

Why Are We Accepting Less Healthy, Lower Quality Options From Food Companies?

Living a healthy lifestyle is all about making the healthiest choices. But what if the best choice (or the information needed to make the best choice) wasn't available to you because the people tasked with looking out for you and your interests don't have the same high standards and the corporations don't deliver the same high-quality products in the United States as they do in Europe?

Whether it's an American corporation introducing organic products in Europe but not in the U.S., the fact that we are denied the opportunity to know what's in our food or where it came from, or the disproportionate amount of refined sugar and chemicals in our everyday products, it's disheartening to realize that companies are more than happy to take advantage of corporate friendly, health-indifferent attitudes in the United States. For every company claiming that a safer, healthier way of producing food isn't "cost-effective," it is interesting to see what they're doing in other countries. It's becoming increasingly clear that cost is not the only reason they're giving consumers in the U.S. less than their best.

Organic Fast Food is Finally an Option – But Not For Everyone

Let's look at McDonald's, one of the largest fast food chains and a worldwide symbol of the United States. They've been experiencing a decline in sales numbers as consumers make better lifestyle choices and become more health-conscious. The United States is now the largest organic market in the world, and McDonald's corporate attempt to grab a piece of that pie

is their new pledge to use only cage-free eggs by 2025. They're also introducing a hamburger made entirely of organic meat.

McDonald's promised the European Union they would only use cage-free eggs by 2011. Now they make the same promise to U.S. citizens with a 10-year target date? And yes, they will be offering an organic burger – but only in Germany, the second-largest organic market.

McDonald's also sells organic milk at their U.K. locations. Many consumers in the United States are not aware that McDonald's can and does make more animal welfare friendly and environmentally sustainable choices in other countries even though we are the largest organic market in the world.

Three Little Letters

Countless activists in the United States are fighting for the right to mandate labeling genetically modified foods. Opponents claim labeling all of these products will raise the cost of food, a cost they will be forced to pass on to the consumer. But this argument ignores the fact that the European Union, Japan, Brazil, Australia, and China are among the 64 countries that currently require GMO labeling. If so many countries already require labeling, why not simply extend that consideration to the United States? Obviously, corporations are aware of the rising numbers of health-conscious Americans that will choose a more environmentally conscious and healthy option.

A Little Something Extra

When looking at the way food corporations treat consumers in the United States, it's also interesting to note the unhealthy things they add to our food. The FDA seems content to let corporations treat us like guinea pigs, sitting back and

claiming there is a lack of concrete evidence to remove ingredients until something forces their hand.

For example, the majority of pigs in the United States are still raised using the muscle drug ractopomine, which is banned in the European Union, China, and Russia. The U.S. has been claiming there is no evidence for this ban in science, while China, the largest consumer of pork worldwide, sees it as a threat to food safety. It seems odd that the pork companies in the U.S. argue that there is no science supporting concern when other nations have clearly found evidence to the contrary.

This isn't the only time products in the United States have added a little something extra that can compromise our health. Companies in the U.S. can sell "bromated bread" which contains potassium bromate. Since the 1980s, that additive has been considered carcinogenic, but the FDA only asks that it be eliminated on a voluntary basis. Unfortunately, this is not the only potentially dangerous food additive that the FDA is unwilling to take a stand on, leaving U.S. consumers at the whims of companies trying to make the most profit possible.

Consumer Action

You're a consumer in the United States who has done the research, and you've decided that you want to lead a healthier, more sustainable, eco-friendly life. It's hard enough to change old habits and learn to appreciate healthy choices without having to sift through misinformation. As you become more informed and discover the extent to which you need to protect your own health, you may become furious with the American food system. You'd have every right to be. More and more companies show they are willing to accommodate stricter international standards while taking full advantage of lax regulations in the United States.

Let's face it, corporations run America. Despite the fact that

90% of Americans want GMOs labeled, The DARK Act has passed Congress. Our crops and our soil are poisoned with glyphosate. And it's not just our food industry that is corrupt. Our personal care products are filled with ingredients that are banned overseas. Our water is contaminated with fluoride. Until we face the fact that our government officials are bought and owned by corporate interests, and we make real change in the electoral process and how we protect consumers, we will have to provide our own due diligence to protect our health.

Recommended Reading:

- *Understanding and Detoxifying Genetically Modified Foods*
- *Scientists Against GMOs – Hear From Those Who Have Done The Research*
- *Doctors Against Vaccines – Hear From Those Who Have Done The Research*
- *Celebrities Against Circumcision*

Sources:

- *McDonald's Just Unveiled Its First Organic Burger – Grub Street*
- *Chef Jamie Oliver Praises McDonald's in England – Politifact*
- *A Possible Carcinogen Is Still Lurking in America's Bread – Take Part*
- *US Is Missing Out On China's Pork Boom Because Its Pigs On Muscle Drugs – Bloomberg Business*