

CHEESE MARKET NEWS

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Three groups file citizen's petition asking FDA to withdraw its approval of Posilac

WASHINGTON — Three advocacy organizations representing consumers, family farmers and cancer prevention advocates filed a citizen's petition with FDA this week seeking the withdrawal of approval for Posilac, Monsanto's recombinant bovine somatotropin (rbST) growth hormone used to enhance milk production.

The petition also requests that milk and other dairy products produced with the use of Posilac be labeled with a cancer risk warning.

The Cancer Prevention Coalition, the Organic Consumers Association, and Family Farm Defenders say their petition is based on scientific evidence showing increased risks of cancer from the consumption of milk from cows injected with Posilac. According to the petition, milk from cows treated with rbST has higher levels of the peptide insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1), which they say has been shown to increase rates of

breast, colon and prostate cancer.

"There is no credible scientific basis for these claims," says Andrew Burchett, public affairs manager, Monsanto. "FDA will not see anything about Posilac that it hasn't taken into account before."

Burchett stresses that FDA has reviewed Posilac and has shown that milk from cows treated with Posilac is no different than milk from cows not treated with Posilac.

Posilac is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and is approved for marketing by FDA.

The groups' petition is the latest in a controversy over the use of bovine growth hormones. A movement toward rbST-free milk is growing, with California Dairies Inc. being the most recent company to stop using rbST. For more information, see "*California's largest co-op drops rbST, fanning flame of movement*," on page 1 of CMN's Feb. 9, 2007, issue. CMN