



Smart Guide

to Minnesota Dairy Without rBGH

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When recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) arrived on the market as Posilac in 1994, it was one of the first genetically engineered agriculture products. Posilac is used by dairy farmers as a way to slightly increase milk production.

One downside is that it also makes more cows sick with udder infections, leading to suffering and forcing farmers to increase their antibiotic use. Avoiding antibiotic use wherever possible is an important public health goal. That is because there is now a consensus among scientists that antibiotic use in farm animals increases antibiotic resistance, often transmitted back to humans.¹

Use of rBGH also raises levels of Insulin-like Growth Factor-1 (IGF-1) in cows and cow's milk. Higher IGF-1 levels in human blood are associated with higher rates of colon, breast and prostate cancer.^{2,3} What scientists still lack are sufficient data to assure that drinking milk with higher IGF-1 levels, from rBGH-treated cows, won't translate into higher IGF-1 levels in the blood of the consumer. Citing the certain risks of using rBGH for dairy cows, and sometimes citing the plausible (although still uncertain) human risks, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and the 27 countries in the European Union have not approved rBGH.

Consumers have become increasingly concerned about these rBGH risks. Almost 60 percent of consumers state they would pay a premium for dairy products coming from cows not treated with the hormone.⁴ Before selling Posilac, Monsanto waged a campaign to keep dairy companies from labeling their milk as being from cows not treated with rBGH. Leading health care organizations oppose rBGH use, and urge hospitals and other health practitioners to buy dairy products made without it. Consumers, too, can shift the market away from rBGH use by seeking out food companies only offering rBGH-free lines of product. Fortunately, there are many.

Of course, Minnesota's certified organic farmers are precluded from using any synthetic hormones or antibiotics in their operations. But there are many non-organic dairy farmers also producing sustainably and/or without the use of rBGH. We found the following producers claiming to not use rBGH, as well as retailers and restaurants carrying their products. Outside of Minnesota, you can find similar producers at Sustainable Table (sustainabletable.org) or Food and Water Watch (foodandwaterwatch.org).

Some products will be labeled as coming from cows not given rBGH. Others are not. Not all manufacturers opt to use a label, possibly due to legal actions lodged by Monsanto. Call your favorite brand's manufacturer. Let them know how happy you are that they do not use milk from cows treated with rBGH, and that you would like to see it on the label.

Minnesota Dairy Without rBGH

- **Milk:** Cedar Summit, Costco (Kirkland), Do-Re-Mi Farm, Ivy Farms Creamery, Kemp's Select, Grass Point Farms, Oberweis, Polka Dot Dairy, Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm, Sam's Club (Member's Mark), Sampson Dairy, Schroeder SimplyRight Milk, Stonyfield Farms, Target (Archer Farms), Trader Joe's, Traders Point Creamery, Valley View Farms, Wal-Mart (Great Value), Whole Foods 365, Woodstock Farms.
- **Cheese:** Andrew & Everett Cheeses, Applegate Farms, BelGioso, Cedar Grove, Cedar Summit, Cobb Hill Cheese, Eichten's Hidden Acres, Grass Point Farms, Green Pastures Dairy, Jasper Hill Farm, Kraft Pure, Lifetime Specialty Cheeses, Nancy's Cultured Dairy and Soy, PastureLand, Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company, Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm, Sierra Nevada Cheese Co., Sweetland Farm, Tillamook, Traders Point Creamery, Whole Foods 365, Wholesome Valley.
- **Butter:** Grass Point Farms, Hope Creamery, PastureLand, Whole Foods 365, Woodstock Farms.
- **Yogurt:** Applegate Farms, Brown Cow, Cascade Fresh, Cedar Summit, Nancy's Cultured Dairy and Soy, Stonyfield Farms, Traders Point Creamery, Wallaby, Yoplait (August 2009).
- **Ice Cream:** Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, Cedar Summit, Sonny's Ice Cream, Stonyfield Farms, Traders Point Creamery, Whole Foods 365.
- **Restaurants and Coffee Shops:** Bruegger's (cream cheese), Caribou Coffee, Chipotle, Starbucks, Subway.

Note: Compiled with information from Oregon Physician's for Social Responsibility, Food and Water Watch, and our own communications with Minnesota companies. Contact us to add your favorite rBGH-free companies or products to this list.

References:

1. Aarestrup FM, Wegener HC, Collignon P. Resistance in bacteria of the food chain: epidemiology and control strategies. *Expert Rev. Anti Infect. Ther.* 2008;6(5):733-750.
2. Holmes MD, et al. Lifestyle correlates of plasma insulin-like growth factor I and insulin-like growth factor binding protein 3 concentrations. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers & Prevent.* 2002;11:862-867.
3. Holmes MD, et al. Dietary correlates of plasma insulin-like growth factor I and insulin-like growth factor binding protein 3 concentrations. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers & Prevent.* 2002;11:852-861.
4. Consumer Reports National Research Center. Food labeling poll 2008. Dated November 11, 2008. Available at <http://www.greenerchoices.org/pdf/foodpoll2008.pdf>. Accessed February 8, 2009.

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