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A LA CARTER: Chewing over a bovine bill of rights

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Cows of the world are uniting - or the cows of this country, at least.

This summer, "Bovines across the nation unite in a call for access to organic pastures, eradication of synthetic hormones and a better day for Bovine Sisters at CowsUnite.org."

This document claimed that a "spokescow" had said, "The Resistance, My Sisters, Begins Now!" Well, maybe. I listened closely, and all I heard her say was, "Mooooo."

The humans behind the cow movement say, "Cows have the right to be cows. Cows have the right to graze. Cows have the right to clean air. Cows have the right to dignity and joy." It is probably hard to find a cow, peaceably grazing on summer's good green grass or placidly chewing its cud, who would disagree with those sentiments.

Cows Unite is supported by Organic Valley, Bioneers, Farm Aid, Sustainable Table and Ecotrust, among others.

Kicking off in Hollywood on Aug. 2, Sustainable

Table's "Eat Well Guided Tour of America" will travel across the United States, stopping in towns all over the country but with the goal of arriving in New York in time for the Sept. 16 Farm Aid concert with Willie Nelson and John Mellancamp at Randall's Island. Along the way, it will visit family farmers,



farmers' markets and restaurants that serve sustainably produced, local food.

Humans who get three other humans to sign up for the movement may receive a coupon good toward Organic Valley milk or cheese and, upon signing up three other supporters, the human can get various revolutionary cow paraphernalia, including a Cow Manifesto and a Holstein-patterned "support ribbon" magnet. Those who encourage even more people to sign up have a chance to win a year's supply of Organic Valley milk, an all-

expenses-paid family weekend visit to an organic dairy farm and other gifts. (I have already signed up to support the cows in their quest for a better life.)

To hear a cow moo, learn more about activities and view two short films, go to

cowsunite.org.

For more information about Farm Aid 2007, go to farmaid.org. Tickets for a HOMEGROWN Festival, the Sept. 9 event, are available to FarmYard members (sign up at the Web site) and to others at all Ticketmaster outlets, online at ticketmaster.com, or by calling 631-888-9000 or 212-307-7171.

Here's part of the "Bovine Bill of Rights":

Cows have the right to be cows. Cows are not machines. We are equals in the interdependent circle of life. All our rights begin with this right.

Cows have the right to graze. Turn us loose to graze in pastures free of synthetic pesticides and herbicides. We will take only what we need, and we will refresh the soil. You will be happier for it, too. Our milk will be delicious and delightful. Promise.

Cows have the right to just say "no" to drugs. The days of experimentation are over. Stop pushing the synthetic hormones and antibiotics. Organic is the right way for Sisters everywhere.

Cows have the right to dignity and joy. When we are free to move about outdoors, it's our best opportunity for dignity, health and joy . . . and a chance at joy should be the right of all living things. Even dogs.

Cows have the right to decent help. Sure, us cows are the all-stars, but the time has come to say thanks to the little guys: the family farmers. We can't do this alone. Fair pay for an honest day's nurturing and care. It's all we ask. Viva la Family Farm!

Cows have the right to clean air. Nothing makes us breathe easier than local customers. When you choose milk from pastures close by, you reduce trucking. . . . Less air pollution, less fuel used and support for your neighboring farmers, all from one little milk choice.

I say, who could argue with that?

RECIPE

LEMON CREAM SCONES

In summer, with blueberries at the farm stands and in the markets, I substitute them for currants in these scones, rich with cream from happy cows. In winter, if I am out of currants, I make them with dried cranberries. I've made these moist scones for years; they are always a hit as a hostess gift. They are especially good served with whipped cream, or with lemon curd. The recipe, slightly adapted, is from the 1997 book "The Village Baker's Wife: The Desserts and Pastries That Made Gayle's Famous" by Gayle and Joe Ortiz with Louisa Beers (Ten Speed Press).

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 cup sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder (be sure it is fresh)

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream or a little more, as needed

1 large egg

1 1/2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon zest

1/3 cup (2 2/3 ounces) unsalted butter, chilled

1/2 cup currants or dried cranberries, or 1 cup fresh blueberries

For glaze:

1 large egg

1 teaspoon water

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

2. Place flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade. Pulse several times to combine ingredients.

3. In another bowl, mix cream, egg, vanilla and zest. Set aside.

4. Cut butter into 1/2-inch pieces and sprinkle them over the flour mixture. Pulse several times, or until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

5. Transfer dough to a bowl and add cream mixture. Stir to combine. If the dough does not quite come together, add a little more cream. Stir in the currants, cranberries or blueberries lightly, being careful not to overmix.
6. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. With floured hands, gently pat dough into an 8-inch circle and transfer to an ungreased baking sheet. With a serrated knife, cut into 8 wedges. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and water to make the glaze. Using a pastry brush, coat scones with glaze.
7. Place baking sheet on center rack in oven and bake 19 to 22 minutes, or until top is lightly browned and a toothpick comes out clean when inserted in the center. Let scones cool on the baking sheet, on a wire rack, for 5 minutes. Makes 8 scones.

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