

Seamons, Colleen

From: Hugh Martin [ormsbym@pacific.net.au]
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2008 12:05 PM
To: submissions
Cc: Tim Martin
Subject: Raw milk for making cheese

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Sir,

I wish to comment on the proposal to change the existing standard that prohibits the production of cheese from unpasteurised milk in Australia and New Zealand. The bacterial contaminants in milk that could adversely affect humans are Mycobacterium tuberculosis and Listeria. Australian dairy herds have long been free of tb, and provided surveillance continues, this danger is non-existent. Listeria is dangerous for the unborn fetus. As far as I am aware, it is only likely to be found in soft, creamy cheeses. As with many other products that are dangerous to a specific group in the community (e.g. peanut allergy), a warning on the label is appropriate, but banning production or sale is not. A recent personal communication with doctors in Switzerland confirmed that in that country there is no concern about immunosuppressed patients developing Listeriosis. The advantages of being able to make cheese from raw milk are numerous. Chief amongst them are the ability to make high quality cheeses in this country. This would increase local consumption, reduced dependency on imported products, stimulate the dairy industry and therefore contribute to GNP as well as decreasing unfavourable overseas trade figures. Wine production in this country is an excellent example of what we can do in competition with traditional European markets when conditions allow our producers to excel. There is that prospect for cheese production. It would be a tragedy if the opportunity to enter this market was lost. Yours sincerely,

H C O Martin
AM, FRACS, FRCS