

Dairy Board Issues BST Statement

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EDITOR'S NOTE: A lawsuit was filed by the Foundation on Economic Trends alleging certain activities of the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board were conducted outside its legislative mandate.

National Dairy Board Mandate

Congress established the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board (NDB) through the Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983. One of the purposes of the act is "To stabilize the supply and demand for dairy products . . ."

NDB's charter, as set forth in the Act, is to ". . . carry out a coordinated program of promotion designed to strengthen the dairy industry's position in the marketplace and to maintain and expand domestic and foreign markets and uses for fluid milk and dairy products produced in the United States." The Act clearly mandates NDB to engage in activities to maintain and stabilize the supply and demand for dairy products in

the United States and abroad.

Dairy Industry Coalition Established

A national survey commissioned by the NDB and conducted in early 1990, measured the impact of scientifically proven inaccurate statements about milk safety and BST to determine their effect on consumers. It revealed that two out of five consumers would cut back or avoid purchases of dairy products if exposed to food-scare appeals.

The NDB recognized that a cut-back of this magnitude would seriously disrupt milk sales. Based on the consumer data, and on evidence that other food groups suffered significant sales losses due to widely disseminated misinformation, the NDB teamed with the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) in June 1990, to form the Dairy Industry Coalition.

The Coalition addresses questions on human health concerns regarding BST and other milk safety issues. The Coalition addresses questions on human health concerns regarding BST and other milk safety issues. The Coalition immediately adopted a neutral

position on BST use should it be approved for commercial use (see attached statement) and advocated a sound science-based process for evaluating and re-confirming findings on the human health issue.

Coalition Activities

The Coalition conducts educational activities that support its commitment to communicating about the safety of milk and milk products. The communication activities are designed to reach the trade and other selected media, the dairy industry, and professional organizations (such as health and medical-professional organizations, food trade associations, etc.). No activities are targeted to the consumer, prior to ruling from the FDA on the approval or disapproval of BST.

To assure the scientific accuracy and validity of all the materials that have been and will be distributed by the Coalition, materials are reviewed by members of its nine-person Scientific Advisory Panel, which consists of recognized health and medical authorities from leading universities nationally. To facilitate the distri-

bution of scientific materials, the Coalition established the Dairy News and Information Center.

The DNIC houses information on milk safety issues, including BST, and serves as a referral service for members of the media, dairy industry and health care professionals, with questions regarding milk safety.

To date, the Coalition has distributed information kits to the media, the dairy industry, medical professional organizations, and food trade associations. The Coalition developed the newslet-

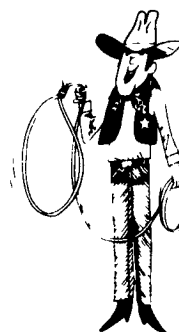
ter "Milk Issues Update" to keep dairy industry members apprised of developments on milk safety issues.

Other Coalition activities include monitoring media coverage of milk safety issues, fielding media and industry-member calls to the toll-free telephone line, sponsoring background sessions for the media on BST and milk safety that feature scientific experts, and distributing science-based information on milk safety to the groups mentioned previously.

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