



August 1, 2007

Dear Editor:

There are many inaccuracies in Jackie Avner's op-ed column regarding organic products appearing in the Sunday, July 27, *Denver Post*. Not only does Avner fail to cite any scientific studies to back her claims denigrating organic products, but as she may be involved in creating genetically engineered animals in the laboratory, her credibility in discussing animal welfare issues in relation to organic must be called into question.

If the writer is the same Jackie Avner that is listed as Vice President of Denver-based Felix Pets LLC, a division of Transgenic Pets, then she and her husband David, who founded the company, are creating genetically engineered hypoallergenic domestic cats. Avner was quoted in a June 2001 BBC report, saying that her biotechnology company was "simply removing a non-essential protein from the cats and it shouldn't hurt the cats in any way." According to the BBC, the UK Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals raised serious animal welfare and ethical issues associated with the company's technology.

The Organic Center is a clearinghouse for peer-reviewed, published, credible science regarding the nutritional, agricultural and environmental benefits of organically produced foods and other products. Our research is backed by an advisory board of more than 30 renowned scientists, university professors and specialists in nutrition and agriculture. A complete archive of published research is available for free download at www.organic-center.org.

Our research indicates that eating organic foods dramatically reduces the levels of pesticide residues in humans, especially children. Organic production reduces the levels of toxic chemicals in the environment. And organic fruits and vegetables are nutritionally superior to their conventionally produced counterparts. In fact, organic fruits and vegetables are shown to be 30% higher in antioxidants, compared to conventional produce.

In a September 2006 study by David Pimentel, Ph.D., professor of agriculture at Cornell University, organic farming contributes to reducing global climate change and cutting farmers' costs by requiring 30% less energy in producing a bushel of organic corn vs. conventional farms. Pimentel also discovered that organic beef grass-fed systems require 50% less fossil energy than a conventional grain-fed beef operation.

Sincerely,

Steven Hoffman
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The Organic Center
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