



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-00561**

BY: **MR. MILLER (BRUCE-GREY-OWEN SOUND)**

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 20, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **HONOURABLE JANE PHILPOTT**

Response by the Minister of Health

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Dairy products

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government is committed to protecting the health and safety of Canadians and of the Canadian Food Supply.

Vulnerable populations such as the elderly, pregnant women, individuals with a weakened immune system and young children are at greater risk of illness from the consumption of raw milk. Historically, the consumption of raw milk has resulted in numerous outbreaks of foodborne disease caused by pathogenic bacteria such as Salmonella, Campylobacter, Brucella, Yersinia and Listeria. These bacteria can cause serious health conditions, ranging from fever, vomiting and diarrhea, to life-threatening kidney failure, miscarriage and death. In fact, outbreaks related to the consumption of raw milk continue to be reported, including in countries where there are allowances for the sale of raw milk. In September 2016, up to 20 individuals were affected by campylobacter outbreak in Colorado linked to the consumption of raw milk.

Milk is also an important food in a balanced diet for Canadians. It is a beverage of choice for young children and pregnant women and therefore is important that it is pasteurized. In addition, there is little evidence to suggest that raw milk has a higher nutritive value than pasteurized milk, and the risks of foodborne disease outweigh any potential nutritional benefits.

In 1991, a regulatory amendment to the Food and Drug Regulations was brought into force which prohibits the sale of raw or unpasteurized milk from various sources to the consumer. This amendment provides a regulatory safeguard against milk-borne illness by implementing a uniform control measure across Canada. The prohibition of sale of raw or unpasteurized milk has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of outbreaks since its implementation.