

Ontario appeal takes raw milk fight to 'next level,' says farmer

Raw milk advocates want right to choose

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

Raw milk crusader Michael Schmidt says the Ontario government is "clutching at straws" by appealing a court ruling that found him not guilty of violating the province's Milk Act.

The Ministry of the Attorney General has confirmed it is appealing a decision by a justice of the peace on Jan. 21 to dismiss 19 charges against Schmidt related to selling and distributing raw milk and raw milk products.

Schmidt said the government is "underestimating the food freedom movement."

"This is not about milk—this is about the respect for the individual's right to make choices without government interference," Schmidt said in a press release.

"This is now the next stage in a serious battle, a clear declaration by government to rob people of their fundamental freedoms."

In late 2006, inspectors from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources along with several police officers raided Schmidt's Glencolton Farms

and confiscated his equipment, a computer, and documents.

Although selling raw (unpasteurized) milk is illegal in Canada, it is legal to consume it. Schmidt distributes his milk to consumers who buy "cow-shares" in exchange for the animals' milk. Shareholders sign a formal contract and receive a card that allows them to obtain their own milk.

'This is now the next stage in a serious battle, a clear declaration by government to rob people of their fundamental freedoms.'

— Michael Schmidt

The direct sale of raw milk violates laws that require pasteurization of most commercial milk products. It is also illegal to give raw milk away in Canada.

Justice of the Peace Paul Kowarsky found that Schmidt's method of distributing his milk did not break any laws and the Crown produced no evidence of anyone getting sick as a result of consuming it.

Schmidt's cow-share members are informed of the potential risks, Kowarsky said, adding that several

countries have legalized raw milk.

"In 2006, after the raid on our farm, I said the government made a big mistake using an army of 25 armed officers to shut a farmer down. Justice Paul Kowarsky proved me right," said Schmidt, who has a master's degree in farming.

Shortly after the raid, the Ontario Ministry of Health issued a warning of the health risks posed by untreated milk, which range from mild illness to death.

Young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with weak immune systems are particularly vulnerable to becoming seriously ill, the Ministry said, as unpasteurized milk contains several harmful pathogens, including a virulent strain of E.coli.

Since the raid, the case has drawn the attention of food rights activists in Canada and around the world who see it as an important development in the fight for people's freedom to choose what they eat and to buy the food they want.

In recent years, there has been a burgeoning demand for raw milk and its products. Raw milk advocates question the logic of keeping the sale of it illegal when it is safely sold in many European countries and several U.S. states.

Schmidt fears the government's reluctance to allow the regulated sale of raw milk will result in irresponsible farmers cashing in on the growing demand by selling unpasteurized milk without adhering to proper



RAW MILK FIGHT: Michael Schmidt (L) at his farm in Durham, Ontario. The Ontario government is appealing a court ruling that found Schmidt not guilty of violating the province's Milk Act. GLENCOLTON FARMS

production safety measures.

Since he was charged in 2006, the size of the herd he manages has doubled. There is also a waiting list of consumers wishing to participate in his raw milk dairy.

Schmidt breeds Canadian cows, which feed on green pasture from late May to early November. During the winter they survive on hay and a supplement of finely ground weeds, sticks and herbs, all from the farm.

While pasteurization rapidly heats the milk in order to kill the bad bacteria, proponents of raw milk claim the process also destroys the availability of calcium as well as enzymes and other qualities that give raw milk its rich taste and high nutritional value.

Raw milk has been credited with alleviating conditions such as asthma, insomnia, Crohn's disease, and allergies. A 2006 British study found that drinking just a few glasses of raw milk a week reduced

a child's chances of developing eczema by close to 40 per cent, and hay fever by 10 per cent.

However, Health Canada has warned that "any possible benefits are far outweighed by the serious risk of illness from drinking raw milk."

Schmidt is co-director of the Canadian Alliance for Raw Milk (ARM), a newly formed group that is also organizing in the U.S. whose aim is to promote food freedom and people's "right to farm their own land and trade/share the produce with others."

ARM is already organized in Ontario and British Columbia, and thousands have joined the alliance in Wisconsin and Ohio with more states pending, according to a release.

Schmidt said he is "ready to move to the next level. And I have thousands of people ready to stand with me."

Nation Briefs

'Buy American' agreement ratified by Canada

Canada ratified a deal with the United States this week on its protectionist "Buy American" rules, which allows Canadian products to be used in a number of local stimulus-funded projects in the U.S.

"Today marks an important day in Canada-U.S. trade," Trade Minister Peter Van Loan said on Tuesday. "The agreement is now in effect."

The Buy American policy was introduced in the U.S. last year following the economic crisis, removing Canada from local and state projects being funded with economic stimulus cash.

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal welcomed the news of ratification, stating that the agreement will give Canadian business the chance to take part in infrastructure projects in 37 of the 50 American states.

"Over a year ago, when the major economic crisis revived the threat of protectionism, the Board of Trade, like many partners, decided to mobilize its allies—at home and in the United States—to reiterate the importance of free trade," said the President and CEO of the Board of Trade, Michel Leblanc. "We kept up the pressure on elected officials in both countries and, finally, our combined efforts yielded success."

Compiled by Matthew Simon
Epoch Times Staff

Ethical-sealing pledge will end EU ban, senator hopes

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

In an effort to challenge the European Union's trade ban on Canadian seal products, a Quebec senator is proposing that provinces and countries involved in the seal hunt sign on to an international declaration on ethical sealing.

Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette visited Iqaluit, Nunavut, last week to promote the Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals, written by a panel of experts and scientists from Canada and the United States.

The senator, who went on an Inuit seal hunt while in Nunavut, says the declaration has already been endorsed by the governments of Newfoundland and Quebec. She is also seeking an endorsement from Greenland. The IWMC World Conservation Trust, an international organization for animal conservation, officially supports it.

"I am quite confident that there will be no reason on the part of the Europeans to continue their boycott, because as far as I'm concerned the boycott itself is illegal right now," says Hervieux-Payette.

She says the declaration could strengthen Canada's consultations with the World Trade Organization in seeking to overturn the ban. The gov-



SUBSISTENCE HUNTING: Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette with Inuit seal hunters in Nunavut. SENATOR CÉLINE HERVIEUX-PAYETTE

ernment has filed a complaint with the WTO arguing that a ban would violate the EU's trade obligations.

The EU Parliament voted last March to eliminate seal products such as pelts, meat, and oil, largely as a result of campaigns by animal rights groups who accuse Canadian sealers of conducting an unsustainable and inhumane seal harvest.

Although the ban hasn't gone

into effect yet, Nunavut Department of Environment Deputy Minister Simon Awa says it has already had a negative impact on the Inuit community.

"Last year, during the auction of the seal-skins in North Bay, Ontario, there were about 10,000 Nunavut seal-skins that were ready for auction and not one skin was sold. Not one skin was bought last year."

Although the EU ban includes some exemptions for Inuit communities, Awa says it hasn't made any difference. "The so-called exemption is meaningless, it doesn't mean anything."

He notes that Nunavut doesn't have a commercial seal harvest. "The Inuit only hunt for subsistence living. It puts food on the table. The selling of the seal skins is a by-product of our subsistence hunting."

Hervieux-Payette says Newfoundland sealers also need the income from the annual spring harvest. She is sharply critical of anti-sealing groups for some of the tactics they use in trying to end Canada's seal hunt.

On January 25, an activist with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals hit Fisheries Minister Gail Shea in the face with a tofu cream pie. The incident resulted in an assault charge against an American resident.

Earlier in the month, a poster of Miss Newfoundland and Labrador Sara Green, who comes from a family of sealers, was doctored to show her covered in blood, holding a hakapik, and surrounded by bloody seal carcasses.

"This is terrorism as far as I'm concerned," says Hervieux-Payette.

The 13-page Universal Declaration on the Ethical Harvest of Seals states that seals must be killed rapidly in

a professional manner that doesn't cause "avoidable pain." It seeks to strike a balance between animal welfare, sustainable development, protecting ecosystems, and maintaining people's way of life in sealing communities.

It says signatories to the document care about animal welfare, and calls for establishing a common international position on ethical standards for the seal harvest.

Hervieux-Payette wants the "vegetarian lobby" to understand that humans have a right to utilize natural resources such as animals when it is done in an ethical and sustainable manner.

"To make a living out of your own trade is, for me, a fundamental right of any individual, and this is not a sport activity—it's part of the way they make a living," she says.

"This is probably the most watched human activity and trade in the world," she says of the seal hunt. "I mean there are probably other activities that are much more despicable, but nobody is talking about it."

Awa says that if the EU ban is not lifted, it will mean hardship for the Inuit.

"Every bit of economic opportunity is very, very critical to a small community . . . Everything is getting more expensive every year and so therefore it is more and more dif-

ficult for harvesters, for the hunters to make a meagre living out of hunting."

PUZZLES⁴ PEACE

Guess the hidden saying, phrase or word(s) suggested by the graphic below



Presented By



SOLUTION ON P7

ESCAPE TO AN ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC

Relax while experiencing the many wonders of Victoria!



Enjoy our package January 15 - March 31, 2010 including:
• 1 night accommodation in a studio room
• Breakfast for two at Samuels by the Park
• 2 Tickets to either Miniature World, the Royal British Columbia Museum, or IMAX Theatre
• Free Parking

Only \$119/night

Based on double occupancy. Taxes not included. Subject to availability. Competitive weekly rates available. Please quote number 0035 when making your reservation.



655 Douglas St. Victoria BC
Phone: (250) 386-1312
Toll Free Reservations: 1-800-663-7007
www.qvhotel.com



stephen whipp financial

Curious about ethical investing?

250-405-3550
www.stephenwhipp.com



Is the water you're drinking contributing to your health?

Water as it comes out of the tap is basically undrinkable. With a foul taste and harmful effects on the body, tap water contains:

- ❖ chlorine : a cause of rectal cancer, colon cancer and bladder cancer
- ❖ rust : a cause of liver cancer
- ❖ chloramine : a toxic chemical compound
- ❖ lead : a poisonous metal that can damage nervous connections and cause blood and brain disorders
- ❖ bacteria
- ❖ other contaminants

See the difference!



In just three days, the onion root grows much larger in ionized microcluster alkaline water than the other one in bottled water or tap water. Our water is the water of life. It brings more nutrients into cells, improves metabolism, helps your body battle diseases and heal itself faster

Call now to find out how easy and affordable it can be to start drinking healthy water
Counter Top Ionized Microcluster Alkaline Water Filter System



- ❖ Battles chronic diseases
- ❖ Achieves reverse aging
- ❖ Improves hydration
- ❖ Low cost
- ❖ No wasted water as in other ionizers
- ❖ No special plumbing: hooks to kitchen faucet
- ❖ Does not require any electrical power.
- ❖ Simple!

Clear Water80
Art Price
250 882 9740
or toll-free: 1 866 999 9740
aprice99@telus.net
www.clearwater80.ca