it.

Other places to check on the truthfulness of nutrition claims include agricultural extension services, county or state health departments, Dairy Councils, university food and nutrition departments, hospital nutrition departments, or local or state offices of the American Dietetic Association, or American Home Economic Association.

No food should be thought of as either good or bad, says Dairy Council. All foods contain some nutrients and some calories (energy). Your body needs these nutrients and calories for good health, so eat moderately from the four food groups—milk and dairy products, meats, fruits and vegetables, and grains—and exercise judiciously if you're concerned about weight control.



Cecil County team members flash winning smiles and trophy plates after capturing state junior 4-H dairy bowl championship for the third consecutive year. This year's contest was held May 14, at College Park. Shown are from left, Diane Moore, 14, of Rising Sun; Karen Knutsen, 14, also of Rising Sun; David Fell, 13, of Calvert, and Robert Schrader, 14, of Earleville. Virtually the same team has won the state junior 4-H dairy bowl crown all three years.

## Md. dairy bowl winners named

**COLLEGE PARK, Md.** — For the third consecutive year, a Cecil County team reigns as the Md. state junior 4-H dairy bowl champion.

The Upper Bay area group captured its latest crown during the eighth annual bovine knowledge contest, held May 14, at College Park in connection with 4-H Super Bowl Saturday on the University of Maryland campus.

Montgomery County was runner-up in the statewide junior 4-H dairy bowl competition.

Frederick County squeaked by Queen Annes County in a seesaw

battle to win the state senior 4-H dairy bowl crown. The winning delegation is now eligible to represent Maryland in a national dairy quiz contest, scheduled Nov. 4-6, during the North American International Livestock Exposition at Louisville, Ky.

Members of the state champion Frederick County senior 4-H dairy bowl team are Dennis Long, 17, of Thurmont; Shary Moxley, 17, of Libertytown; Deborah Osborn, 17, of Keymar; Angie Offutt, 15, of Johnsville, and William J. Allen III, 17, of Jefferson. John E. Williams, Jr., of Johnsville was the team coach.

Members of the winning Cecil County junior 4-H dairy bowl team are Robert Schrader, 14, of Earleville; David Fell, 13, of Calvert; Diane Moore, 14, and Karen Knutsen, 14, both of Rising Sun. Team coach was Joy L. Myers of Elkton, an Extension agricultural and 4-H agent in Cecil County.

Virtually the same team has been on the state championship junior 4-H dairy bowl roster for three consecutive years. Next year, the entire group will graduate into senior 4-H competition.

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