

Pure Facts

Newsletter of the Feingold® Association of the United States



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www.feingold.org

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Why does food cost so much?

And what can consumers do to find higher quality foods at lower costs?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service has published a report on the cost of food in this country. (See www.ers.usda.gov)

Data from 2008 indicates that for every dollar spent on food in this country, only 15.8 cents goes to the farmers/growers and the remaining 84.2 cents is spent on "marketing," which is defined as all of the expenses incurred to get that food into your shopping bag.



Even if you don't have a garden, a farm stand nearby or a farmer's market in your area, you can still make smart choices in your neighborhood supermarket. The first step is to read the fine print on the price labels shown below the product. Most of them will tell you the cost per pound or per ounce. For example, the Virginia supermarket where these figures were gathered sells various brands of 10-ounce bags of potato chips for \$3.99. The small print on the shelf label shows that this translates to \$6.38 a pound.

Scalloped potatoes made from scratch take a little longer to prepare than a mix but cost only a fraction of the price, and the mix is not complete since it requires that you add milk and butter.



But in the produce section, a 10-pound bag of potatoes is \$4.99 or only 50 cents a pound when they are bought this way, so you know that the manufacturer -- who buys potatoes in enormous amounts -- paid much less than 50 cents a pound. Yet all the added marketing costs mean the consumer pays \$6.38.

For specialty versions of potato chips, the price rises to \$6.98 a pound, and at the top of the list are the baked, flavored chips selling for a whopping \$7.30 a pound!

Most people don't want to have to make their own potato chips, but it's a simple matter to make popcorn from scratch.

Dollar Meals

Like all companies, fast food chains are not in business to lose money, so (except for short-term promotions) the meal that sells for a dollar must be made from ingredients that are cheap enough for the company to make a profit.

Back in 2008, in the midst of their famous dollar meal, McDonalds earned profits of \$4.3 billion, up \$2 billion from the previous year.



In that same supermarket, a pound of popping corn sells for 83 cents. Pop Secret (with artificial flavor) costs \$3.73 for an 11.2-ounce package of microwaveable popcorn. This translates to \$5.33 a pound. But that pales in comparison to ready-popped versions. At \$2.99 for a 5-ounce bag, Smartfoods White Cheddar Popcorn is a whopping \$9.57 a pound!

You can buy lots of fresh fruits and vegetables for \$9.57!

There might be times when you opt for these processed foods, but being aware of the huge markup will help you decide if the cost is worth it. ♦

The Feingold® Association of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, is a non-profit organization whose purposes are to support its members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate awareness of the potential role of foods and synthetic additives in behavioral, learning and health problems. The program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors, aspartame, and the preservatives BHA, BHT and TBHQ.

A Dad's Story

Back in the mid-1970s, I was a divorced father raising my son. During his first, second and third grade years, he was extremely hyper.

I was called to the school often because Troy wouldn't sit still, talked a lot, and had trouble just concentrating in class. I was frustrated and didn't know what to do. I talked with my son's doctor, who wanted to put him on Ritalin, but I refused.

I had a good friend who was a teacher, and along with the help of his 3rd grade teacher, I discovered the Feingold Diet. At first, I thought it was a bit overwhelming, but I read everything I could get my hands on.



I sat my son down, and we talked about his behavior at school, church and home. I told him what I wanted to do, and he seemed willing to try. The first thing we did together was to go through every food item we had in the house. We removed everything that he shouldn't have...and that seemed to be most of the things we had! Then we went to the grocery store and bought things that were acceptable. I found that some things we could only get at a natural food store. Some things I had to make from scratch, but we began the diet.

Within a relatively short time, his behavior began to change. We actually found that we liked the foods we were eating and they were much healthier for us.



Occasionally, I ran into a problem when he was away from our home. He might be given something he should not have, and it showed up in his behavior rather quickly and then took a couple of days to get out of his system. I did send snack foods with him when he went to a friend's or any place away from home.



Over time, I added back some of the salicylates to his diet and watched for any reactions. With some foods, he had no problem and with others, we just immediately stopped those foods. We continued with this for a number of years. To this day, there are things Troy doesn't eat.

He excelled in elementary school, and high school was even better. He went off to college and then medical school. He is now a radiation oncologist, is married, and has two wonderful daughters.



The Feingold Diet was definitely the right answer for my son. It changed his whole life and mine as well. I am convinced that every parent who is dealing with a child who is having problems and every teacher who struggles with a student should share information about the Feingold Diet. It can make a world of difference in a child's behavior.



I can't say enough about this program and even though it was many years ago that we used it, I still feel strongly about it and have shared our story with many people over the years. ♦

Blair Richards

Pediatricians call for protecting children from harmful chemicals.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has added its voice to the many nonprofit organizations that have long called for an overhaul in the federal system that regulates chemicals.

However, it might be more accurate to call it a system that prevents regulation. Not only are the millions of pounds of chemicals produced each year protected from regulation by current laws, but the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) admits it knows very little about them. The Toxic Substance Control Act actually prevents federal regulators from banning or even testing many of them.

The law, dating back to 1976, allows the chemical companies to determine if the products they manufacture and sell are safe.

But in the years that have followed, it has become increasingly clear that the many hormone-disrupting chemicals that are in the air, water, and in consumer products, are causing serious damage.



Because of their small body weight, infants and children are the most vulnerable citizens, eclipsed only by the unborn baby.

The AAP has joined the Environmental Working Group and others who have long called for precautions to protect citizens, especially pregnant women and the very young.

Currently, it's difficult to know if a product is hazardous since companies are not required to disclose what chemicals are in their products. ♦

Painkillers during pregnancy increase risk.

A study published in the fall in the journal *Human Reproduction* showed that when a woman takes medicine like aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) during pregnancy, there is a risk for the unborn baby boy.

Researchers from the University of Copenhagen surveyed more than 2000 women in Denmark and Finland, asking about their use of the medicines during pregnancy. When the painkillers were used during the second trimester, there was a greater chance a male child would have reproductive damage. The medicine is believed to interfere with the production of testosterone during the formation of the sex organs.

While taking a single painkiller increased the risk, if a woman took two of the drugs, the likelihood of damage was 16 times as great. This hormone disruption is believed to be similar to the damage that can be caused by phthalates, which are used in many plastic products. ♦

The Preschool Critic

It's not unusual for a young child on the Feingold diet to recognize that other people are eating food additives known to be harmful, and to comment about it.

This poses a dilemma for the parent, and while we don't have any specific recommendations about how to handle it, we suggest that parents take a hard look at the issue.

We all want our children to be polite and respectful of the choices others make. We see people who fill their shopping carts with junk or who order unhealthy food at a restaurant. This might be viewed as simply a personal preference, like people who enjoy spicy food or those who don't like broccoli.



We want our children to respect the choice of a vegetarian diet or one that is kosher or that eliminates gluten. But a diet filled with dyes, fake sweeteners, flavor enhancers and other harmful additives is not really in the same category. These additives cause damage -- they harm the nervous system, the immune system and the reproductive system. They also cause mutations, DNA damage and cancer.

When your child tells his aunt that she shouldn't eat that red velvet cake or sweeten her coffee with aspartame, it's similar to a child telling an adult that they should not smoke or should wear seat belts.

Each parent will need to determine what best fits their family's value system, but before you discourage a young child from speaking out, consider that his message is truthful and that uncensored words spoken by young children can have a positive impact on adults. ♦

Jingle Defense

What can you do when you hear the ice cream truck coming down the street?

We asked the experts -- Feingold moms -- and here is what they found works for them.

"My girls rush to see which truck it is but know not to even ask for any since it's all 'artificials.'"

"We keep ice cream bars and pops in the freezer, and I tell the kids to come get one out of the freezer when the other kids are getting theirs from the truck."

"Someone asked the ice cream lady to get Feingold-acceptable treats, and she did! All the trucks in the city are run by the same company, so the whole town can have natural treats!"

"Kids need to know that they can't have everything they ask for. I tell them that the ice cream truck has yucky stuff, but even if we weren't Feingold, they wouldn't get to have something every time they heard it."

"We have a treat at home. Sometimes I jazz it up with banana, chocolate syrup, sprinkles, etc. to make it a special treat."

"When she was little, I got the ice cream truck guy to keep acceptable ice cream bars on the truck so she could buy one. When the day care children used to go to the ice cream truck, I kept acceptable ice cream bars in the day care freezer for her."

"I told the kids straight up that this is not an option for us. I said it very matter-of-factly and didn't make a big deal of it, so neither did they. I told them the ice cream had unhealthy chemicals and dyes, and we had better stuff in the house. They've never questioned it."

"My neighbor told her kids that when the music is playing it means that they are all out of ice cream!" ♦

Good news from Australia

The Australian branch of the Aldi supermarket chain has announced they are ditching food dyes.



This is important to consumers world-wide for several reasons:

First, it brings awareness to the fact that petroleum-based food dyes are harmful. Second, it shows that food can be colorful and delicious without the need for fake dyes. This makes it harder for markets in other countries (and for the US FDA) to continue to turn a blind eye to the enormous amount of research showing the damage they cause. Finally, it puts pressure on governmental agencies to take action to protect consumers, especially children.

In 2007, following the landmark study from the University of Southampton (showing that food dyes cause harm to all children), the major British chains announced they would be getting rid of the dyes.



How Schools Sabotage Learning

Barrie Silberberg wrote, "I went to my daughter's Student of the Month awards ceremony today. It was truly wonderful -- until they gave out the 'prizes.' Each child received coupons for meals out, etc. One place was a snow cone place. Yes, Dye City! But the worst of all was the Willy Wonka Licorice-type candy with not only Red 40 but also Yellow 5 and Blue 1 -- given out at school before 9am! I was SO angry! I just sent a letter to the school's 3 administrators, sharing my recent blog that I wrote about the FDA and dyes and also explaining about my book (*The Autism and ADHD Diet*) and all the studies out there." ♦

The effort that started in England with Jamie Oliver, and the 2004 and 2007 Southampton studies, resulted in the removal of most of the synthetic dyes from the food in Europe! Let's hope this trend makes its way to North America!

Leading the charge were Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Sainsbury's and ASDA (which is owned by Wal-Mart.) ASDA was especially vocal, promising their customers a "no nasties guarantee."

The chain's "no nasties" policy did not sit well with Ajinomoto, who currently makes the synthetic sweetener aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet). The Japanese company initiated a law suit against ASDA that has gone on for several years.

Ajinomoto seeks to defend the integrity of its controversial sweetener, which has generated more health complaints to the US FDA than any other additive in history.

In addition to aspartame, Ajinomoto is the major manufacturer of MSG (monosodium glutamate), which has an even longer history of reported health problems. ♦

Food Fibs

In an effort to appear healthier and more natural than they really are, companies are resorting to many devices, and in some cases, stretching the truth. Here are a few examples:

- Campbell's Tomato Soup contains 240 mg of sodium.
- Campbell's "25% Less Sodium Tomato Soup" contains 240 mg of sodium. Huh?
- Heinz Classico pasta sauces say they are "packed from fresh tomatoes," but they are reconstituted from tomato concentrate.
- Snapple, whose slogan is "made from the best stuff on earth," has a Papaya Mango Tea that does not contain any papaya or mango but instead has citric acid, "flavors," and the fake sweetener aspartame.
- Mott's 100% All Natural Juice is made from water and concentrated juices that are the equivalent of 14 teaspoons of sugar in their single serving. ♦



What's for McBreakfast?

The fast food giant got a wrist-slapping from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture for using the word "maple" in their ads for oatmeal. People in Vermont are very touchy about the misuse of this word, and unless it's really maple syrup, companies must use the term "artificial flavor."

Several food chains now serve oatmeal, generally with the option of added fruit, nuts and brown sugar. (Jamba Juice, with organic steel-cut oats, cooked and not microwaved, has been rated the best tasting.) But coming in at a cost of between \$2 and \$3, this is a high-priced breakfast option. Thrifty consumers can put oats and hot water in a thermos at home, bring some nuts or fruit, and enjoy their breakfast at the office at a fraction of the cost. ♦

"Corn Sugar" - a rose by any other name

High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) became very popular with food manufacturers in the 1980s because it is cheaper than cane or beet sugar and also a little cheaper than corn syrup. This is due, in part, to the fact that corn is heavily subsidized by taxpayer dollars. (Many Feingold members believe they are sensitive to corn sweeteners.)



Meat Glue - Ewwwww

It goes under several names, thrombion, transglutaminase and Activa RM, but some call it Super-Glue.



Meat glue is an enzyme powder derived from beef and pork blood plasma. When it is mixed with scraps of beef, the fine white powder causes the pieces to stick together and give the appearance of a quality cut of meat. Once the meat is cooked, even butchers cannot detect the difference between this product and the real thing.

Meat scraps were once used to make ground beef, but these steak look-alikes command a much higher price.

The main problem with the process is that bacteria form on the surfaces of meat that is exposed to air, so while this can be a problem with ground meat, solid pieces are exposed to bacteria only on the outside of the piece, and cooking kills them. But with glued meat, there are many surfaces that are potentially exposed to bacteria, and they are now found throughout the piece and may not be thoroughly cooked.

Food processing has long used natural enzymes to tenderize meat and make cheese, but unlike these, Activa is believed to be hazardous if the fine powder is inhaled.

According to the trade publication, *Meat Trade News Daily*, the glue is also used in making imitation crabmeat and chicken nuggets, which are created from a slurry of ground up chicken parts. It can also be used in sausage, pork and fish.

Activa RM is manufactured by the Japanese firm Ajinomoto, best known for its MSG (monosodium glutamate). On the basis of one study conducted by Ajinomoto, the Food and Drug Administration has declared it "GRAS" (generally regarded as safe) and has not placed any restrictions on its use or required that it be identified on the label or that restaurants alert consumers to its use. ♦

School food in Los Angeles

Changing school food can change lives, and the good news is that these changes are not as difficult as many believe.

In fact, the biggest obstacles are likely to be the people who are charged with doing what is best for our children. This was personified in the Los Angeles School District's Superintendent, whose stony face was shown on Jamie Oliver's recent Food Revolution show. Happily, Mr. Cortines has retired and been replaced with a new Superintendent, John Deasy, who agreed to work with Jamie. One of the first changes will be to get rid of the highly sugared, flavored milks (which generally contain artificial flavorings and may have dyes).

Good news from DC

A small increase in the money provided (ten cents each for breakfast and lunch) has made a huge difference in the food. Ed Bruske writes, "Kids can choose from organic yogurt and home-baked muffins for breakfast. Lunches range from a scratch-cooked spinach lasagna to roasted bone-in chicken to a Cajun-seasoned Tilapia filet."

"This year, [the District's] schools have saved \$1 million on food, even while serving breakfast in the classrooms of most elementary schools for the first time and implementing a supper program in 99 schools. Breakfast in the classroom boosts participation and brings in federal subsidy dollars that can be used to improve food quality. The supper program is also a money maker. Meals cost \$1.40 but are reimbursed by the US Department of Agriculture to the tune of \$2.92 each through the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program." ♦



Why are some school officials so reluctant to reform their food?

Any time huge sums of money are involved, there is always the potential for abuse, and schools are no exception.

School officials have long made deals with cola giants to give them exclusive "pouring rights" -- the right to have only that company's vending machines in the schools -- in exchange for cash to the school. Such deals ignored rules requiring competitive bids for major purchases.

Food companies and food distributors sell hundreds of millions of dollars worth of food to large school systems, and it is routine for the major food manufacturers to provide huge rebates (or "kickbacks" as some



call them). Whether the money goes into the school's treasury, to individual administrators or into the pockets of the distributors is a great unknown. Then there's the issue of the bribes offered by food processors. Tyson's, a huge meat processor which supplies chicken products to many schools, has admitted that government inspectors in their Mexican plant were given bribes, and their top executives knew about it.

The Slow Cook - another Dad making a difference

Ed Bruske's web site, The Slow Cook, is an outstanding resource for those who want to keep current on what's going on regarding school food. A former reporter for the *Washington Post*, Bruske has chronicled the developments in the Washington, DC, public schools, where his daughter is a student.

These reports, including a series about a DC school kitchen, have been a major factor in bringing reform to the city's schools.

This concerned dad has truly shown how mighty "the pen" can be in bringing reform. If your community has a journalist with the interest and talent to follow the proud tradition of investigative reporting, the local school cafeteria is a good place to visit.

PIC Report

The following products have been researched or re-researched and may be added to your Foodlist or Mail Order Guide.

Products with this symbol ^ are available in Canada.

SM = natural smoke flavoring

GF = gluten-free CF = casein-free

Stage One

A TASTE OF THAI Fish Sauce (GF, CF)

ANNIE'S HOMEGROWN ORGANIC* Honey Wheat Pretzel Bunnies (CF), Pretzel Bunnies (CF), Spelt Pretzel Bunnies with Sea Salt (CF); Granola Bar: Chocolate Chipper (CF), Peanutty (CF)

ANNIE'S HOMEGROWN TOTALLY NATURAL* Gluten Free: Cocoa & Vanilla Bunny Cookies (GF, CF), Ginger Snap Bunny Cookies (GF), Snicker Doodle Bunny Cookies (GF, CF)

BARBARA'S BAKERY* Cereal: High Fiber Flax & Granola, High Fiber Original (CF), Puffin Puffs Crunchy Cocoa (CF)

BOAR'S HEAD Mortadella (CS, N, GF), Mortadella with Pistachio Nuts (CS, N, GF); Slicing & Precut: Cream Havarti with Dill Cheese (GF), Swedish Style Fontina Cheese (GF)

ELEGANT MINERALS (www.elegantminerals.com) (all GF, CF) Natural Costume/Halloween Face Paint: Aqua, Black, Brown, Dark Green, Gold, Hot Pink, Light Blue, Light Green, Orange, Purple, Red, Royal Blue, Silver, White

IAN'S*^ Gluten Free Onion Rings (GF, CF); Organic Chicken Nuggets (CF); Wheat Free Gluten Free Chicken Tenders (GF, CF); Wheat Free, Gluten Free Chocolate Covered Wafer Bites (CS, GF, CF); Wheat Free/Gluten Free Recipe Animal Cookies (GF)

IZZI B's ALLERGEN-FREE CUPCAKES (www.ibcakes.com) Chocolate Frosting (GF, CF), Maple Frosting (GF, CF), White Frosting (GF, CF); regular & mini: Chocolate Chocolate Chip Cupcake (GF, CF), Vanilla Chocolate Chip Cupcake (GF, CF), Vanilla Cupcake (GF, CF)

LIFEWAY Real Lowfat Kefir Cultured Milk Smoothie Probiotic: Chocolate Truffle (GF), Pomegranate (GF), Vanilla (GF); Real Original Kefir Cultured Milk Probiotic Plain Unsweetened (GF)

LIFEWAY ORGANIC PROBUGS Whole Milk Kefir Sublime Slime Lime (GF)

Stage One, continued

SHABTAI GOURMET (www.cinderellasweets.com) (all are GF, CF) Gluten Free: Bread Crumbs, Brownie Bites, Devils Food Seven Layer Cake, Florentine Lace Cookie - Egg Free, Pecan Meltaway Cookies, Ring Ting Cupcakes, Super Moist Fudge Brownie, Swiss Chocolate Roll

SILK TRUE (available only in Canada)^ Pure Coconut Original (GF, CF), Pure Coconut Vanilla (GF, CF)

SO DELICIOUS (all GF,CF) Coconut Milk Creamer: French Vanilla, Hazelnut, Original

TOOTH SOAP® (www.toothsoap.com) (all are GF,CF) Breath Sweetener™, Chocolate Mint Liquid, Cinnamon Gel, Cinnamon Honey Liquid, Ginger Whip, Lemony Lime Tooth Swish, Peppermint Gel, Peppermint Honey Liquid, Peppermint Tooth Swish, Peppermint Whip, Plain Jane Gel, Plain Jane Liquid, Plain Jane Shreds, Plain Jane Whip, Salty Jane Liquid, Salty Mint Liquid

Stage Two

GREAT LAKES (www.glit.com) Dried Apricots (SF, GF, CF, peaches)

IZZI B's ALLERGEN-FREE CUPCAKES regular & mini: Chocolate Chili Spice Cupcake (GF, CF, cayenne peppers), Pumpkin Spice Cupcake (GF, CF, cloves)

LIFEWAY Real Lowfat Kefir Cultured Milk Smoothie Probiotic: Strawberry (GF)

LIFEWAY ORGANIC PROBUGS Whole Milk Kefir: Goo-Berry Pie (GF, blueberries), Orange Creamy Crawler (GF), Strawnana Split (GF, strawberries)

OLDE WORLD ARTISIAN BREAD COMPANY Gluten Free Dairy Free Cinnamon Raisin Bran Muffins (SF, GF, CF)

PURE KNEAD (www.pureknead.com) Allergy Friendly Fare Gluten Free Original Hamburger Buns (GF, CF, cider vinegar)

SHABTAI GOURMET (www.cinderellasweets.com) Gluten Free: 7-inch Birthday Cake (GF, CF, oranges), Apricot Roll (SB, GF, CF, apples), Chocolate Chip Cookies (GF, CF, almonds, apricots), Honey Cake Loaf (GF, CF, almonds, oranges), Lady Fingers (GF, CF, oranges), Marble Cake Loaf (GF, CF, oranges),

SIMPLE FUEL (www.simplebrandz.com) Chocolate (acai berries, blueberries, cherries, maquai berries, rosehips, strawberries)

TOOTH SOAP® (www.toothsoap.com) Passion Fruit Liquid (GF, CF, salicylate content unknown)

The Feingold Association does not endorse or assume responsibility for any product, brand, method or treatment. The presence (or absence) of a product on a Feingold Foodlist, or the discussion of a method or treatment, does not constitute approval (or disapproval). The Foodlists are based primarily upon information supplied by manufacturers and are not based upon independent testing.

Saltwater swimming pools

For summer fun without the red eyes and reactions, consider this alternative to chlorine.

If you have your own pool or have access to a saltwater pool, there are many good reasons to switch.

In her free online newsletter, *Get The Connection*, Mary Ellen Anderson described the problems her son had: "One summer, many years ago, our son became sick every time he had a swimming lesson. Finally, he had to quit taking the lessons, and he stopped getting sick once he stopped the swimming lessons!"

"I eventually discovered that algaecides are commonly used in swimming pools, and I am sure his exposure to them was a major reason he was so sick after his swimming lessons. I also know that chlorine is both a carcinogen and toxic to the body, so I am confident that it, too, was causing problems."

Of the chlorine-free options, salt water pools appear to be the best tolerated. Feingold mom April Walker reported, "My son cannot swim in most pools because his eyes get bloodshot and swollen, and he develops asthmatic symptoms. We were invited to swim in a salt system pool -- the owner said it was not toxic like other pools, and my son had no reaction. The owner said he never adds chemicals and that somehow the salt, which is similar to that in teardrops, keeps it all clean. We could open our eyes under water. Apparently, it was relatively inexpensive to convert the system, and all they have to do now is add salt. An added benefit is that it does not smell." ♦



The next *Pure Facts* will be our July/August issue.



Just right for Dad!

A Feingold apron for the Grill King in your family can be ordered from the Feingold Shop. There's a large choice of products and messages at:

www.cafepress.com/feingoldshop

Local Harvest

Check out your area for the details on local farms and farmer's markets that sell directly to consumers. You will benefit by finding locally grown foods at prices that cut out the expensive marketing costs which account for most of the price of foods that are purchased conventionally. You also have greater access to grass-fed meat, cage-free eggs, and organically-grown fruits and vegetables. Some sell cheese, honey and baked goods.

To locate the resources in your area visit www.localharvest.org and enter your zip code. ♦

Pure Facts

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Pure Facts is published ten times a year and is a portion of the material provided to members of the Feingold Association of the United States.

Membership provides the Feingold Handbook which includes Recipes & Two Week Menu Plan, a regional Foodlist containing thousands of acceptable US brand name foods, a telephone and E-mail Help-Line, and a subscription to *Pure Facts*. The cost in the US is \$69 plus s+h. A *Pure Facts* subscription plus Member's Message Board access is \$38/year when ordered separately.

For more information or details on membership outside the US, contact FAUS, 37 Shell Road, 2nd floor, Rocky Point, NY 11778 or phone (631) 369-9340.

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