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Fox Needs More Elitists

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Glenn Beck last night went on a rampage against the new food safety law up for a vote in the Senate today, denouncing the bill as a George Soros attempt to control you. Obviously, that's completely nuts.

But here's what is not completely nuts:

The new bill [threatens](#) local and small-scale food producers, especially artisanal cheesemakers whose products of course require bacteria.

Food guru Michael Pollan has [backed](#) an amendment that would exempt local producers from some of the proposed new law's strictures.

Walter Olson of Cato directs us to [this example](#) of what's at stake:

Kelli Estrella, a farmer and award-winning cheesemaker whose pastureland is tucked into a bend of the Wynoochee River here [in Washington state], has become a potent symbol in a contentious national debate over the safety of food produced by small farmers and how much the government should regulate it.

To her devotees, Ms. Estrella is a homespun diva of local food. With her husband and six adopted children from Liberia, she makes tasty artisan cheeses from the milk of her 36 cows and 40 goats and sells it at farmers' markets.

Some even winds up on tables at fancy restaurants in Manhattan and Los Angeles.

But to the federal government, Ms. Estrella is a defiant businesswoman unable to keep dangerous bacteria out of her products. Last month, the Food and Drug Administration moved to shut down her business, [Estrella Family Creamery](#), after tests found listeria in some of her cheese and she refused to agree to a broad recall of her products.

Although no illnesses have been linked to Ms. Estrella's cheese, listeria is a sometimes deadly bacteria that is especially hazardous for the very young and the very old. Pregnant women who become infected can have miscarriages or stillbirths.

Now here's where the mind boggles. It's hard to imagine any heroine less appealing to the Glenn Beck imagination than a locavore maker of artisanal cheese served at fancy restaurants. In fact, I can in my mind's eye right now see Beck in fake smoking jacket, glasses and munchkin voice ridiculing and mocking "a particular fine example of Camembert." But I wonder: perhaps just this one time, Glenn Beck should let loose his inner elitist – and inform his audience accurately of the concerns genuinely at stake rather than substituting crazed paranoia about the determination of shadowy Central European financiers to control you, your banks, and your precious bodily fluids.