

RAW MILK FACT SHEET

- Raw milk is legally available in many other nations including England, New Zealand, France, Italy, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark.
- Raw milk is legally available in 42 American states via retail and farm-gate sales, private buying clubs, and herdshares.
- Herdshares are legal and recognized in 12 American states (Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Idaho, Michigan, North Dakota, Ohio, Utah, Tennessee, Wyoming, West Virginia, and Washington). They also freely operate in other states such as California, Indiana, and Oregon.
- Many British Columbians purchase raw milk when cross-border shopping at any of the 112+ grocery stores and 33 farms which sell it in Washington State.
- What is legal in WA state is illegal in B.C. Farmers and consumers face up to \$3 million dollar fines or 3 years in jail under a law (*Public Health Act, Health Hazards Regulation*) defining all raw milk as a “health hazard.”
- This law was first created in 1988 without public consultation. The resulting “black market” created by prohibition does not protect public health.
- In 2010, the Fraser Health Authority won a court injunction under this law preventing anyone who is aware of this order from “packaging and distributing” raw milk, even in their home kitchen.
- Health authorities are willing to prosecute consumers as well as farmers. In 2013, a herdshare member was convicted and penalized over \$150,000 for violating the law.
- International quantitative microbiological risk assessment (QMRA) studies show that properly-produced raw milk is a low-risk food.
- True herdshares do not sell raw milk. Consumers purchase legal ownership in a herd of meat and dairy animals, in order to enjoy the products from their animals. These livestock co-owners hire farmers as agisters to board and care for their animals.
- The Raw Milk Institute’s Risk Analysis and Management Planning (RAMP) on-farm food safety system trains farmers in the production methods for clean, pathogen-free, low-risk fresh milk.
- The B.C. Herdshare Association provides free training in RAWMI’s RAMP system.
- We are not asking for legalized sales – that would require changing Federal law.
- We are asking that B.C. law be amended to legalize and regulate herdshares, so that livestock co-owners can legally access safe, nutritious, fresh products from their animals.

For more information, contact the British Columbia Herdshare Association

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