

251 Sir Frederick Banting Driveway
Tunney's Pasture,
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

December 13, 2017

Dear 

Thank you for your correspondence of November 10, 2017, regarding the sale of raw (unpasteurized) milk in Canada. A copy of your correspondence was forwarded to Health Canada's Food Directorate for direct reply.

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting the health of Canadians and ensuring the safety of the Canadian food supply.

In the interpretation of the *Food and Drugs Act* and the definition of "sell", section B.08.002.2 (1) of the *Food and Drugs Regulations* would not apply to an individual that consumes the products of their own dairy livestock to which they hold legal title. However, the raw milk obtained from the dairy livestock cannot be distributed outside of the premises or the farm even if it is to a family member. That would be considered distribution which would contravene the *Food and Drugs Act and Regulations*.

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. 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. Milk is an important food in a balanced diet for Canadians. It is also a beverage of choice for young children and pregnant women. Therefore, those groups at risk should not consume unpasteurized milk.

The Government of Canada remains of the opinion that the current regulations that prohibit the sale of raw milk are necessary to protect consumers.

I hope that my comments are helpful in addressing your concerns.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,



Karen McIntyre
Director General, Food Directorate