Within the last few months, we’ve come further than ever in the fight to pass GMO labeling laws. The campaign in Oregon submitted more than 156,000 signatures to place a GMO labeling measure on the November ballot and is busy rallying people to come out and vote in the fall. Food & Water Watch will be placing four temporary organizers on the ground to help see the campaign through to victory.

On the legislative front, New York came close to bringing a GMO labeling bill to a vote this session. Similarly, Massachusetts increased the number of representatives supporting a GMO

I’ve been doing social change work for more than 40 years, and I know that organizing people to hold our elected officials accountable is the only thing that actually makes change. How many politicians take action on an issue only because it’s the right thing to do? Precious few.

That’s why Food & Water Watch is committed to building the political power necessary to pressure decision makers to act on behalf of people and the environment — on the issues that are key to life. Elections in our nation are held hostage in a system of legalized bribery, enabling corporations to become more powerful and more influential in U.S. politics than ever before.

And both political parties are to blame for this, because both the Democrats and Republicans depend on large sums of corporate money to stay in office. Even well-meaning politicians often cow to selfish interests during election-year politics. In the end, it’s going to take everyone fighting to get money out of politics.

On the federal level, a lot of what’s going wrong today with our food and water lies at the feet of President Obama’s administration, which has been giving a green light to fracking and exporting gas. President Obama also broke his campaign promise to help farmers fight large meat industry interests, and has done nothing to help curb food industry power when it comes to critical issues such as labeling genetically engineered foods. Now, the

Holding Politicians Accountable — No Matter Which Party

Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director

Bold Action Needed to Fight Global Warming

Like many in the environmental community, we were heartened to see President Obama take executive action in June to address climate change. But the proposed action encourages greater reliance on fracked gas — a major contributor to global warming. We need bold action to address this very real planetary crisis.

Several studies over the past few years have shown the extent to which methane (a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide) leaks during the production and transportation of fracked gas. Fracked gas is not something we should be transitioning to, yet this is just what the proposed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules envision.

The Fight for GMO Labeling Continues

(continued on A-3)
Fracking and Earthquakes

A number of earthquakes have occurred in places where significant seismic activity is unusual, and additional studies have demonstrated the link between fracking and waste disposal and earthquakes.

In Arkansas, Colorado, Texas, Kansas and Ohio, earthquakes have been linked with injection wells used in disposing of fracking waste. But nowhere has this received more attention recently than in Oklahoma, which recorded over 200 earthquakes of magnitude 3.0 or higher during the first half of 2014 — significantly more than California, which had recorded 140 during the same period.

To put this in perspective, between 1975 and 2008, Oklahoma averaged just one to three quakes of that size annually. And, the U.S. Geological Survey released a study earlier this year linking a 5.0 quake and 5.7 aftershock to injection well activity.

The earthquakes are having real impacts — damaging property when they occur but more significantly, hitting the pocketbooks of homeowners. In Oklahoma, earthquake insurance has skyrocketed to over $12,000 annually according to a report in Time magazine — essentially a tax on homeowners to subsidize big oil and gas industry projects.

Communities are rising up and fighting back. With state-based partners in Oklahoma, we are launching a campaign to stop injection wells, and we have been working with coalition partners in Ohio on a similar campaign for the past year and a half. Earthquakes are another reason why fracking should be banned, and why we need to continue to organize and build political power to make that happen.

More Cities Pass Resolutions to Save Antibiotics!

Over the summer Food & Water Watch has been able to pass resolutions to ban the overuse of antibiotics on factory farms in over 13 cities including Chicago, Illinois; Alexandria, Virginia; and Carrboro, North Carolina. These cities join others in Ohio, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Washington, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and New Jersey, pushing Congress to pass legislation to protect our health.

We’re also excited to promote the release of “Resistance,” a new documentary on antibiotic resistance, and have partnered with Uji Films to hold screenings of this important film across the country.

Antibiotic resistance is a problem increasingly affecting the health of our communities, and it is exacerbated by poor factory farming practices. More than 80 percent of all antibiotics used in the U.S. are used in agriculture, and many of these antibiotics are the same ones that people use for medicine. This continual feeding of antibiotics on factory farms creates antibiotic-resistant bacteria, which can spread quickly and cause life-threatening infections in people.

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(continued on A-4)
In the second quarter of 2014, working with our allies at the national, state and local level, we attained the following victories:

- Passed resolutions to stop the misuse of antibiotics on factory farms in Chicago, Illinois; Alexandria, Virginia; Highland Park, New Jersey; and Carrboro, North Carolina.
- Passed measures to ban fracking and related activities across the country, including local bans in Santa Cruz County and Beverly Hills, California and Hillsdale, New Jersey; passed measures in Ann Arbor City and Washtenaw County opposing oil and gas exploration in Scio Township, Michigan; and passed a measure in Allamakee County, Iowa that effectively prevents frac sand mining there.
- Supported groups in Vermont in passing the first clean GMO labeling law in the country.
- Passed measures to support labeling of GMOs in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Jersey City, New Jersey.
- Defeated a bill that would have weakened local control of factory farms in Missouri.
- Derailed plans for the proposed Bluegrass Pipeline, indefinitely postponing the project.
- Defeated a Portland, Oregon ballot measure funded by major water users and polluters that would have created a new water district in order to deregulate environmental protections and lower costs to the largest industrial water users.
- Blocked a measure that would have deemed exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to any World Trade Organization country as in the public interest, although legislation to increase LNG exports is still pending in Congress.
- Passed a resolution opposing the Trans-Pacific Partnership in Carrboro, North Carolina.
- Passed a fracking waste ban through the New Jersey legislature — our work now focuses on Governor Christie and an override should he veto the bill.
- Made progress with our Take Back the Tap campus program’s Tap-a-Palooza pledge contest, getting 3,500 people to pledge to give up bottled water. The initiative resulted in new fill stations at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, New Mexico State University, Xavier University in Ohio and William Paterson University in New Jersey, and finalized a bottled water reduction plan at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

MILESTONES

- Worked with Oregon-based allies to turn in signatures to qualify a GMO labeling measure for the ballot in Oregon this November.
- Submitted 71,174 letters to members of Congress asking them to co-sponsor legislation that would stop the misuse of antibiotics on factory farms.
- Submitted 91,725 comments to the Food and Drug Administration in opposition to the Monsanto “Dream Bill” that would kill GMO labeling.
- Working with partners in New Yorkers Against Fracking, we collected and delivered over 50,000 comments on Governor Cuomo’s draft energy plan urging him to ban fracking and truly move away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy in the plan. We also sent 41,235 comments to the EPA telling them to ban the use of insecticides that kill bee populations.

Fracking Campaign Update (continued from A-1)

This is why Food & Water Watch is partnering with other allies on a major climate march on September 21 in New York outside the United Nations Climate Summit. This will serve as a powerful moment to focus attention on the climate crisis.

We need to build on that awareness and demand real solutions from the elected officials who are supposed to represent us. We will be building on the momentum from the march for the Global Frackdown on October 11 to organize actions across the United States and the world to demand that decision makers respond to the crisis by banning fracking and related activities and instead commit to a renewable energy future.

Holding Politicians Accountable (continued from A-1)

White House is negotiating two secret trade deals — one with Europe and another one with 12 Pacific Rim countries. These deals aren’t really about commerce; they are about trading away our nation’s independence and helping big corporations boost their profits.

It’s time to hold all our elected representatives responsible in both parties — no exceptions.
Food & Water Watch • foodandwaterwatch.org

It Takes a Movement to Win Safe Food and Clean Water!

Doug Lakey • Development Director

I once had a long-standing Food & Water Watch member ask me, “Why do you send out fundraising mail?” She could have also been referring to emails, or telephone calls, or any of the number of ways we reach out to people and ask for support.

I told her that Food & Water Watch is going toe-to-toe with some of the richest and most powerful corporations in the world who want to control our life-giving resources for the benefit of their bottom lines. To do so, we need the funds to hire policy experts, communication professionals, researchers and lawyers, and to staff our local organizers in 16 different states, all working on vital public campaigns to stop fracking, get GMO food labeled and stop the misuse of antibiotics in factory farms, as well as working behind the scenes to make sure government and regulators are protecting people, not corporations.

“But why do you ask so often?” she replied. At that point, I turned the question around, and asked her how often she gives to organizations without being asked. She thought a moment and said, “Well, never.” We never know when it will be “the right” time for someone to make a donation, so we ask regularly to be sure Food & Water Watch is there when the time is right.

Food & Water Watch does not accept any corporate or government funding, so we can take strong and uncompromising positions to protect our food and water. But that means we depend entirely on our members (and some private foundations) for the money we need to keep fighting for you and your family’s right to safe food and clean water.

We are countering the power of Big Money with the power of people educated and mobilized to take action. You can take the next step in your support, and in building a movement to protect our food and water, by becoming a monthly supporter. Your small, regular gifts as a Food & Water Partner will provide us with a dependable stream of revenue so that we can be smart and strategic in our campaigns. We can also reduce the amount of money we spend to reach out to you to figure out if “the time is right” — because when you make that monthly commitment, we know we can count on you, even without asking. Please return the enclosed form, or feel free to contact our Monthly Giving coordinator Alex Patton in our D.C. office at (202) 683-2535 or by email atapatton@fwwatch.org.

IN HER OWN WORDS

Brenna Norton
Southern California Organizer

As a former professional ballet dancer and theater nut, I had a roundabout way of finding myself in organizing. But 12 years ago I also discovered powerful individuals making a real and meaningful impact on our world, and I got the bug for organizing that never left.

I worked, volunteered and interned on a range of issues: from media reform, to political campaigns, to studying how the right-wing agenda was successful in taking over our country, to food policy, organic farming and climate change. My goal was to find what resonated with me as one of the most effective ways to create change.

I saw clearly that change wasn’t going to come from D.C. and that being right did NOT matter. That asking for something with a lot of smart people didn’t matter. There is a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Those who love peace,” he said, “must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war.” I learned from these experiences that building people-powered political power, and organizing on a local and regional scale, is the only thing that is ultimately going to save our planet and humanity.

Food & Water Watch is the only national organization with financial independence that is working with grassroots organizations on a local and regional scale to build the political power to protect our shared resources — and it’s working. I’m so blessed to find exactly the work I was called to do.
We’re working to pass legislation that would end the misuse of antibiotics on factory farms, and we’re spreading the word on social media. Check out some of our latest online resources and shareable images to raise awareness about our campaign. Like what you see and want to help spread the word to your social networks? Check us out on Facebook and Twitter!
Don’t Hang Up that Phone!

Food & Water Watch
Member Specialist Carol Cook

At a time in life when many are slowing down, our newest staff member, Carol Cook, is going full steam ahead. Carol has had a long and diverse career working with and for a variety of nonprofit organizations, from the National Small Business Association to the American Institute for Cancer Research. She also helped start a wealth management company, David Cook Associates, where her son, Sean, serves as its current President and CEO. Her other son, Scott, played professional soccer for many years and is now a church pastor in North Carolina. Carol has six grandchildren that she loves to spoil and is so happy to be working for Food & Water Watch, as she feels she is doing her part to protect our food and water for them.

As our Membership Specialist, Carol will be contacting our members by phone to tell them more about our work and help them become more involved in our campaigns to protect our most essential resources. So when you pick up your phone and it is Food & Water Watch calling, there’s a good chance that it will be Carol hoping to talk with you. We hope you will find the time to speak with her. We think you’ll like her as much as we do! And, rest assured, Carol will help you figure out how you can play a part in protecting our food and water, too — for you, your family and her grandchildren!

PARTNER PROFILE

Karen Feridun • Berks Gas Truth

If you’ve been to an anti-fracking event in the Northeast — or joined an Americans Against Fracking national conference call — chances are you’ve heard from Karen Feridun, the unflappable leader of Berks Gas Truth in Pennsylvania, a leading grassroots organization in the fight to ban fracking.

Food & Water Watch has worked closely with Karen and Berks Gas Truth for the last few years on a variety of campaigns including calling on President Obama to reopen EPA investigations into fracking pollution in Dimock, Pennsylvania and opposing fracked gas exports and the Cove Point LNG export facility. Karen led the campaign to get the Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee to support a statewide moratorium on fracking last year and surprised everyone when they passed it.

Building upon this incredible win, this spring our sister organization, Food & Water Watch Fund, partnered with Karen and Berks Gas Truth to launch Pennsylvania Voters Against Fracking. Designed to inject the issue of fracking into the Democratic gubernatorial primary, we launched a pledge asking candidates to commit to a moratorium on fracking and showed up at a series of candidate forums, debates and events.

As a national organization, Food & Water Watch has the research, communications and organizing staff to bring resources to campaigns, but our grassroots partners are essential. In the Pennsylvania voters project, Karen was a true partner — we’re proud to stand alongside her there and look forward to continuing to work with her and other grassroots allies as we fight to protect our essential resources and democracy in the keystone state.

Karen Feridun at a Baltimore rally protesting the proposed LNG export facility at Cove Point on Maryland’s eastern shore.
This spring, students at nearly three dozen schools participated in the 2014 Tap-a-Palooza contest.

The competition ran from World Water Day to Earth Day, and two winning schools received funding to install hydration stations on their campuses. Students at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (at right) collected over 1,200 pledges to choose tap over bottled water, putting their school at the top of the contest leaderboard for overall pledges collected.

Sharing the first-place prize, Dartmouth College collected the most pledges as a percentage of their school population.

Based on an average consumption of 220 bottles per person per year, this year’s contest theoretically reduced over 770,000 bottles from the waste stream.
Antibiotics Resolutions (continued from A-2)

We’re working to pass local resolutions to support two bills in Congress that would ban this misuse of antibiotics on factory farms for good. By organizing local campaigns, we are sending a strong message to Congress that our communities demand protections for our health and action on this issue. Go to our website to learn more about our campaign, and download your own toolkit for passing a local resolution in your community: foodandwaterwatch.org.

Become an activist!
Want to see the latest ways you can help drive the movement to end corporate control and abuse of our food and water supplies? Visit our website at: foodandwaterwatch.org/take-action

Become a member!
Your donation will help make our food and water safe and clean. Join us at: foodandwaterwatch.org/support-us
Or, please send your check for $20 to:
Food & Water Watch
1616 P St. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036

Already an activist and a member?
Spread the word! Join us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and more!

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria threaten everyone’s health.

Factory Farms make me sick.

Did we miss something you want to hear about? Have ideas to improve our newsletter? Contact us at info@fwwatch.org to give us your feedback.