

**Coalition
Issues
BST
Opinion**

WASHINGTON, D.C.— The Consumer Policy Institute's report, "Biotechnology & Milk: Benefit or Threat?", discusses a broad range of issues concerning bovine somatotropin (BST), also known as bovine growth hormone (BGH).

The study examines consumer impact, economic, social and environmental impact, the impact on world hunger, animal welfare and human health.

"The Dairy Industry Coalition's mission is to ensure consumer confidence in the milk supply and to address BST and milk-safety issues. Our comments and activities, therefore, pertain only to the two human-health issues raised by the report.

"First, the report asserts that questions about the protein hormone IGF-I (insulin-like growth factor) remain unanswered. However, in March 1990 the Food and Drug Administration responded in detail to questions raised about BST (including IGF-I) by Foundation on Economic Trends' president Jeremy Rifkin. It stated that it found that although the treatment of dairy cows with BST tends to increase the amount of IGF-I in the milk, the amount of IGF-I found in human breast milk is about the same or greater than that found in milk from BST-treated cows.

The FDA also pointed out that because IGF-I is a protein hormone it will have no activity when consumed, and that studies have confirmed that IGF-I is not orally active in humans.

"The CPI report also states that BST use may consequently result in the increased use of antibiotics in dairy herds and, therefore, increase the levels of antibiotic residues in milk.

"While this claim conflicts with existing studies on the effects of BST on dairy cows, we believe that independent, scientific forums and institutions play a vital and necessary role in addressing and resolving such issues. We strongly support an independent science-based review process to examine food-hazard claims.

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