

# RAW MILK – COW, GOAT, SHEEP “SHARES”



- **Raw milk may contain food borne pathogens. These pathogens may be shed into the milk directly from the animal or enter the milk from the environment. These pathogens present a health threat to consumers of raw milk.**
- The current regulations, **18 AAC 32.010** and **18 AAC 32.060**, were written to safeguard public health and protect consumers. 18AAC32.010 allows for consumption of raw milk and raw milk products by the person who owns the cow, goat or sheep.
- 18AAC32.060 forbids removal of raw milk from a premise unless it is to be pasteurized by a processor or denatured and labeled “FOR ANIMAL FOOD NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION”.
- **The original intent was specifically to prohibit the sale of raw milk and raw milk products in commerce. Not to limit consumption of these products by the owner or owners of a cow, sheep or goat.**
- It is legal to remove raw cow, sheep or goat milk from a premise for personal consumption IF the person owns the animal.
- **A legal contract needs to be established clarifying ownership of the animal.** (Examples may be found on internet sites promoting raw milk, such as, The Weston A. Price Foundation *Real Milk* website. It is your responsibility to decide what is appropriate.)
- The current regulations (18 AAC 32.010 and 18 AAC 32.060) do not permit the public sale or distribution of raw milk or any products made from raw milk at a physical location (home, farm store), via the mail or the internet.

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- **The animal owner is responsible for protecting themselves and their family from any hazards associated with consuming raw milk or products made using raw milk.**
- Certain portions of the population (the very young, seniors, and any person who is immune-compromised) are at greater risk for severe health problems or sequelae from infections that may be acquired from consuming raw milk. This risk is now even greater with the emergence of antimicrobial resistant pathogens like *Salmonella* and *Escherichia coli*.

There are significant health hazards associated with the consumption of raw milk and dairy products made from raw milk because the raw milk may contain food borne pathogens. Multiple outbreaks of food borne illness in the U.S. have been reported where unpasteurized milk or cheeses are implicated. Additional information is available from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Epidemiology Bulletin “Unpasteurized or Raw Milk ” ([http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2009\\_29.pdf](http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2009_29.pdf)), the FDA (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm079516.htm>), and the CDC ([http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/cheesespotlight/cheese\\_spotlight.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/cheesespotlight/cheese_spotlight.htm)).

## **To reduce the potential for pathogens to be introduced we recommend:**

1. Good veterinary care for the animals.
2. Standard hygienic practices when milking the cow, goat or sheep:
  - a. Wash the teats with a sanitizing solution, dip teats in an approved germicidal teat dip before milking
  - b. Use a strip cup to examine the milk for abnormalities
  - c. Dip the teats in an approved germicidal teat dip after milking
  - d. Use clean and sanitized equipment to collect the milk.
3. Proper storage and handling of the milk after it is collected. Milk is a nutrient rich product and encourages bacterial growth. Refrigeration at below 41 degrees Fahrenheit will minimize growth of pathogens and spoilage bacteria.
4. Milk from animals being treated with antibiotics or other pharmaceuticals should not be consumed.

