

5 Foods Americans Eat that Are Banned Around the World

By The Daily Meal | Shine Food – Sunday, October 13, 2013



Synthetic Hormones rBGH & rBST

The United States government has set several rules and guidelines in place to protect us from eating potentially harmful foods. Several dishes considered real delicacies in other parts of the world, like haggis in Scotland or fugu (puffer fish) in [Japan](#), are banned from the U.S. food market because of potential health risks. But looking at the issue from a reversed angle, there are actually several common foods eaten in America that are banned in other parts of the world.

The shocking truth is that many of our favorite foods, like boxed mac and cheese and yogurt, include ingredients that other countries have established as potentially harmful for health, and therefore are banned. Clearly, mac and cheese on its own isn't poisonous in any way, but the yellow food colorings #5 and #6 have been shown to cause hypersensitivity in children, and are therefore banned in countries including Norway, Finland, and [Australia](#). For yogurt and other milk products, it is the rBGH and rBST that some countries are concerned with - these growth hormones are banned in several regions including the European Union, [Canada](#), and Japan because of their potentially dangerous impacts on the health of both humans and cows.

Though the studies and investigations showing the possible dangers of these ingredients are not to be taken lightly, food manufactures in America surely are not trying to poison the American people. Different countries have different policies and politics when it comes to food, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) assures that it is monitoring the safety of all ingredients available for American consumers. The varying food-safety laws around the world are good reminders for all of us to be aware of what ingredients are in our foods, and not to panic, but to use common sense and mild precaution when choosing what foods we eat.

1. Olestra (aka Olean) : Olestra is a zero-calorie fat substitute created to make healthier snacks such as fat-free potato chips. But olestra has been shown to cause side effects in the form of gastrointestinal problems, as well as weight gain - instead of weight loss - on lab rats. The U.K. and Canada are two places that have banned this fat substitute from their food markets.

2. Brominated Vegetable Oil: Brominated vegetable oil (BVO), is vegetable oil, derived from corn or soy, bonded with the element bromine. It's added to many sodas and sports drinks prevent the flavoring from separating and floating to the surface. But bromine has also been shown to alter the central nervous and endocrine systems, causing skin rashes, acne, loss of appetite, fatigue, and cardiac arrhythmia. The chemical is banned both in Europe and [Japan](#).

3. Synthetic Hormones rBGH & rBST : These two growth hormones can be found in dairy products such as yogurt and milk. The controversy with cows injected with these hormones is that several studies cite rBGH as a cause of cancer. Due to these reports, many consumers in the U.S. choose to buy organic milk and dairy products, as well as those labeled "rBGH free," and the hormone is totally banned at milk and dairy farms and in dairy products in the European Union, [Australia](#), Canada, Israel, and New Zealand.

4. Azodicarbonamide: This chemical azodicarbonamide can be found in boxed pasta mixes, breads, frozen dinners, and packaged baked goods, and is added as an instant bleaching agent for flour. In Singapore, Australia, and most European countries, this chemical is banned due to reports of it causing asthma. Azodicarbonamide is also a chemical used in foamed plastics, like yoga mats.

5. BHA and BHT: Found in cereals, nut mixes, chewing gum, butter spreads, and many other foods in need of preservation, BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole) and BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) are commonly used preservatives. The National Toxicology Program's 2011 report on carcinogens states that BHA can trigger allergic reactions and hyperactivity and "is reasonably anticipated to be a human hazard." The preservatives are both banned in parts of the European Union and [Japan](#), and the U.K. doesn't allow BHA in infant foods.