

Larry Geller  
Honolulu, HI 96817

HCR72  
AGR  
Friday, February 12, 2010  
11:00 a.m.  
Room 312

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair  
Rep. Jessica Wooley, Vice Chair

LATE  
Testimony

February 11, 2010

Re: HR31—

HCR72—URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ASCERTAIN THE SAFETY OF REPASTEURIZED UNREFRIGERATED MILK SHIPPED TO HAWAII FROM THE MAINLAND

In Support

Dear Representative Tsuji, Representative Wooley, and members of the Committee:

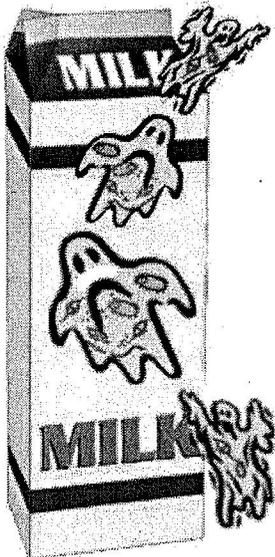
Milk has been in the human diet at least since 5500 BC. It is consumed both by children and adults. These days we have the technology to deliver a wholesome, tasty, refreshing product to supermarkets anywhere in the country. Except in Hawaii.



KITV reported in 2007 that at that time 70% of Hawaii's milk is brought in from California. By the time it reaches Honolulu-the milk is about 30 days old. Worse, it frequently spoils before its use-by date and buyers report that it can have a bad odor.

It's about time that we investigated this problem with the objective of ensuring the safety and quality of this important food.

According to the Wikipedia, pasteurization of cow's milk initially destroys 95% of any potential pathogens and increases the shelf-life, but eventually results in spoilage that makes it unsuitable for consumption. This causes it to assume an unpleasant odor, and the milk is deemed non-consumable due to unpleasant taste and an increased risk of food poisoning.



Except in Hawaii, milk is kept refrigerated in transit and stored between 1 and 4 degrees Celsius in bulk tanks in order to prevent spoilage. Milk shipped to Hawaii from the Mainland is reported to be unrefrigerated, and so the spoilage process proceeds during transit, requiring that the milk be re-pasteurized to make it saleable. Re-pasteurization does not remove whatever toxins the bacteria left in the milk, nor can it restore a fresh flavor to the product.

Let's begin fixing this long-standing problem. I urge the Committee to pass both of these resolutions.

Larry Geller