



## Shop Smart, Shop Wise

# HEALTHY FOODS FOR CHILDREN

by Carol Ann Fischer, D.C., N.D.

Parents who want to feed their children healthy food need some knowledge and understanding about the foods that are currently available. Knowing about the deceptive practices in the health food industry will help arm parents with the information to determine what foods are truly healthy for their children.

It becomes difficult for parents to know which foods are healthy when food labeling is so deceptive. In 2008 a new federal rule was enacted where 'organic' California-grown raw almonds are no longer raw. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) mandate requires raw almonds to be sanitized or "pasteurized." The rule requires almonds be sprayed with a toxic fumigant or treated with high-temperature heat. The treated almonds are then deceptively labeled as "raw." This law is forcing many domestic organic almond growers out of business. For now, imported raw almonds are exempt from any pasteurization treatment.

For parents who want to give their children dairy products, there is more deception to come as Dean Foods announced in July 2009 that it intends to create an entirely new, lower-priced, product category, "natural dairy," aimed squarely at pirating away organic customers. Dean Foods will be creating "natural" dairy products using conventional milk.

The organic industry's largest name brand manufacturer, Dean Foods, controls 50 different dairy brands in the U.S. Horizon and Or-

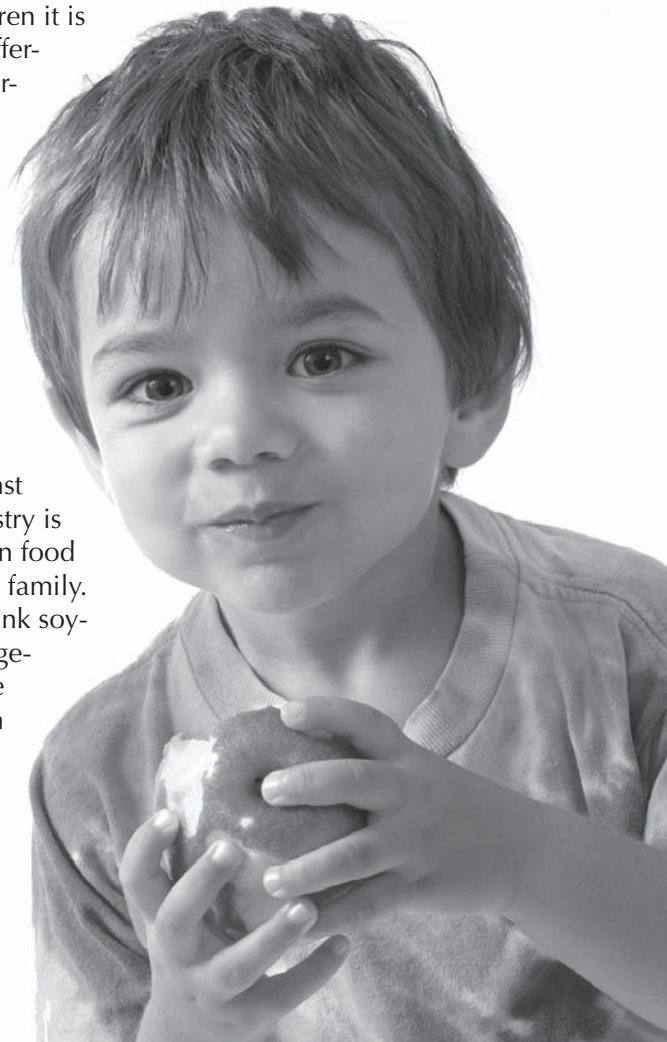
ganic Cow are their two retail organic lines. Horizon has had the highest dollar volume of any organic industry brand, yet it will market products that are not certified organic with their "alternative to the organic label". "When the first Horizon natural products are introduced—a yogurt aimed at children and single-serve milk—will be promoted as being without growth hormones", but will not be necessarily healthy, according to Mark A. Kastel, Senior Farm Policy Analyst at The Cornucopia Institute.

For the health of our children it is important to understand the difference between "natural" and "organic". Consumers prefer the word 'natural' over the term 'organic,' thinking organic is more of an unregulated marketing buzzword that means the product is more expensive. In reality, the opposite is true. 'Natural' is the unregulated word. Organic foods must meet government standards to be certified as organic. The best defense against the deception of the food industry is to read all labels carefully when food shopping for your children and family.

Parents whose children drink soy-milk need to become knowledgeable about the deception in the alternative dairy industry. Dean Foods also owns White Wave/Silk, which recently switched almost their entire Silk soy-milk line to "natural" (conventional) soybeans without

lowering the price. Their "natural" soy products have the same appearance as when they were organic, with the same price, packaging and UPC product codes. Parents should be aware that most of the conventional soybean crop has been mixed with genetically modified seed (GMO) created by Monsanto.

If parents are confused about what foods are healthy, children will also be confused and unlikely to eat vegetables or try new food if their



parents have a fast food diet, and do not eat vegetables. A recently written book can help families learn what food is and is not healthy. Please Don't Eat the Wallpaper!: The Teenager's Guide to Avoiding Trans Fats, Enriched Wheat and High Fructose Corn Syrup, authored by Nancy Irven, D.C. will change the way kids and parents think about food.

The book aimed at 14-year olds teaches them to want better food and how to make better choices. Chapters include recipes, food choices and meal planning, how to read food labels and product labeling, and the history of sugar, trans fat and white flour. The book is becoming popular in many high schools as a textbook for nutrition classes.

This inexpensive book is available at Barnes & Noble stores and on-line. Becoming more informed can help children and parents make better decisions regarding the foods that they eat.

For more info on reading labels, visit <http://www.cornucopia.org/>.

To read the article on GMO seed and Monsanto, visit <http://www.mercola.com> and read *This Company May be the Biggest Threat to Your Future* posted on May 1, 2008.

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