

The

Inspectors' Report

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Notes from The Chair

By Luis Brenes

At the BOD retreat in 2005, the BOD identified IOIA's training curriculum as a top priority that helps serve our mission of promoting integrity and consistency of the certification process.

IOIA is justly proud of our training program and our Trainers. We are also proud of our position in the industry. We are recognized globally as the standard for inspector training. However, there is no room for complacency. Inspecting is today more complex and challenging than ever before. It demands special knowledge but also special skills and attitudes. We knew we needed to take a step forward in codifying how and what we teach. We wanted to significantly increase the professionalism of our trainings. We wanted to raise the bar for what an IOIA Certificate of Completion means. We needed a standardized, consistently delivered training using IOIA copyrighted materials.

In the 2006 budget, we allocated money for curriculum development and identified the basic Crop course as the first leg of the project. Our Executive Director oversees the project with BOD oversight through a subcommittee (Garry Lean and Ann Baier). A Training Advisory Committee was struck, including those with curriculum background and experienced inspectors. Knowing that materials would be least polished for the New York trainings, Garry Lean agreed to serve as Lead Trainer for the first course.

To date, we developed materials and trialed them first in New York and then in California. We are spending more time than anticipated on the Crop course, but we feel if we create the right 'template', the Livestock and Processing courses can be completed more efficiently. The new course has an

[see **Notes**, page 5]

Wild Pigs Eyed as Source of Deadly E. Coli

Wild pigs may have spread deadly bacteria onto a California spinach field, according to state and federal investigators, who report that there is a particular ranch where wild boar trampled fences that had hemmed in a spinach field.

To date, 204 cases of illness due to E. coli O157:H7 infection have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control, including 33 cases of Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS), 102 hospitalizations and three deaths. Cases were spread out over 26 states and 1 province in Canada.

Officials also said the outbreak appears to be over, as no one has become ill from eating contaminated spinach since Sept. 25.

Samples taken from a wild pig, as well as from stream water and cattle on the ranch, have tested positive for the same strain of E. coli implicated in the outbreak, said Dr. Kevin Reilly of the California Department of Health Services. Investigators continue to look at three other ranches in the areas in seeking the source of the contaminated fresh spinach.

"We are not saying this is the source at this point," Reilly said of the ranch. Samples of cattle feces on one of the implicated ranches have tested positive for the disease-causing strain of E.coli 0157:H7. These four fields, located in Monterey and San Benito counties, are not currently being used to grow any fresh produce.

Wild pigs are one "real clear vehicle" that could explain how E. coli spread from cattle on the ranch to the spinach field less than a mile away, Reilly said. The pigs could have tracked the bacteria into the field or spread it through their droppings, he said. [One interesting point is that pigs are more like people than they are like cattle regarding the toxicity of E coli 0157. A number of papers show that people and pigs both have receptors for E coli 0157 on the cells of the gut while cattle do not have such receptors. Pigs also get diarrhea similarly to humans when infected by E coli 0157, according to a number of studies.]

FDA, the State of California, CDC, and the USDA continue to investigate the cause of the outbreak. The environmental and on-site investigation has included inspections and sample collection in facilities, the environment, and water. In addition, investigators have reviewed and evaluated animal management practices, water use, and the environmental conditions that could have led to contamination of the spinach. The field investigation team has included experts in multiple disciplines from FDA, CDC, USDA, and the State of California.

Product Recalls

FDA announced on Sept. 29, 2006 that all spinach implicated in the outbreak traced back to Natural Selection Foods LLC of San Juan Bautista, California. This determination was based on epidemiological and laboratory evidence obtained by multiple states and coordinated by CDC. Natural Selection Foods issued a recall on September 15 of all brands [see **Spinach**, page 22]

Membership dues and Membership Directory update reminder! Deadline is December 1.

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....And More!



Dairy Animal Acquisition under the NOP Regulations

Purpose

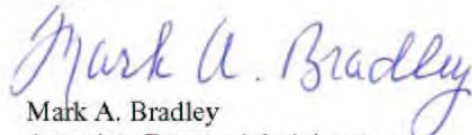
This document is for use by National Organic Program (NOP) producers and certifying agents in determining what classes of dairy animals are appropriate for acquisition under the NOP regulations. These guidelines only clarify existing NOP regulations and will be updated as the regulations are revised.

If You:	Then You May Acquire the Following Class(es) of Dairy Animals:
Were certified organic prior to October 21, 2002.	1. Conventional (Note: Conversion using the 80-20 exemption must be complete by June 9, 2007);* 2. Converted feeding 100% organic feed;** 3. Converted under 80-20;** 4. Organic from last 3 rd of gestation;** 5. Born of an organic mother.**
Were certified organic after October 21, 2002, and fed 100% organic feed during conversion.	1. Conventional (Note: Conversion using the 80-20 exemption must be complete by June 9, 2007);* 2. Converted feeding 100% organic feed;** 3. Converted under 80-20; ** 4. Organic from last 3 rd of gestation;** 5. Born of an organic mother. **
Were certified organic after October 21, 2002, and converted using the 80-20 feed exemption.	Organic from last 3 rd of gestation.**
Are currently in transition to organic and feeding 100% organic feed during the 12-month dairy animal conversion period.	None. You must complete certification before adding animals from off your farm to your herd. Any organic animal that leaves a certified operation loses its organic status when it enters a non-certified operation.
Are currently in transition to organic and converting using the 80-20 feed exemption during the 12-month dairy animal conversion period.	None. You must complete certification before adding animals from off your farm to your herd. Any organic animal that leaves a certified operation loses its organic status when it enters a non-certified operation.
Are currently in transition to organic and feeding crops and forage from land, in your organic systems plan, that is in the third year of organic management during the 12-month dairy animal conversion period.	None. You must complete certification before adding animals from off your farm to your herd. Any organic animal that leaves a certified operation loses its organic status when it enters a non-certified operation.
Are a new dairy, certified, with no dairy animals	1. Conventional (Note: Conversion using the 80-20 exemption must be complete by June 9, 2007);* 2. Converted feeding 100% organic feed;** 3. Converted under 80-20;** 4. Organic from last 3 rd of gestation;** 5. Born of an organic mother.**

*Milk from these animals eligible to be labeled as organic after 12 months of continuous organic management.

**Milk from these animals is immediately eligible to be labeled as organic.

Approval



Mark A. Bradley
Associate Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

NOP Rule Changes

On October 5, the NOP Rule was updated to reflect addition of several materials to Subpart G Administrative. Inspectors should note the addition of several volatile amine boiler additives and peroxyacetic acid as a sanitizer, each with a specific annotation. The appeals process was also updated. **The NOP rule on the website is updated as well.**

The following Materials were added, effective date September 11:

- **Crop:**

Section 205.601 Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production

(h) As slug or snail bait. Ferric phosphate (CAS # 10045-86-0).

(m) (2) EPA List 3—Inerts of Unknown Toxicity allowed:

(i) Glycerine Oleate (Glycerol monooleate) (CAS #s 37220-82-9)—for use only until December 31, 2006.

(n) Seed preparations. Hydrogen chloride (CAS # 7647-01-0)—for delinting cotton seed for planting.

- **Livestock: No changes.**

- **Handling:**

Section 206.605(a) Nonagricultural (nonorganic) substances allowed as ingredients, amended by adding:

- Egg White lysosome (CAS 9001-63-2)

- L-Malic acid (CAS 97-67-6)

- Microorganisms—any food grade bacteria, fungi, and other microorganism.

Section 206.605(b) Synthetics allowed as ingredients, amended by adding:

- Activated charcoal (CAS #s 7440-44-0; 64365-11-3)—only from vegetative sources

- Cyclohexylamine (CAS # 108-91-8)—for use only as a boiler water additive for packaging sterilization.

- Diethylaminoethanol (CAS # 100-37-8)—for use only as a boiler water additive for packaging sterilization. for use only as a filtering aid.

- Octadecylamine (CAS # 124-30-1)—for use only as a boiler water additive for packaging sterilization.

- Peracetic acid/Peroxyacetic acid (CAS # 79-21-0)—for use in wash and/or rinse water according to FDA limitations. For use as a sanitizer on food contact surfaces.

- Sodium acid pyrophosphate (CAS # 7758-16-9)—for use only as a leavening agent.

- Tetrasodium pyrophosphate (CAS # 7722-88-5)—for use only in meat analog products.

The Adverse Action Appeal Process was also updated (205.681 Appeals)

205.681 (d) Where and what to file. (1) Appeals to the Administrator must be filed in writing and addressed to: Administrator, USDA, AMS, c/o NOP Appeals Staff, Stop 0203, Room 302-Annex, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0203.

g **TAP reports** - On Aug. 22, NOP posted TAP reports for 11 substances that have been added to the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances database kept by NOP. To view the listings, go to <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/NationalList/PetitionedSubstancesDatabase.htm>.

g **NOP posts Q and A concerning enforcement of national organic standards** - On Aug. 1, the NOP posted a Q&A document for consumers concerning the enforcement and integrity of NOP. The document is posted at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/Newsroom/NOP%20Compliance%20QAs%207-31-06.pdf>. In this document, NOP explains that if an accredited certifying agent is revoked from the program, the agent must surrender all records from the certified clients, and operations certified by that agent are given 30 days to find another certifying agent. During this time, the certified operations do not lose their organic certification. After the 30 days are up, organic product produced or sold by those certified operations cannot display the revoked certifying agent's logo or mark.

Canadian News

On September 1, 2006, the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) announced approval of the revised Canada Organic Standard and Permitted Substances List. Also on September 1, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Organic Task Force (OTF) pre-published the Canadian Organic Products Regulation. The Organic Products Regulations/Règlement sur les produits biologiques, was published in the Canada Gazette, Vol. 140, No. 35, September 2. For US readers, the Gazette is analogous to the US Federal Register. The public and international trading partners were given 75 days to comment. The comment period on Canada's proposed organic regulation ended Nov. 15.

What's Next?

The government will review the comments and make any necessary revisions prior to final publication and enactment. Canada hopes to see an organic regulation in the books and a Canada Organic Office/ Bureau national du biologique at CFIA before the end of 2006. However, many stakeholders are skeptical. Quebec, a provincial government widely recognized in Canada for its strong organic certification program, has voiced opposition to some provisions. Canadian Organic Growers, another major voice in Canadian organics, protested the short comment time. They commented that 75 days was sufficient to review the regulation but not both the regulation and the Organic Policies and Procedures (OPP) Manual. The most serious concern for some is that the regulation appears to control only the organic claims where the organic logo is used. If this interpretation is correct, there is nothing in the regulation to prevent operators from making false claims that a product is 'organic' or 'biologique', provided they do not use the organic logo. Some commenters would prefer to have the regulation amended before implementation if this interpretation is correct. Even without opposition, complete implementation will likely take years. For links to the regulations, visit <http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partI/2006/20060902/html/regle2-e.html>, and for the documents http://www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/on_the_net/organic/index-e.html

To read comments to the regulation from Canadian Organic Growers, visit www.cog.ca/documents/COGResponsetoOrganicProductsRegulation_000.pdf Although Canada has had an organic standard since 1999, it has not been codified in law. Certification of organic producers and handlers, and accreditation of certifiers has been voluntary, except in Québec, which requires certification to the Québec organic standard by a certifying body accredited by the Conseil des appellations agroalimentaires du Québec (CAAQ). The Canadian organic community wants a mandatory regulatory system that will ease the way to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada securing equivalency agreements with other countries. The proposed Canada Organic Regime will define accredited certifiers, procedures for inspection and certification, a Canada Organic seal, surveillance and enforcement, and maintenance of the Canada Organic Standard and Permitted Substance List. Sources: *Organic Trade Association* (www.ota.com) and *Canadian Organic Growers* (www.cog.ca)

Free Budget Tools Available

The Ag Budgeting Database is the latest online offering from the **Canadian Farm Business Management Council**. The database contains 1,500 budgeting tools such as spreadsheets, cost calculators, worksheets, benchmarks, and reports for virtually every type of commodity produced on Canadian farms. Almost all of them are free (a few have a nominal cost). Farmers willing to spend some time with Ag Budgeting Database and really learn how to use the tools will find it extremely valuable when it comes to analyzing their business' profitability. Find it at: www.farmcentre.com/farmbudget

OZ Certifiers Unite

The Organic Growers of Australia Certified Ltd. (OGA), one of the largest certifying bodies for organics in Australia, on Sunday 29th October held its Annual General Meeting where an almost unanimous majority of members voted 'YES' to the move into the Biological Farmers of Australia Co-op Ltd. Group (BFA). The BFA is Australia's leading and largest member body for organics in Australia, and its subsidiary Australian Certified Organic, prior to this merge, certified over half of Australia's certified

organic operators. The agreement was reached over 4 years of mutual cooperation.

Pierce Cody, owner of the largest independent retailer of certified organics within Australia, says it is fantastic news. "There are currently 7 certification bodies in Australia which for a relatively small market causes considerable confusion and doubling up of resources, placing extra pressure on our fledgling industry. It is pleasing to see that two certifiers have been able to work together to deliver some much needed rationalisation of Industry. Of course we are very keen to see further of this rationalisation occur."

Based on Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) 2005 data, the new group will certify over 1600 operations; or approximately 70% of the industry's organic operators.

The integration of OGA into the BFA group is expected to be completed over the next few months. Michael Blakeney, General Manager for BFA explains "Once the consolidation is complete, the OGA certification stream will provide certification to those small growers who wish to target farmers' markets and retailers. Their produce will not be eligible for the export stream. Present OGA growers who wish to have product available for export will be required to have ACO certification.

Howard Rubin, Director of OGA says it is a win-win situation for all growers. "While OGA has over the years specialized in small grower certification, these growers have in practice been subsidizing the larger growers. Now we have created a system especially for them providing a reduction in fees and simple compliance system.

"Smaller growers subject to increasing costs with other certifying bodies will likely join and grow this new small growers' scheme. It has been a long time coming and we really appreciate the cooperation between the two Boards for achieving this great result for all."

Industry Debates Future of Oz Organics

As most industry stakeholders are aware, there continues to be much speculation, confusion and concern over the potential relocation and options surrounding the industry Organic Standard in Australia. The BFA concept proposal for regulation of organic and biodynamic foods is still out for comment via www.bfa.com.au, É

More Sector News

Highlights from the National Organic Standards Board meeting

NOSB's meeting Oct. 17-19 in Arlington, VA, was the final meeting for Board Chair Kevin O'Rell, Livestock Chair Michael Lacy, and Materials Committee Chair Nancy Ostiguy, who all served five-year terms. Due to an additional open seat, the National Organic Program (NOP) is expected to name four new members in January. Here are some highlights from the meeting:

g NOSB officers for the next year are Andrea Caroe (Chair), Julie Weisman (Vice-Chair), and Bea James (continuing as Secretary). Pending formal appointment, Gerald Davis will continue to chair the Crops Committee, Joe Smillie will chair the Compliance, Accreditation and Certification Committee, Julie Weisman will remain chair of the Handling Committee, Hubert Karreman will chair the Livestock Committee, Dan Giacomini will chair the Materials Committee, and Rigoberto Delgado will continue to chair the Policy Development Committee.

g NOSB postponed discussion on clarifying the definition of materials as synthetic or non-synthetic, and deferred a recommendation on determining whether a substance is agricultural or non-agricultural.

g For crops, NOSB voted to reject lime mud, sodium lauryl sulfate, and calcium chloride; and deferred a recommendation on sulfuric acid to stabilize dehydrated manures.

g NOP received 80,000 comments on the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for pasture. A draft Proposed Rule is almost ready.

NOSB Recommendations from the October Meeting Below is a brief summary. Entire text is available at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nosb/FinalRecommendations/FinalRecommendations.html>.

An important reminder: NOSB recommendations are **only** recommendations and do not change the regulations.

1. [Final Recommendation on the Use of Expiration Dates on Certificates of Organic Operations \(PDF\)](#) The NOSB voted 13:1 to recommend that the NOP implement a rule change for 205.404 Granting certification and 205.406 Continuation of certification to require expiration dates on certificates which will improve compliance and enforcement capabilities.

2. [Final Sunset Recommendation on Colors 605 in Handling, Revised \(PDF\)](#) The NOSB voted 12:2 to recommend not renewing Colors, nonsynthetic only, under 205.605(a) nonsynthetics allowed. Thus, individual colors must be petitioned.

3. [Final Sunset Recommendation on Lecithin, Bleached 605 in Handling, Revised \(PDF\)](#) The NOSB voted 11:3 to recommend renewing Lecithin, bleached, on 205.605(b) synthetics allowed. The NOSB's Committee Summary noted that they hope that a petition will be presented in short order to restrict the use of bleached lecithin to dry forms only. There is neither a nonsynthetic nor an organic alternative to dry, de-oiled synthetic lecithin.

4. [Final Recommendation on Guidance: Use of Compost, Vermicompost, Processed Manure, and Compost Teas \(PDF\)](#) (Entire text is 24 pages.) Very interesting reading. The Rationale Supporting Recommendation: To provide guidance for certain types of compost and manure inputs commonly used in organic farming that were not directly addressed in the rule. To provide guidance and clarification on 2 previous NOSB recommendations: April 2002 Compost Task Force Recommendation and October 2004 Compost Tea Task Force Report and Recommendation.

5. [Final Recommendation on Commercial Availability Criteria for 606 in Handling, Revised \(PDF\)](#) NOSB voted 12:0 - NOSB passed an amended recommendation regarding commercial availability and Section 606 of the National List, removing a burden on certifiers to report determinations. NOSB clarified that on 606 petitions, it sought a risk assessment of the possibility of supply disruption rather than proof of current commercial unavailability.

6. [Final Recommendation on Guidance: Listing of Certifying Agent's Name on Packaged Products \(PDF\)](#) The NOSB voted 14:0 in favor of a guidance statement regarding certification of retail operations and when the certifier's name should appear on the label. See NOP website for full text.

7. [Final Recommendation on the Pet Food Task Force Interim Final Report \(PDF\)](#) The NOSB officially received the Pet Food Task Force Interim Final Report of April 07, 2006, and recommended that the proposed rule changes move forward.

Harvey Suit Dismissed

On Nov. 2, 2006, the United States District Court in the District of Maine has dismissed a legal action filed by Mr. Arthur Harvey in which he alleged that the Secretary of Agriculture failed to meet the requirements of the Order of the District Court.

In the filing, Mr. Harvey objected to the Secretary's interpretation of the requirements of the amendments to the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) that were passed by the Congress of the United States in late 2005. Mr. Harvey's motion sought an order from the Court on the issues of synthetic processing aids and "food contact substances."

In his opinion, Federal Judge B. Hornby stated: "The history of this litigation, the timing and character of the amendments, and the reference to the First Circuit opinion in the appropriations bill, together make it apparent that Congress authorized the use of synthetic substances in handling operations so long as they appear on the National List." (Over the years, the NOSB has authorized 38 synthetic materials for specific uses with some organic processed products. See www.ams.usda.gov/nop/nop/standards/listreg.html.)

The opinion further stated that Section 6517 now authorizes the use of synthetic substances, whether ingredients or processing aids, for use in handling operations so long as they appear on the National List. Furthermore, the judge said that Mr. Harvey's claim about the Food Contact Substance Policy Statement exceeded the bounds of the Consent Decree and the lawsuit.

This court decision will continue to allow the use of synthetic materials in the post harvest handling of organic products, including fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals and grains, and other products in demand by today's consumers. The decision does not add materials to the National List, and all requirements for review of materials by the NOSB remain in place, including the sunset provisions for materials. É

SECTOR NEWS

Organic Farmer Elected to US Senate

Jon Tester, an organic farmer and leader in the organic movement since 1987, has been elected as a US Senator from the state of Montana. A third generation farmer from Big Sandy, Montana, he has been farming organically for nearly twenty years. He recently completed his fourth regular session in the Montana Senate, where he served as President of the Senate.



In 2005, Tester and his wife Sharla were named outstanding agricultural leaders by the College of Agriculture at Montana State University. Their T-Bone Farms is a diversified organic operation with

1400 acres (567 hectares).

Tester has been a leader in the organic movement for more than a decade. He has served as treasurer for OCIA, Int'l, and helped to develop the Montana Organic Certification program.

Bob Quinn, an organic farmer and President of Kamut International, said "I'm sure he'll be a strong voice for sustainable and Organic Agriculture in the U.S. Senate as well, as someone who has learned it by experience." He added "We are extremely happy as an organic community" that Tester has been elected to the U.S. Senate.

NCSA Farm Bill Goals

The National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture has developed a **2007 Farm Bill Agenda** as well as a new **National Organic Action Plan** process.

The Farm Bill Agenda includes:

g Reauthorization of the organic certification cost-share program.

g Support for full funding and implementation of the Conservation Security Program (which may face challenges from the ethanol camp, who want to put conserved land into corn).

g GMO Liability Legislation.

g Reworking the Risk Management Agency/crop insurance program.

g A new national organic transition and stewardship incentives program.

g Support for the OFRF research agenda

For more details go to

www.sustainableagriculture.net/RAFINC_SAJoint.php

The National Organic Action Plan is the umbrella for the beginning of a national conversation on the long range future of organics, starting with a series of nationwide public dialogues examining national and federal priorities for organic agriculture. For more info about the Plan, contact Liana Hoodes at liana@sustainableagriculture.net.

Bradley off to China

NOP's Mark Bradley will be heading to China before year's end to investigate certifiers' work there. He disclosed to *Organic Business News* that there was one formal complaint on the books, although he was not able to elaborate on it or any other specific concerns, other than many in the industry are concerned about human waste being used on organic crops. There have also been questions in the press about the staggering acreage numbers that are coming out of China, although one certifier we spoke with said this is probably due to a grower group-type scenario similar to those found in central and south America. We will be interested to hear Bradley's findings.

Action on NOP Violations

Compliance investigators are looking into 34 cases of alleged violations of the NOP regulations based on complaints filed in the last six months. The investigations are being handled by the USDA's Ag Marketing Service and Compliance and Analysis Office.

Organic Business News reports the actions taken on the following complaints filed between February and August:

Renaissance Acres removed organic advertising that promoted the sale of its herbs as organic but was not certified as organic. A luffa scrubber was using the USDA organic seal but did not list a certifying agent. The unidentified company was accused of altering the seal. Corrections were made to bring it into compliance. **Salt Works** in Washington agreed to remove organic references from advertising which promotes its salt product. At **Parrot Island** in Minnesota, investigators determined there was no violation in repackaging of pet feeds labeled as organic because they fall outside the scope of NOP regulations.

Investigators also determined there was no violation on the USDA organic seal being used on a soil amendment product sold at **Smart World** in Florida. Another company agreed to remove organic references after it was pointed out that it was using "organic" in its website advertising but was not certified.

In another case, a company began claiming it was certified by QAI before it actually received certification from the certifier last March. It stopped producing the product with the QAI logo until it was actually approved.

Alliance World Coffee in Indiana took off organic claims after learning it had to be certified to roast its coffee products and sell them as organic. Finally, **Potent Foods** of Oregon was using the USDA organic seal without naming the certifying agent, ICO. The labeling was corrected by adding the certifier's name.

Pollan Speaks at Bioneers

Bestselling author **Michael Pollan** was a plenary speaker at the October **Bioneers Conference**, held this year in 17 locations with over 13,000 participants across the US. Pollan's speech was titled '*Beyond the Bar Code: The Local Food Revolution*', and explored the profound societal transformation underway that is changing the way we eat and grow our food. Pollan is author of numerous articles on food and nature in the past 20 years, as well as the bestselling book, *The Botany of Desire*, and his latest, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. IOIA will be offering an autographed copy of his latest book, along with a DVD of his Bioneers presentation, at our AGM auction, coming up in March. The Bioneers is a very special conference that has been held annually for 17 years. The Bioneers are an inspiring collection of problem-solvers, with practical and visionary solutions for many of our most pressing environmental and social challenges. These 'biological pioneers' include writers, biologists, educators, architects, farmers, economists, public servants, scientists, business people, artists, gardeners, chefs, and activists whose work spans many fields and cultures. Together, they offer a dynamic vision for restoring the Earth, combining ecological approaches with social, spiritual and political strategies. You can find out more about this growing force by visiting their website, www.bioneers.org.

AGM to Decide on a Smaller Board of Directors

During the BOD meeting of November 16, a motion passed unanimously as follows:

At the next IOIA AGM the BOD will request the IOIA members to reduce the BOD from seven members to five members.

IOIA's Bylaws clearly indicate that the size of the board is up to the membership.

The IOIA BOD has had seven members since inception. In 2004, a bylaws change made the First Alternate a part of every BOD meeting, increasing the size of the assembled Board to eight. Several reasons for the recommendation were mentioned in the Board's discussions.

1. A large board means that many hours of work and leadership are concentrated on the Board. We believe we need to strengthen the structure of the IOIA committees; a smaller board will free some valuable human and financial resources for other important tasks.
2. A total of 7 board members, one alternate, and our Executive Director hold discussions during the board meetings. Almost all meetings are telephone conferences. The Board felt that the decision making process would benefit from a smaller size.
3. At least once a year all board members meet in person before and after the AGM. Some years the board meets for an additional retreat. The cost of these in-person meetings is significant (around \$8-10,000 each). It was felt that a smaller board could be effective, while at the same time saving at least an estimated \$3000.00 per year.

Advantages of a smaller BOD:

- We will still have a good board size (5 members, 1 alternate and the ED present on the calls = 7 people)
- More efficient decision-making, especially in the conference call setting.
- Additional in-person meetings are more feasible. The cost of in-person meetings is a deterrent to additional meetings beyond the AGM. The pre- and post-AGM setting is not always the most conducive to strategic and long-range planning.

Direct cost savings.

- Cost savings could divert more money to strengthen and build committees.

Disadvantages of a smaller BOD:

- Concentrates more power, responsibility, and workload into fewer hands.
- A smaller Board means less diversity of experience and perspective. Diversity = strength, resilience, and good decisions

During the upcoming AGM on March 4 the membership will be asked to vote on this issue. The BOD invites and encourages membership discussion on the IOIA Forum prior to the AGM. If you're not yet on the Forum, contact Diane at webgal@ioia.net to sign up. É

Certifier News

Benjamin New Manager at OneCert

Allan Benjamin has joined OneCert in the new position of Certification Manager. Benjamin will be drawing upon his extensive organic certification experience as he manages OneCert's day-to-day operations.

Before joining OneCert, Benjamin completed organic inspector training (farm, livestock, and processor) with IOIA and served as an organic inspector and inspection report evaluator for the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Organic Program. For the past two years, he represented the Missouri Department of Agriculture at the National Association of State Organic Programs (NASOP) annual meetings as well as the National Organic Program trainings, and the meetings of the Accredited Certifiers Association in Chicago. Benjamin has a broad agricultural background. He has hands on farming experience at several farms and ranches as well as research experience at the Univ. of Missouri Dairy Research Farm and at the Univ. of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center.

Contact Allan Benjamin at: phone: 402-420-6080; toll-free: 866-241-9476; email: allan@onecert.net; website: www.onecert.net

Lewin New CCOF Certification Services Director

CCOF has appointed **Jake Lewin** as the new Certification Services Director effective September 1, 2006. He had been serving as Interim Certification Services Director since July of this year. Lewin brings to the position a wealth of certification experience and education including more than eight years in the organic food, farming, and certification field. For the last 2 ½ years, Lewin has overseen all aspects of CCOF's marketing and international market access grant programs. Lewin's other experience includes working on an organic strawberry farm and as a certification reviewer, program manager and organic inspector for a variety of organic certifiers. He brings with him a

deep understanding of organic standards in the United States and abroad.

GOCA Suffers Fire Setback

Guaranteed Organic Certification Agency (GOCA), of Fallbrook, CA, suffered losses in early November when the home that the business offices are attached to burned down in the course of an accidental house fire. Owner Charlie Heermans reports that about the only thing that didn't burn down were the GOCA offices, although he lost his home and all of its contents. "No one was killed, the pets are okay, all our certification paperwork was backed up – miraculously the few files that did suffer fire damage were only burnt around the edges!" GOCA staff are working to get the operation back in order, and while GOCA currently is not taking on new clients, they expect to be mostly operational by the end of this year and fully up and running (and taking on new clients) in about 3 months. Best wishes to GOCA as they emerge from this trial!

USDA Recognizes India

These new certification agencies from India have just been posted to the NOP website. Full contact info is online at www.ams.usda.gov/nop/NOP/TradeIssues/India.html:

BVQI (India) Pvt. Ltd.

Ecocert SA (India Branch Office)

IMO Control Private Limited

Indian Organic Certification Agency (INDOCERT)

Lacon Quality Certification Pvt. Ltd

Natural Organic Certification Association

OneCert Asia Agri Certification Private Limited

S.G.S. India Pvt. Ltd.

Skal International (India)

Uttaranchal State Organic Certification Agency (USOCA)

Notes from the ED

By Margaret Scoles

It is hard to believe that we are already looking soon to another holiday season, year-end, and planning the next AGM. I'm still raking up leaves, although most of them are down and we've had a bit of snow. I always count it a small measure of success when I can serve my own tomatoes in the Thanksgiving Day salad. I managed to do so this year. All of the rest have been cooked into the winter's supply of salsa.

My summer was spent largely and intensely on IOIA's **curriculum project**, which focused first on the Crop Course. This year, we intentionally postponed the usual large basic training from spring until fall, to maximize our down time for curriculum development. Two large trainings (New York and California) just 6 weeks apart proved to be a real challenge. To add to challenges of the trainings so close in time and new Crop Course curriculum materials, both trainings broke records for enrollment and filled up to the brim. As many certification agencies prepare their renewal applications for accreditation with the USDA, they are sending an unprecedented number of non-inspector staff members to our trainings. In the absence of other options for more appropriate training, industry also sends an increasing number of staff people to our basic inspector trainings. This usually high and diverse enrollment resulted in unexpected positive finances for the trainings and ends IOIA's year on a positive financial note, but we learned a few hard truths, too. Mixing different audiences has both advantages and disadvantages. While many participants count the diversity as a benefit of the course, others noted that it makes it harder to focus on what it takes to become an inspector. One thing is sure: we must reduce the upper limit on enrollment for quality training. That might mean more frequent, lower enrollment trainings which could mean more work in some ways, less stress in others, lower profitability, or possibly higher training fees. We look forward to 'going back to the drawing board' over the next 3 months to adjust and complete the new Crop course curriculum, based on our experiences. We still need to prepare curriculum materials so Trainers can use them readily. Results of the first

Livestock training offered as a stand-alone training without requiring the Crop course as a prerequisite were a bit mixed in NY. Once again, diversity of experience in the participants had its pros and cons. Curriculum project work to date has been largely the work of staff (**Lisa Pierce** and I) with some pieces contracted out to other individuals and Trainers. Special thanks are due to **Garry Lean**, **Stanley Edwards**, and **Lisa Pierce** for their willingness to trial the new materials. Also special thanks to **Monique Scholz** and **Harriet Behar**, who adapted some of the ideas from the Crop course to the Processing course. And to **Joyce Ford**, who helped to develop materials. Although I felt sometimes that I had too many 'irons in the fire' this summer and fall, I wouldn't trade for anything the opportunity I had to be in the classroom with all 5 of the courses delivered this fall. It was great to meet so many of new members of IOIA!

A high point of my summer was attending the **IFOAM Conference on Animals in Organic Production** in Minneapolis in August. A great prelude was a weekend on the North Shore of Lake Superior with a good friend. **Jim Riddle** was Program Coordinator of the IFOAM conference. It was great to see him and Joyce there, as well as the IFOAM crew, and the handful of inspectors who managed to tear themselves away from inspections in a busy season. **Harriet Behar** and I were group leaders for one of the whirlwind all-day field trips that preceded the conference. We visited a grass-based dairy, a meat packing plant, and a beef operation, with lunch in the middle at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Katahdin hair sheep were a bonus at the beef operation. One surprise was finding **Souleymane Bassoum** of Senegal there. He was a friend made at the 2002 IFOAM Conference in Victoria. He is from a nomadic family, with a much different perspective on livestock production than a Montana rancher. I very much enjoyed his presentation and seeing the photos of the family herd. Conference content was excellent -- a good mix of research, policy, and practical presentations by producers. I highly recommend the proceedings as a livestock inspection resource [see IFOAM, page 13]. Best Practices for Organic Hog Production was a great session. Keynote presentations included **Fred Kirschenmann** and **Dr.**

Temple Grandin. Dr. Grandin is widely recognized for her work in the development of low-stress cattle handling systems and humane audit protocols for meat slaughter facilities. She has also written books on autism. After years of struggling with autism, she began to see her disability as a gift when she realized that 'thinking in pictures' gave her a special perspective on how animals see. Animals, without language, also see in pictures. I visited with her at the conference and afterwards about possibly speaking at organic livestock inspector training. Unfortunately, she had impossible conflicts with our AGM/Advanced Training dates, but she really wants to work with inspectors. So we have a solid "rain check". Please watch for her in upcoming IOIA training sessions. She has been very generous with her materials to IOIA. If you are interested in livestock handling and humane audits, do check out her website at www.grandin.com. It is a wealth of information and resources. Her book *Animals in Translation* is one of the most interesting I've read for a long time. I wish you an excellent holiday season with your loved ones. É

Notes, from page 1

additional full day of class time and is more interactive. We were especially glad to see the jump in the course evaluations for the field trip experience as we implemented the new course schedule. This project will continue as a major focus in 2007 addressing not only basic trainings but also training different audiences, and improving the opportunities for continuous education for current members. É

Board member resigns

Maarten Samsom asked for publication of the following announcement:

"Dear IOIA members. In March 2006 I was voted into the BOD, where I became the member at large. In the eight months since then I have put my best effort forward. As I was putting more and more time into being a board member, it felt that my effectiveness was decreasing. It became clear to me to be an issue of incompatibility. I decided that it would be better for the IOIA that I resign to make room in the board for more cooperation." É

2007 AGM in Sunny Encinitas, California

The 2007 IOIA Annual General Meeting will be held in the sunny pool-side Cabana Room of the Best Western Inn & Suites in Encinitas on Sunday afternoon, **March 4**, from 1-4 PM and will include a full dinner afterwards served in the same room. The hotel is located atop a hill overlooking the ocean. The ocean and a delightful shopping and dining area along beautiful coastal highway 101 are just a few minutes walk to the west. An excellent Japanese restaurant is located on the hotel grounds. Ocean-view rooms will be provided first-come, first-served, to those registering for the training and AGM. Advanced training sessions will be held in a combination of hotel meeting rooms: the Cabana room, the Quail Botanical Gardens in Encinitas, and a local café. The Botanical Gardens is located about 5 minutes from the hotel; transport will be arranged. The gardens will be a treat that should more than make up for any inconvenience. Please take a moment to check out the hotel at www.bwencintas.com and the Botanical Gardens, at www.qbggardens.com. Quail Gardens features over 35 acres of exhibits, including rare bamboo groves, desert gardens, a tropical rain forest, and California native plants.

Transportation: San Diego (SAN) is the closest major airport. A smaller airport in Carlsbad is just a few minutes away. Transport options from San Diego range from shuttles at about \$45 and rental cars to inexpensive public buses and the Coaster, the local commuter train (about \$5 and 15 minutes to Encinitas). The Coaster stop in Encinitas is easy walking—just a block from the hotel. Amtrak trains follow the same route but stop only in Carlsbad, not Encinitas. Coaster schedules are available at http://www.sdcommute.com/Rider_Information/coaster/index.asp#stations

Voting at the AGM: If you can't attend, please send your proxy with someone. An Agenda, Ballot, BOD bios, and a proxy form will be mailed out to the voting membership (all Inspector Members) in January. If you have topics to suggest for the AGM, please Email Luis Brenes, Board Chair.

Advanced Training: Thank you to the many members who've suggested topics for the Advanced Training! For the first time ever, IOIA will offer a selection of

concurrent, plenary, and pre-conference sessions to choose from. The event will span 3 days rather than two. This will hopefully encourage more members to attend. At the same time, the format will keep classes seminar sized to allow for discussion.

Pre-conference sessions on March 1 will include a day trip to Mexico if there is enough interest, and IOIA's first **Personal Body Care Products Workshop**. **Gay Timmons** will lead this 1-day workshop, which will include a classroom presentation and a field trip to Dr. Bronner's (about 30 minutes away). Topics will include an overview of types of facilities, formulas, soap chemistry, processes used in cosmetics (catalysts, reagents, and other substances that are not processing aids), non-organic ingredients, multi-ingredient formulation, recipe calculation, and labeling. Timmons has many years of experience with inspection, certification, and consultation for the organic cosmetic industry. In 2000 she founded Oh, Oh Organic, a company committed to the development and delivery of sustainable agricultural ingredients for the cosmetic and personal care industries. Her article 'Soap: Verification Guidelines for Review and Inspection' was published in *The Inspector's Report* Fall 2005. Prior to her current career, she was the first American woman to manage vessel operations, (loading and unloading cargo on the Oakland and San Francisco docks), international traffic management, and ingredient sales.

Advanced Training Topics: One track will be standards based. **Mark Bradley** has been invited from the USDA NOP to speak for a plenary session on the NOP standards. Concurrent offerings will include Canadian update, JAS, EU, and Bio-Suisse. IOIA is working to provide a JAS workshop that will be accepted by certifiers for inspecting for JAS certification. This will be particularly useful for Canadian inspectors, as there is currently no JAS equivalency outside the US. Other topics that have been suggested: How to audit records for complex processing; Auditing computerized recordkeeping systems or "How do you proceed when there's no paper?"; Chlorine; Soil Health and Composting with invited specialist; E. coli and food safety in organic produce; Pest Management with invited speaker. Thank you to those who have made suggestions.

Other Events: Expo West in Anaheim is the weekend following the AGM.

More details: Application and more detailed information will be posted on the IOIA website as soon as available. **Deadline** to apply for the training will be **January 19**. Please send in your suggestions and ideas for both the AGM and Advanced Training. **See you there!**

Guelph Organic Conference, Jan. 25-28 Ontario, Canada

This year's theme is *Next Generation Organics*. **Michael Ableman**, of Salt Spring Island, BC will provide the keynote. Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario will provide courses on Jan. 25-26 including Intro to Ecological Agriculture, Advanced-Field Crop Rotation, Advanced-Direct Marketing, Advanced-Composting, and Advanced-Finding the Balance-Interpreting Soil Tests. The event also features a pre-conference workshop on bio-energy. IOIA will again sponsor a booth at the Trade Show. All members are encouraged to stop by and/or volunteer. IOIA's booth is #91. If you are interested in volunteering at the booth, please contact **Leanne McCormick**, Co-Chair of the IOIA Canadian Committee at leannemcc@rogers.com or give her a call at 519-782-4883.

Dag Falck will deliver a workshop on the Saturday Jan. 27 program - *Organic grain production from the inspector's point of view*. **Tomás Nimmo**, head organizer for the conference, says, "We asked him to deliver that with 2 hats on - the organic crop inspector and also the organic grain buyer, so it should be interesting!" Nimmo encouraged other inspectors to attend Dag's workshop. Falck is currently employed by Nature's Path and is a former Board member and current Inspector member of IOIA.

For more info about the conference, visit www.guelphorganicconf.ca Advance registration is available until January 4.

Correction

In our last issue, we erred in the spelling of Maarten's name and email. So TO BE SURE you have it correct, please make a note of Maarten's contact information:

Maarten Samsom
maarten@wildblue.net

Upcoming Trainings

Encinitas, California

IOIA will sponsor Advanced Organic Inspector Training at the Best Western Encinitas on **March 2-3** in conjunction with the 2007 Annual Meeting on March 4. Pre-conference sessions on March 1 will include a workshop on the inspection of facilities making organic claims for Personal Body Care Products. A Basic Organic Processing Inspection will be scheduled in conjunction with the event. Details are pending. Detailed info and application forms will be posted at www.ioia.net as soon as available. Please see article on AGM, page 4, for more information.

San Jose, Costa Rica

IOIA and Eco-LOGICA will cosponsor 4 day Basic Organic Crop Inspector training using USDA National Organic Standards as a reference. The course will be held at ICAES in San Jose, Costa Rica from **March 12 - 16, 2007**. Instruction will be conducted in Spanish. Please contact Milena Barrantes or Guillermo Saborio at 506.280.6592 or 506.281.3164, fax to 506.224.6676, or email Guillermo at gsaborio@eco-logica.com or Milena at mbarrantes@eco-logica.com for further information. Applications for the course will be posted at www.ioia.net when available.

Northern California

IOIA and California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) are collaborating to develop Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Trainings in **spring 2007** in northern California. Information is pending and will be posted at www.ioia.net as soon as available.

Ohio

IOIA and Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) will cosponsor Basic Organic Crop and Livestock Inspection Trainings on **April 16-22** near Columbus, Ohio. Detailed information and application forms are pending and will be posted at www.ioia.net as soon as available.

Manitoba, Canada

IOIA and the Agriculture and Extension Division of Assiniboine Community College (ACC) will sponsor both Basic Organic Crop Inspection and Basic Organic Livestock Inspection courses again in 2007. These are **Distance Education** courses that consist of: 1) a period of individualized study supported by combination of videos, audio tapes, electronic mail, fax, and telephone tutorial support followed by; 2) field trips during weekend training sessions held in Manitoba. Weekend sessions from Friday evening until Sunday evening will be held April 20-22, 2007 for the IOIA/ACC Livestock Inspection course and April 27-29, 2007 for the IOIA/ACC Crop Inspection course. Course participants receive course packages that require home study and mail-in assignments in advance. Deadlines for the courses are **February 03, 2006** and **March 2, 2007** respectively. Assiniboine College information brochures, IOIA application and ACC registration forms are under development and will be posted at www.ioia.net when available. Or please contact Assiniboine Community College (ACC) at 204-725-8700 ext 6683 or 1-800-862-6307 ext 6683 or 204-725-8740 fax, or PeterseM@assiniboine.net.

Jamaica

A Basic Organic Farm Inspection Training is under development for **April 2007** in Jamaica W.I. The Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement is collaborating with IOIA to develop these trainings. Details are pending and will be posted at www.ioia.net as soon as available.

Future Trainings: Watch upcoming IOIA newsletters and the website for details as other trainings develop.

IOIA Scholarships – The current round of IOIA Scholarship awards is due to be announced December 15. Be sure to check out the information on the winners in our next newsletter.

Directory Updates, from page 2

Sarah Gibson
728 East 4th Ave
Escondido, CA 92025
Home: 760.212.1486
Email: sarahswaheli@yahoo.com

Amy Griner
3001 Hayling Drive
Raleigh, NC 27610
Phone: 919.215.8604
Fax: 919.515.7981
Email: algriner1@yahoo.com

Stuart McMillan
52 Sunset Blvd
Winnipeg, MB R2M 0X4
CANADA
Home: 204.291.1319
Email: salmagundiag@hotmail.com

Ruth Toews
Box 82
Crandall, MB R0M 0H0
CANADA
Phone: 204.562.3658
Email: toewsruth@hotmail.com

Welcome New Supporting Individual Members:

Maria Banda (Minneapolis, MN)
Carmela Beck (Santa Cruz, CA)
Joan Brady (Dashwoon, ON, CANADA)
Brian Canfield (New Castle, VA)
Brent Cannell (Broomfield, CO)
Chris Cardner (OldForge, NY)
Sarah Costin (Fallbrook, CA)
Frank Dehne (Blachly, OR)
Dave Engel (Soldiers Grove, WI)
Allegra Foley (Willits, CA)
Matthew Gedeon (Cambridge, VT)
Patricia Gehlen (Salem, OR)
Robert Goodall (Bellgrade, MN)

Theresia Goodall (Bellgrade, MN)
Scott Goyne (Penngrove, CA)
David Gravelle (Broomfield, CO)
Daniel Guido (Mohawk, NY)
Allen Harthorn (Chico, CA)
Sharon Horn (Mt. Solon, VA)
Roberto Jiménez ((Baton Rouge, LA)
Abhijeet Kulkarni (Emeryville, CA)
Laurence London (Salinas, CA)
Michael Lone (Seattle, WA)
Nabiha Megateli-Das (Ann Arbor, MI)
Shannon Murphy (Temecula, CA)
Kari Murray (Pacific Grove, CA)
Patti Olenick (Harrisburg, PA)
Doug Raubenolt (Londonville, OH)
Larry Rayhons (Lenox, IA)
Shelley Schepp (Regina Beach, SK, CANADA)
Anne Sheldon (Guelph, ON, CANADA)
Judith Siddiqui (Colton, CA)
Patricia Vincent (Roxbury, VT)
John Wilson (Lanoka Harbor, NJ)
Scott Wolcott-MacCausland (Burlington, VT)

In Brief...

Nominations for the IOIA Board of Directors: Are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors or would you like to nominate someone? Please contact Sandra Conway, Chair of the Nominations Committee, at 204-425-3627 or Email: sconway@mts.net **NO LATER THAN January 1** (60 days before the Annual Meeting), so the committee has a few days to discuss the nominations. Responsibilities include attendance at conference calls throughout the year, and at least one in-person meeting connected to the AGM. Candidates should plan one week each year to allow for pre and post AGM meetings. Any Inspector Member can be nominated. At least 3 positions will be open for election. Luis Brenes (Costa Rica), Marina Buchan (British Columbia), and Ann Lameka (Oregon) have declined to run for another term.

Accreditation The Accreditation Committee has made their decision regarding the outcome of the current round but still has to contact the individuals. They expect to have the process wrapped up in early December.

OFRF Requests Proposals

In reinstating its Organic Research grants program, OFRF is releasing an open request for proposals in all subject areas, but particularly encourages proposals in the following topic areas:

g organic livestock systems;
g economic constraints and opportunities relevant to the viability of small- and medium-scale organic farms and ranches;
g projects that investigate the interactions between components of organic systems and that take a systems-management (rather than an input-substitution) approach to solving production problems.

To apply, eight copies of a proposal must be submitted to the OFRF office by Dec. 15, 2006. For more details, please refer to the updated request for proposals on the OFRF website at <http://www.ofrf.org/research/application.html>. Or contact Jane Sooby, technical program coordinator, at 831-426-6606, email jane@ofrf.org.

Member Directory Updates

The 2007 IOIA Membership Directory will be published in late January. We will continue to print the mini-directory (address and contact info only, free to everyone) as an insert in the first 2007 newsletter. If you wish to receive a hard copy Membership Directory, you can pay an additional printing cost of \$15 per copy (all members except for Supporting Certification Agency members). IOIA provides copies of the Directory to Supporting Certification Agency Members, viewing that as a membership benefit for inspector members.

Dues Changes: Supporting Individual and Supporting Organization dues for 2007 increased by \$25. **Inspector members** will note **no dues increase** this year. This is a good time to applaud the IOIA membership for record donations last year, one factor in the IOIA Board's decision not to increase inspector dues this year.

A big **Thank You!** to all who paid Membership Dues promptly and without prompting. The IOIA office is busily updating entries in the online Membership Directory. If you haven't done so, please renew your dues and update your Membership Directory listing. You have several ways to pay your dues, including PayPal through the website. If you're not renewing, please take a moment to let us know why.

Address Changes:

Inspectors:

Marina Sexty Buchan
RR 1, S15, C28
Cawston, BC V0X 1C0
CANADA
Phone: 250.499.2596
Fax: 250.499.2596

Ib Hagsten
Email: ibhagsten4752@msn.com
Upgrade status to Inspector

Maarten Samsom
Email: maarten@wildblue.net

Jennifer Silverman
Email: silverclan@swcp.com

Dr. agr. Vivian Villich
Email: Vivian_villich@dccnet.com
Upgrade status to Inspector

Supporting Members:

Ken Cray
101New Road

Tolland, CT 06084
Phone: 860.871.0223

Welcome Returning Former Members (not printed in 2006 Directory)

Inspector Members:

Joel Hoffman
P O Box 26
Wellsville, NY 14895
Cell: 716.244.7038
Fax: 215.679.4814
Email: HFJK@localnet.com

Valerie Wonderham
S6 C52 RR#1
Okanagan Falls, BC V0H 1R0
CANADA
Phone: 250.497.5130
Email: vwonderham@shaw.ca

Isidor (Byeong-deok) Yu
706 AT Center
Yangjae-dong
Seocho-gu
Seoul, Republic of KOREA
Phone: +82.2.6300.8177
Fax: +82.2.6300.2959
Email: community02@hanmail.net

Welcome New Members:

Inspectors:

Kitri Falxa
2423 NW Shields Drive
Bend, OR 97701
Phone: 541-788-0177
Email: kitrifalxa@yahoo.com

[continued on page 3]

IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Inspectors' Report is the newsletter of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization, whose mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training and to promote integrity and consistency in the organic certification process. Editorial Staff: Diane Cooner, Box 1259, Guerneville, CA 95446 USA. Phone/fax 707-869-3017, webgal@ioia.net. Deadlines are Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 & Nov 1. Relevant articles are welcomed. We strive for accuracy, but the Editor and IOIA cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Published quarterly on recycled paper.



Noticias Organicas de Latinamerica

Para Carlos Escobar

Colombia renueva su normatividad

En el presente Julio de 2006, las autoridades colombianas dieron a conocer la nueva resolución y reglamentación técnica para la producción, transformación, comercialización y certificación de la agricultura ecológica. Este proceso tomo 2 años de consultas con diferentes instituciones y personas que hacen parte de la cadena orgánica. Según Diana Toscano, responsable del programa de agricultura sostenible del Ministerio de Agricultura, el cambio surgió a raíz de la falta de control de la producción ecológica agropecuaria del país, por lo cual era necesario estandarizar procesos de manera más clara y especialmente, bajo sistemas que fueran reconocidos internacionalmente para facilitar de este modo el comercio internacional de productos ecológicos de Colombia con otros países.

El resultado de este cambio están consignados en la nueva resolución 0187 del Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural de Colombia, complementados por el Reglamento de Producción Orgánica versión 1.

La resolución 0187 de 2006 fija las definiciones y pautas básicas para la producción, comercialización y certificación de productos orgánicos. También se establecen las funciones de las autoridades agropecuarias, los organismos de certificación, los operadores y la creación de un sistema nacional de información al respecto. Por otra parte, confirma el uso del sello único de alimentos ecológicos ya usado desde la expedición de la Resolución 0148 de 2004 del mismo ministerio.

Por su parte, el Reglamento adoptado a partir de la anterior resolución, trata con mayor precisión los aspectos técnicos de la producción, procesamiento, empaquetado, transporte, almacenamiento, certificación, importación y comercialización de productos orgánicos provenientes de cultivos y animales

Finalmente, otro gran paso dado por las autoridades colombianas en los últimos días, fue la presentación oficial de la documentación requerida antes las

autoridades europeas con la finalidad de alcanzar el reconocimiento como país tercero según el R. CEE 2092/91. De acuerdo a las leyes europeas, hasta diciembre de 2006 es el plazo final para que los países en desarrollo obtengan su respectivo reconocimiento y puedan continuar exportando alimentos ecológicos hacia dicho mercado.



Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural
ALIMENTO ECOLÓGICO

Sello Único Nacional Colombiano

Costa Rica: ley para el desarrollo, promoción y fomento de la actividad agropecuaria orgánica

El pasado 30 de agosto de 2006, después de un año intenso de consultas con instituciones como el Movimiento de Agricultura Orgánica de Costa Rica (MAOCO), Ministerio de Economía Industria y Comercio, Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería, Ministerio de Hacienda, Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía, Instituto Nacional de Seguros, Bancos Públicos, HIVOS, VECO, FAO, Consejo Nacional de Consumidores y Usuarios, universidades y certificadoras presentes en Costa Rica, entre otros, la Cámara de Parlamentarios de Costa Rica aprobó la ley para el desarrollo, promoción y fomento de la actividad agropecuaria orgánica (expediente no. 16.028), compuesta por 11 capítulos y 43.

La ley tiene por objeto asegurar el desarrollo, promoción, fomento y gestión de la actividad agropecuaria orgánica, fortalecer los mecanismos de control y promoción de los productos derivados de la actividad agropecuaria orgánica; así como procurar la competitividad y rentabilidad de los mismos.

Su contenido incluye:

g Claridad sobre algunas definiciones sobre agricultura orgánica, agricultura convencional, periodo de conversión y grupo de productores, entre otras.

g Faculta al Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería (MAG) como ente responsable de la promoción de la agricultura orgánica en Costa Rica y, además, coordinador con otras instituciones gubernamentales para que involucren acciones a favor de la agricultura orgánica (por ejemplo, campañas educativas y de capacitación)

g La certificación participativa como sistema de garantía para los mercados nacionales; siendo la certificación de tercera parte obligatoria para los mercados internacionales.

g Apoyo a la investigación y a la formación de profesionales en Agricultura orgánica

g Impulso al consumo de productos orgánicos a partir de campañas de promoción hacia los consumidores

g Autorización a los bancos estatales a dar líneas de crédito especiales a los productores orgánicos en conversión.

g Autorización también al Instituto Nacional de Seguros (INS) a crear un régimen especial de aseguramiento de cosechas orgánicas.

g Exenciones a los agricultores orgánicos del pago del impuesto de la renta y de aranceles para la importación de insumos, herramientas y vehículos de carga.

g Exoneraciones del pago del impuesto sobre las ventas a los productos agropecuarios o agroindustriales orgánicos registrados y certificados ante la entidad correspondiente

g Sanciones y penas a quienes mal usen la palabra "orgánico", mezclen OGM o siembren estos en zonas donde se encuentran cultivos orgánicos.

g Con este nuevo paso, Costa Rica es el quinto país latinoamericano que cuenta con ley y reglamento técnico garantizando no solo la certificación de productos orgánicos, sino también la promoción y desarrollo de la agricultura orgánica dentro de los próximos planes de gobierno. A esta ley, solo le espera la sanción presidencial para entrar en vigencia antes de finalizar el presente año. É

IFOAM Livestock Conference

1st IFOAM International Conference on Animals in Organic Production Advances Global Organic Livestock Sector

From August 23rd to 25th, over 250 of the world's leading organic livestock experts from 24 countries joined together for the 1st IFOAM International Conference on Animals in Organic Production at the University of Minnesota's Continuing Education and Conference Center.

Jim Riddle, the University of Minnesota's Organic Outreach Coordinator and conference coordinator, said, "The University of Minnesota was honored to host this historic event, which brought together top organic livestock researchers and producers from around the world. The exchange of information was incredible, and the impacts of this conference will be felt for years to come."

Attendees took part in informative farm tours, ate delicious organic food, listened to captivating keynote speakers, learned from numerous workshop presenters, and networked with organic producers and researchers from around the world.

The conference came to diverse significant scientific conclusions that are crucial for both organic and conventional livestock sectors. Significantly, one study presented at the conference by Dr. Taradon Lunangtongkum concluded that resistance to important antibiotics for human health - fluoroquinolones - had been developed by the highly pathogenic *Campylobacter jejuni* species of bacteria in 46% of conventionally raised chickens and 67% of conventional turkeys respectively, whereas less than 2 % of the organically raised chickens and turkeys exhibited resistance to these important antibiotics. The presentations arrived at many conclusions that demonstrate that organic livestock systems improve both animal and human health while protecting the environment.

Dr. Temple Grandin, noted author of *Animals in Translation* and other important works and keynote speaker at the conference emphasized that "people need to wake up to the sensory-based thinking of animals. Organic Agriculture is positioned to create a new model of agriculture based upon Principles that are diametrically opposed to industrial



Future board members Julio Perez, Patti Bursten Deutsch and Fred Ehler take a break at the IFOAM conference.

agriculture.... Humans can no longer regard themselves as somehow separate from the ecosphere of which they are an integral part. In terms of organic standards and animal welfare we have to make sure that sick animals get treated in organic systems."

The participants of the conference collaboratively developed and issued the **St. Paul Declaration**, which recognizes that animals are sentient beings, expresses a commitment to the Principles of Organic Agriculture that ensure the inclusion of animal welfare and animal health management as integral components of organic food and fiber production systems, and concludes that animals should be provided with the conditions and opportunities that accord with their physiology and natural behavior. The St. Paul Declaration calls for financial and institutional support to expand research and extension on organic animal production and management systems, calls on the business and investment community to participate in the sustained economic development of the organic livestock sector and acknowledges the role of organic standards in achieving tangible outcomes for animal health and welfare. The complete text of the St. Paul Declaration can be accessed via the IFOAM website at: [St.Paul Declaration http://www.ifoam.org/press/positions/St.Paul_Declaration.html](http://www.ifoam.org/press/positions/St.Paul_Declaration.html)

Sponsors for the conference included the University of Minnesota.

You can purchase or download the IFOAM conference proceedings at <http://shop.ifoam.org/bookstore/>

You can also purchase or download audio recordings of all sessions at <http://www.organicvoices.com/IFOAM2006ord.html>

Over the coming months, selected presentations will be posted on the University of Minnesota's Organic Ecology website, www.organicecology.umn.edu

New Supermarket Sounds and Smells

Thanks to Ib Hagsten for submitting this gem!

The new supermarket near my house has an automatic water mister to keep the produce fresh. Just before it goes on, you hear the sound of distant thunder and the smell of fresh rain. When you approach the milk cases, you hear cows mooing and smell the scent of fresh hay. When you approach the egg case, you hear hens cluck and cackle, and the air is filled with the pleasing aroma of bacon and eggs frying. The veggie department features the smell of fresh buttered corn.

I don't buy toilet paper there any more. É

Source: IFOAM

Insurance for Organic Inspectors

By Margaret Scoles

As a new section in the IOIA Basic Training curriculum, IOIA now has an optional module called "Operating an Organic Inspection Business". One of the sections is a little info about insurance for inspectors. It might be helpful for you to read what IOIA is telling new inspectors.

[Could IOIA provide liability insurance for organic inspectors? The challenges:

IOIA's structure does not allow for providing errors and omissions liability insurance to members. IOIA is structured as a nonprofit membership association. Our international constituency makes it even more difficult. Very few insurance companies have experience with insurance for organic groups. Of those, most have experience with insuring certification agencies, not inspectors. And not all of those operate in all states or all provinces. IOIA has sought quotes on providing the option for members to purchase insurance. Insurance companies, as they strove to limit their risk, suggested that IOIA might provide it as an option only for accredited members. This is a fairly small pool and the lower the number of participants, the higher the cost. IOIA will continue to explore ways for inspectors to source insurance, but is unlikely to provide it directly, at least in the near future. Unfortunately, far too many inspectors are working without proper liability coverage. Fortunately, lawsuits against inspectors are extremely rare. The least expensive insurance option, per inspector, is for the certification agency to name inspectors as insured on their policy. Some agencies do add inspectors. Sometimes inspectors are told that certifiers can't insure independent contractors, but this is untrue. IOIA has worked to encourage certifiers to add inspectors to their policies. Ideas included an additional fee for inspections where the inspector isn't covered, to compensate certifiers who take a proactive approach. So far, certifiers each handle it differently.

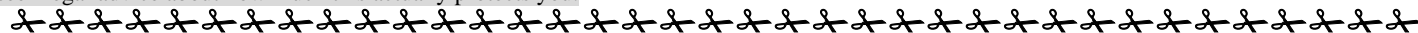
How to get insurance:

1. Ask the certifying agency. You might be already covered. Be sure to be clear on what is covered and what type of insurance they actually have. Sometimes it will only cover physical injury.
2. If you are an employee, you have little risk. The certifying agency that employs you is the party at risk.
3. Even if you are an independent contractor, the certifying agency is more likely to be sued by a dissatisfied client than the inspector.
4. If you have an independent consulting business (certified crop advisor, professional agronomist, or similar consultant role in the food processing industry), your organic inspection will generally fit under that umbrella.
5. Form a corporation: Some inspectors follow this route, but it is best to seek legal advice about how much this actually protects you.

6. Talk to your regular insurance agency. They will be a good resource. It is easier to add a rider to an existing policy (farm, consultancy, etc) than to start from a bare slate.

Minimizing the risk:

1. The best insurance is doing your job right!
2. Remember your role and avoid giving advice.
3. Don't accept inspection assignments beyond your area of competence.
4. Respect confidentiality.
5. Document thoroughly and proofread your reports critically to insure:
 - there are no unsupported statements.
 - you've cited the relevant standard for every noncompliance.
 - you haven't made absolute statements about the certifiability of anything. Leave decision-making to the certifier. É



INDEPENDENT ORGANIC INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION

IOIA has several publications for sale. Order here or through our website, www.ioia.net. Please add 10% for Shipping and Handling.

% New! Farming with the Wild: Enhancing Biodiversity on Farms and Ranches; Written by Daniel Imhoff, Watershed Media, 182 p.; 2003; \$20.00

% New! Organic Dairy Farming, Edited by Jody Padham, Community Conservation, Project coordinated by MOSES, 156 p.; 2006; \$15.00

% Building Soils for Better Crops (2nd Edition), by Fred Magdoff and Harold Van Es. 240 pp. \$20

% COG Organic Field Crop Handbook, 2nd Edition, Expanded and Rewritten. Published by Canadian Organic Growers. An invaluable resource. While preserving the best of the now out-of-print and no longer available first edition, this edition is updated to include info on GMO's, E. coli issues in manure,

and many additions to the crop section. 222 pages, spiral bound, \$30.00.

% Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 2nd Edition, published by Sust. Ag Network, \$19.00

% Organic Livestock Handbook, published by Canadian Organic Growers. Edited by Anne Macey, 179 pp, spiral bound, \$25.00

% Organic Tree Fruit Management, published by COABC, 240 pages, \$30.00

% Steel in the Field, published by Sustainable Ag Network, 128 pages, \$18.00

% Introduction to Certified Organic Farming. Published by REAP Canada, 200 pg. 25.00

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% Supporting Individual - \$100

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% Certifying Agency - \$250

% Patron - \$500

% Sustainer - \$1000

% The Inspectors' Report - 4 issues/yr - \$30

% 2006 IOIA Membership Directory:

% \$15 members % \$25 non-members

IFOAM/IOIA Int'l Organic Inspection Manual:

% \$45 members % \$60 non-members

Spinach, from page 1

they pack with "best if used by dates" of August 17, 2006 through October 1, 2006. These products included spinach and any salad with spinach in a blend, both retail and food service products. Four other companies issued secondary recalls because they received the recalled product from Natural Selections. See www.dhs.ca.gov/opa/ecoli/ for a complete list of brand names and products involved in the recall.

Natural Selection Foods, LLC brands include: Natural Selection Foods, Pride of San Juan, Earthbound Farm, Bellissima, Dole, Rave Spinach, Emeril, Sysco, O Organic, Fresh Point, River Ranch, Superior, Nature's Basket, Pro-Mark, Compliments, Trader Joe's, Ready Pac, Jansal Valley, Cheney Brothers, D'Arrigo Brothers Co. of New York, Green Harvest, Mann, Mills Family Farm, Premium Fresh, Snoboy, The Farmer's Market, Tanimura & Antle, President's Choice, Cross Valley, and Riverside Farms. The affected products were also distributed to Canada, Mexico, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Iceland. FDA continues to investigate whether other companies and brands are involved. Of the 28 different brand names, 13 packages traced back by FDA had the DOLE® label, with the names "Spinach," "Baby Spinach" and "Spring Mix".



Natural Selection said the manufacturing codes turned over to health officials from packages of spinach that had infected patients all were from non-organic spinach.

The company packages both organic and conventionally grown spinach in separate areas at its San Juan Bautista plant. The brands include the company's own labels and those of other companies that had contracts with Natural Selection to produce or package its spinach.

We've Been Here Before

There has been a long history of E. coli O157:H7 outbreaks involving leafy greens from the central California region. Spinach processed by other manufacturers, as well as frozen and canned spinach, has not been implicated

in this outbreak, but based on discussions with industry, and given the past E. coli O157:H7 outbreaks, FDA and the State of California expect the industry to develop a comprehensive plan which is designed to minimize the risk of another outbreak. Implementation of these plans will be voluntary, but FDA and the State of California are not excluding the possibility of regulatory requirements in the future. FDA will be holding a public meeting to address the larger issue of food borne illness linked to leafy greens later in the year once the current investigation is complete.

Backlash for Organics

Not surprisingly, the only camp to directly 'link' the outbreak with the use of raw manure in organic production was Alex Avery, longtime critic of the organic agriculture sector. Internet research found that any mention of organic product in connection with the outbreak emanated from Avery's Center for Global Food Issues. Congratulations to the Organic Trade Association, CCOF and others for their hardline response to Avery's misinformation. For those of you not on the IOIA Forum, Doug Crabtree, Organic Certification Program Manager for the Montana Department of Agriculture, offered his own response:

"This is just the sort of opinion that we all need to be on the lookout for and ready to correct...The best response to such opportunist propaganda is to respond succinctly with the facts:

- 1) The contaminated spinach was NOT either produced or handled organically. While the processor / distributor does also handle organic produce, the suspect lots were ALL non-organic.
- 2) Organic farmers have no monopoly on the use of manure to enhance soil fertility. In fact, many more non-organic producers rely on manure than do organic ones. Manure use is neither required, nor widely utilized in organic production.
- 3) Most importantly, certified organic farms are the only operations that have strict regulations, verified by independent inspection and verification, that mandate the safe use of manure. Whereas raw manure is commonly used, without any oversight, in non-organic farming, any manure used in organic production must be incorporated at least 90 days prior to harvest and may NOT be managed in manner that contributes to contamination

of crops, soil or water by pathogenic organisms, such as E. coli (7 CFR 205.203)."

Crabtree went on to note, "Bottom-line, certified organic food is the best option for anyone truly concerned about food safety."

Bottom-line – Time Will Tell

In this case, the bottom-line of both organic and conventional producers have been affected and the big unknown is how large and long the financial impact will be. As well as the obvious and immediate health problems, a halt in the spinach harvest can have dire consequences financially; it affects not only pickers and farmers but possibly the entire salad industry. Movement of fresh-market spinach remains slow and uncertain following resumption of shipments after the E.coli outbreak. The extent of market loss to the industry (covering the entire value chain from grower to retailer) will not be evident until a clearer picture emerges on the length of time required to rebuild consumer confidence. In mid-October, spinach shipments were only about one-third that of a year earlier and growers remained uncertain about how much to plant. Given that the farm value of the U.S. fresh-market spinach crop averaged \$199 million over the past 3 years (2003-05), and spinach is marketed year-round in the United States, a crude estimate of market loss for all growers would be roughly \$3.5 to \$4.0 million for each week that spinach was not harvested. The value of fresh-market spinach has more than doubled over the past decade as a surge in demand has encouraged greater production. California accounts for about three-fourths of the value of both the fresh and processing spinach crops.

The Salinas Valley spinach crop was worth \$188 million last year. There have been 19 other food-poisoning outbreaks since 1995 linked to lettuce and spinach, according to the FDA. At least eight were traced to produce grown in the Salinas Valley. The previous outbreaks involved more than 400 cases of sickness and two deaths. É

Sources:

Associated Press
Calif. Dept. of Health Services
Economic Research Service, USDA
IOIA Forum
Organic Business News
US Centers for Disease Control
US Food & Drug Administration

comparative fault." Asked how farmers were at fault, Bayer spokesman Greg Coffey said the company does not comment on pending litigation.

Bayer conducted field tests of LL601 from 1999 to 2001 in Louisiana, then dropped the project without seeking government approval to market it. This year, LL601 was found to be widespread in U.S. long-grain rice, prompting Europe to cut off imports and throwing the rice futures market into turmoil.

The USDA is investigating how the variety escaped from test plots into farmers' fields, where it was quietly amplified for years until its discovery. The seeds and plants of LL601 look virtually identical to those of the popular conventional variety with which they had become mixed, said Steve Linscombe, director of Louisiana State University's rice research station in Crowley.

The day the contamination was announced in August, Bayer asked the government to approve the variety. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced on November 24 that after a thorough review of scientific evidence it would deregulate LLRICE601 "based on the fact that it is as safe" as its traditionally bred counterparts. The final environmental assessment is available on the APHIS web site at

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/brs/aphisdocs/06_23401p_ea.pdf and was to be published in the Federal Register on December 1.

Meanwhile, lawsuits have been filed on behalf of about 300 rice farmers in the South.

The company's response to the largest of those suits asserts that Bayer's test plots were in full compliance with Agriculture Department rules. Critics of U.S. biotech regulations have said that, if true, that only proves the inadequacy of those rules and calls into question whether the department can fairly investigate the problem.

"It is unfortunate that Bayer, rather than accept responsibility for its actions, is instead trying to pin the blame on the American rice farmers, the very people most detrimentally affected by Bayer's conduct here," said Adam Levitt, a Chicago lawyer who has filed five class-action suits.

Rice farmers biggest losers

Roughly 40 percent of U. S. rice exports have been negatively affected by what many experts consider to be their industry's worst crisis, according to a USA Rice Federation official.

Speaking in Little Rock to the Arkansas Rice Research and Promotion Board, federation Vice President Bob Cummings discussed the damage caused to the \$ 1.3 billion U. S. rice export market. The problem is of particular concern in Arkansas because the state produces roughly half of all the rice grown in the United States, and about half of all U. S. rice is exported.

Rice is Arkansas' single most valuable row crop, worth \$ 810 million in 2005.

Stuttgart-based Riceland Foods Inc. also has been named in two of the lawsuits, which criticize how the cooperative has handled its investigation of the problem since January and allege negligence and fraudulent concealment.

The USDA and the Food and Drug Administration have said that no health, food safety or environmental concerns are associated with LLRICE 601 and that "the domestic market is steady to date," Cummings said. But the picture is far more bleak in export markets.

Trade with the 25-nation European Union, an \$87 million market in 2005, has stopped because of the problem.

Although the problem involves only long-grain rice - which is produced primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Texas - some markets that buy medium- and short-grain rice, produced primarily in California, have also been affected by it.

The current problem involves not only LLRICE 601 but also two other so-called Liberty Link rice varieties, LLRICE 62 and LLRICE 06, Cummings said.

"Liberty Link 62 has been detected in Europe and there's been some detection in U. S. testing," he said. LL62 rice is legal in the United States (since 2000) and Canada, but is not authorised anywhere else in the world.

All three Liberty Link varieties contain genes that make them resistant to the herbicide Liberty, also known as glufosinate. While Bayer never sought USDA approval to commercialize LLRICE 601, the two other Liberty Link varieties were approved for sale - though Bayer has never marketed them.

The fact that LLRICE 601 has never been approved for sale in any country is significant, Cummings said.

"[The USA Rice Federation is] supportive of biotechnology for rice, but we're only supportive to the extent that there's regulatory approval here in the United States and in foreign markets, and there's consumer acceptance," he said.

"If you talk to the folks who are really up to speed on sampling and testing... they'll always say that where we are today we will never get a GE-free statement that's valid," Cummings said. "The traits are in the system, you cannot guarantee statistically that you'll ever get rid of them."

In data collected from seven U. S. rice exporters, USA Rice Federation found that 32 percent of nearly 700 long-grain rice samples - collected between August and October and including everything from unmilled rice to parboiled rice - tested positive for Liberty Link traits.

Sources: *Washington Post*, Nov 22, 2006; *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, Nov 4 2006

<http://www.nwanews.com/adg/News/171621/>

CA Senate Rebuffs Biotech Play to Pre-empt Local Rules

Proponents of precautions for genetically engineered crops declared victory in their battle to defend the rights of counties and cities in California to enact local restrictions on genetically engineered (GE) organisms. SB1056, a bill that would have pre-empted such local laws, failed to make it out of committee in the California Senate and died with the close of the legislative year.

The Monsanto-backed bill was introduced in 2005 after the passage of four county and two city bans on GE crops. It was opposed by associations of cities and counties, environmentalists, organic and family farmers, and thousands of citizens concerned that it would have pre-empted democratically established local rules. California currently has no state regulations to protect farmers, consumers or the environment from the risks of GE crops.

Beginning last year, the biotechnology industry pushed for similar pre-emption laws in several U.S. states, fearful that Californias' model of local bans would take hold elsewhere. By not even bringing SB1056 to a vote, the Senate sent a clear message that enacting pre-emption before state legislation is bad policy. É

MAS Could Make GM Obsolete

For years, the life-science companies - Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer, Pioneer etc - have argued that genetically modified food is the next great scientific revolution in agriculture, and the only efficient and cheap way to feed a growing population in a shrinking world. Non-governmental organisations have been cast as the villains in this agricultural drama, and often categorised as modern versions of the Luddites, accused of continually blocking scientific and technological progress because of their opposition to GM food.

Now, in an ironic twist, new cutting-edge technologies have made gene splicing and transgenic crops obsolete and a serious impediment to scientific progress. The new frontier is called genomics and the new agricultural technology is called **marker-assisted selection (MAS)**. The new technology offers a sophisticated method to greatly accelerate classical breeding. A growing number of scientists believe MAS - which is already being introduced into the market - will eventually replace GM food. Moreover, environmental organisations that oppose GM crops are guardedly supportive of MAS technology.

Rapidly accumulating information about crop genomes is allowing scientists to identify genes associated with traits such as yield, and then scan crop relatives for the presence of those genes. Instead of using molecular splicing techniques to transfer a gene from an unrelated species into the genome of a food crop to increase yield, resist pests or improve nutrition, scientists are now using MAS to locate desired traits in other varieties or wild relatives of a particular food crop, then crossbreeding those plants with the existing commercial varieties to improve the crop. This greatly reduces the risk of environmental harm and potential adverse health effects associated with GM crops. Using MAS, researchers can upgrade classical breeding, and cut by 50% or more the time needed to develop new plant varieties by pinpointing appropriate plant partners at the gamete or seedling stage.

Using MAS, researchers in the Netherlands have developed a new lettuce variety resistant to an aphid that causes reduced and abnormal growth. Researchers at USDA have used MAS to develop a strain of rice that is soft on the

outside but remains firm on the inside after processing. Scientists in the UK and India have used MAS to develop pearl millet that is tolerant of drought and resistant to mildew. The crop was introduced into the market in India in 2005.

While MAS is emerging as a promising new agricultural technology with broad application, the limits of transgenic technology are becoming increasingly apparent. Most of the transgenic crops introduced into the fields express only two traits, resistance to pests and compatibility with herbicides, and rely on the expression of a single gene - hardly the sweeping agricultural revolution touted by the life-science companies at the beginning of the GM era.

There is still much work to be done in understanding the choreography, for example, between single genetic markers and complex genetic clusters and environmental factors, all of which interact to affect the development of the plant and produce desirable outcomes such as improved yield and drought resistance. Also, it should be noted that MAS is of value to the extent that it is used as part of a broader, agro-ecological approach to farming that integrates new crop introductions with a proper regard for all of the other environmental, economic and social factors that together determine the sustainability of farming.

The wrinkle is that the continued introduction of GM crops could contaminate existing plant varieties, making the new MAS technology more difficult to use. A landmark 2004 survey conducted by the Union of Concerned Scientists found that non-GM seeds from three of America's major agricultural crops - maize, soya beans and oil-seed rape - were already "pervasively contaminated with low levels of DNA sequences originating in genetically engineered varieties of these crops".

Not surprisingly, MAS technology is being looked at with increasing interest within the European Union, where public opposition to GM food has remained resolute. In a recent speech, Stavros Dimas, the EU's environment commissioner, noted that "MAS technology is attracting considerable attention" and said that the EU "should not ignore the use of 'upgraded' conventional varieties as an alternative to GM crops".

As MAS becomes cheaper and easier to use, and as knowledge in genomics becomes more easily available over the next decade, plant breeders around the world will be able to exchange information about best practices and democratise the technology. Already plant breeders are talking about "open source" genomics, envisioning the sharing of genes. The struggle between a younger generation of sustainable-agriculture enthusiasts anxious to share genetic information and entrenched company scientists determined to maintain control over the world's seed stocks through patent protection is likely to be hard-fought, especially in the developing world.

If properly used as part of a much larger systemic and holistic approach to sustainable agricultural development, MAS technology could be the right technology at the right time in history.

Source: Jeremy Rifkin, The Guardian Oct 26, 2006

Bayer Blames Farmers, 'Act of God' for Rice Contamination

The company that created the experimental variety of genetically engineered rice found this summer to have contaminated the U.S. rice supply contends that rice farmers and an "act of God" are to blame for the inadvertent release of the unapproved crop.

Those are among the assertions by Bayer CropScience of Research Triangle Park, N.C., in response to a class-action lawsuit filed by hundreds of farmers in Arkansas and Missouri.

The 30-page response offers the first clue to how the company plans to defend itself against the 15 class-action lawsuits filed by farmers, who allege that they stand to lose millions of dollars because of the contamination.

Lawyers for the farmers said they had expected the company to deny responsibility, but were offended by its attempt to blame farmers. The lawyers said their clients had no reason to suspect that the seeds they were planting in recent years were contaminated by Bayer's unapproved variety.

Denying any culpability, the Bayer response variously blames the escape of its gene-altered variety of long-grain rice, LL601, on "unavoidable circumstances which could not have been prevented by anyone"; "an act of God"; and farmers' "own negligence, carelessness, and/or

Resources

A Scientific Status Summary on the Organic Food Industry has been published "Online Early" for publication in the November/December issue the Journal of Food Science, a publication of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) - The summary "... comprehensively compares organic and conventional foods with respect to pesticide residues, nutritional components, naturally occurring toxins, and microbiological safety ..." - The document is posted at <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1750-3841.2006.00196.x?cookieSet=1> - Reprint requests may be directed to the lead author of the summary, Carl K. Winter, who is an Extension Food Toxicologist in the Department of Food Science and Technology at the University of California, Davis who may be reached by e-mail at CKWinter@UCDavis.edu - A summary of the Scientific Status Summary was published in the October issue of the IFT Magazine, Food Technology at <http://members.ift.org/NR/rdonlyres/79831BA3-2224-4787-A9CC-A03E837F6148/0/1006organic.pdf>, a copy of which is also available from Dr. Winter.

FDA's Recalls, Market Withdrawals and Safety Alerts Page:
<http://www.fda.gov/opacom/7alerts.html>

Aquaponics Revised The ATTRA publication on Aquaponics has been thoroughly revised and is back online as a 28-page PDF.
<http://www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/aquaponic.html>
<http://www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/aquaponic.pdf>

This updated ATTRA publication contains a number of excellent technical resources and design manuals that provide practical guidelines for implementing aquaponics.

As drought emerges as a major destabilizing factor in agriculture, keep in mind that water re-use in arid climates and water-limiting situations is one of the basic premises of aquaponics.

Water is recirculated between fish tanks and hydroponic beds. The fish effluent serves as a nutrient source for hydroponically-grown plants and the hydroponic media, plant roots, and

microbes function as a biofilter to cleanse the water before it returns to the fish tank.

New e-newsletter The Organic Center Their mission is "to generate credible, peer reviewed scientific information and communicate the verifiable benefits of organic farming and products to society." Contact rmndavis@organic-center.org
<http://pitchpublicity.com/mo2010/newsletter/>

The Organic Center recently posted a State of the Science Review entitled "Impacts of Organic Farming on the Efficiency of Energy Use in Agriculture." See www.organic-center.org, under "State of Science."

OTA list serve for commercial ingredients OTA is now offering members an e-mail list serve for posting commercial requests related to the trade of organic ingredients. Members may now post "ingredients offered" and "ingredients needed" requests to other members by subscribing to the OTA Ingredients Posting list serve. Specific usage guidelines have been created. If you're interested in this service, please e-mail membership@ota.com. Members are encouraged to continue to use The Organic Pages Online to post and view "Ingredients Needed Requests," which can also be viewed by non-OTA members, at <http://www.theorganicpages.com/topo/ingredientsourcing.html>.

Food Safety Info - OTA provides a link on its home page to food safety information. See <http://www.ota.com/organic/foodsafety.html>.

An Inconvenient Truth The film's official website, www.climatecrisis.net, includes ways in which people can reduce their impact on climate change at home. It makes the point that since agriculture is responsible for about a fifth of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, you can reduce your emissions simply by watching what you eat. Some of the advice given in relation to food includes:

[Buy locally grown and produced foods - The average meal in the United States travels 1,200 miles from the farm to your plate. Buying locally will save fuel and keep money in your community.

[Buy organic foods as much as possible -

Organic soils capture and store carbon dioxide at much higher levels than soils from conventional farms. If we grew all of our corn and soybeans organically, we'd remove **580 billion pounds** of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
[Avoid heavily packaged products - You can save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide if you cut down your garbage by 10%.

WorldChanging: A User's Guide for the 21st Century is the name of an awesome new book, available online at www.worldchanging.com/book
This 608 page book, edited by Alex Steffen with a foreword by Al Gore, offers innovating and inspired solutions to the world's most pressing problems. Sections on stuff, shelter, cities, community, business, politics and planet. Retailing at \$25.00 US.

Common Mistakes, Part 2 The Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) recently published an organic fact sheet entitled 'Common Mistakes Made by Organic Certification Applicants'. Comparing it to an earlier list prepared by James A. Riddle entitled 'Certified Mistakes', there are three new additions:

1. Non-approved inputs: Applicants not feeding certified organic feed to breeding cows when they are in the last third of their pregnancy for a future organic slaughter animal.

2. Documentation of approved inputs: Applicants fail to document that off-farm manure used on their operation did not contain treated wood bedding, nonapproved synthetic lagoon additives or prohibited herbicide or insecticide use on the manure piles.

3. Commingling and contamination: Applicants fail to clear the storage area from prohibited pest control products.

For more information please see www.mosesorganic.org/factsheets/commonmistakes.pdf Source: MOSES

Minutes Now on Website For many years, IOIA has regularly printed the full minutes of the Board of Directors meetings in this newsletter. Longer versions have given way to abridged versions, then highlights, then referrals to the IOIA website. In an effort to maintain some semblance of regularity, we will now be posting the full minutes on the website only, and highlights in the newsletter only as space permits. É

St. Francis Inspires California Crop Inspection Training

By Stan Edwards

In greeting the basic crops inspection participants, retreat center director

Brother Mark Schroeder enlightened

the group with the basic principles of the Franciscan philosophy and related our work as organic inspectors to the mission of Francis of Assisi by helping protect the “Integrity of Creation”, aka; the earth! And here, I had



thought, I was simply “preaching” for organic integrity! With a 20 foot mural of Jesus observing them from his cross, the 34 participants received a minimum of lecture and frequently broke into small groups as **Lisa Pierce** and I led them through the new interactive IOIA crop curriculum. Of special note were the new exercises, many based on an organic system plan E.D. Margaret Scoles designed during her long hours spent on curriculum development this year. The result of these long hours spent paid off as the students remained engaged all day long applying many of the concepts covered during lecture. The attendees as usual came with a very wide background of knowledge, ranging from: certification personnel from CCOF, Marin County, Monterey County, WSDA and individuals from CA, the US Midwest, Brazil, Fiji, India and Bangladesh. They were an astute group, questioning the many grey areas in the USDA NOP, and most notably the exercise keys!

Process Training in Sunny Southern California

By Harriet Behar

Even though we were in the middle of a very busy city, Oceanside CA, the IOIA processing course was cloistered inside the high white walls of Mission San Luis Rey. The beautiful setting was a good location for lots of “deep thoughts” and everyone’s brain was challenged by the course, but was soothed by the gorgeous weather and flower filled grounds.

Excellent organic food also aided in consistent brainpower. **Monique Scholz** and myself were the two trainers for the class of 35 people, consisting mostly of certification agency personnel, food industry technicians and organic inspectors. A wide variety of visual and written exercises helped to break up the time and give the students chances to learn by doing. Both field trips were to bakeries, one made breads, and the other cookies. Students completed an inspection checklist report based on what was seen on-site and these locations presented challenges to the inspector both during the visits and when writing the reports. As all inspectors know, it is not easy getting all of the details right and remembering all of them as well!



NY Processing

by Monique Scholz

IOIA and NOFA NY hosted a 3.5 day Organic Processor Inspection Training, in Binghamton, New York, September 25-28. The event was preceded by IOIA's newly developed "Organic Introduction to Certification" day.

The lead trainer for this Organic Training was Monique Scholz from Québec, assisted by **Robert Howe** from New York. There were 21 participants, including nine certifier staff (from NOFA NY, PCO, and the Texas/NH and Oklahoma Dept. of Ag) and a number of food industry QC managers keen to learn how to navigate and meet the NOP.

This course enabled trainers to inaugurate some of the new standardised curriculum material recently developed by IOIA. The "virtual inspection", graciously provided by Harriet Behar from Wisconsin, added realism and was a welcome change from the Granola OHP used throughout the class and break-out sessions.



Photographer Roberto Jimenez is far left in this photo. Monique is wearing her gift from the class. Not to imply that she was viewed as a 'witch', but because she worked a 'special magic' in making things clear!



Bob Howe, in cap on right, assisted with the training. We're not sure why he didn't get a new hat from the class...

The runner up was **Jessica Greenblatt Seeley**, from PCO. When introducing herself to the class on Day 1, she candidly stated "I got married last week and this is my honeymoon. I'm happy to be here". [Now, **that's** dedication! – Ed.]

Throughout the course, trainer and participants were supported by IOIA's ED **Margaret Scoles** and NOFA staff. Special thanks to **Victoria Smith** (NHDAMF) for filling in as group leader on short notice.

Carol King, ED on right and Amie Cristo, mega-assistant for the training, both from NOFA-NY Certified Organic, the training cosponsors.



New IOIA Curriculum Program Rolled Out In New York

Twenty-six people participated in the **IOIA Basic Crop Inspection Training** in Binghamton, New York, on September 20-24. This was IOIA's first course to trial many new Crop course materials including a new Day 1 (Introduction to Organic Certification). The new materials emphasize the Organic System Plan and using the plan in

inspection and reporting. Participants from the US and Canada, along with Trainer **Garry Lean** and assisted by **Margaret Scoles**, rose to the challenge of an intense mix of classroom presentations and interactive exercises. Day 4 of the course was spent entirely on the field trip--debriefing, writing noncompliance issues, and preparing reports.



Garry's group prepares for a field trip

Lean and Scoles continued on as Trainers for the **Livestock training** (31 participants) on September 25-28, while **Monique Scholz** led the Basic Processing Inspection training next door, assisted by **Bob Howe**. The diverse Livestock group included experienced inspectors, new inspectors, certification staff, and one veterinarian. Many participants expressed some frustration with the numerous 'gray areas' in the livestock regulations that remained gray even after the training. Field trip hosts included two organic dairy farms, both grass-based: Twin Oaks Dairy (Rick, Kathie, and Robert Arnold) and Cobblestone Valley Enterprises (Paul and Maureen Knapp). The Arnold farm hosted two groups and local inspector **Robert Perry** filled in as the third Group Leader.

Guest speakers for the Livestock course included **Jeff Mattocks** of Fertrell on the topic of Feed Rations and **Dr. Linda Tikofsky**, of Cornell University. Dr. Tikofsky graduated from University of Illinois College of Veterinary

Medicine and was in private practice for 13 years. She joined Cornell University's Quality Milk Production Services in 1997 and is currently a Senior Extension Veterinarian. She has been working with organic herds since 2000 in both research and extension capacities. Research interests are antibiotic susceptibility of bacteria from organic farms, conjugated fatty acid and other beneficial nutrients in organic milk, and the challenges and opportunities presented to transitioning farms. She has collaborated on organic dairy research with the Organic Farming Research Foundation and Towards Sustainability Foundation. She is currently collaborating with NOFA-VT and NOFA-NY on education projects for transitioning farmers, veterinarians and extension personnel. Her professional memberships and committees include the Scientific Congress of Organic Agricultural Research; Organic Dairy Working Group (Cornell University); and Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. IOIA is pleased that Dr. Tikofsky is willing to speak at future IOIA trainings.

NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC cosponsored all three trainings and provided great support throughout the training. **Amie Cristo** of NOFA-NY provided mega-support. One of her tasks was to serve organic snacks throughout the training, so she was especially popular! É



Clemson University Training

By Monique Scholz

IOIA and CLEMSON UNIVERSITY (CU) hosted a 2 day *Transitioning to Organics* workshop, followed by a 2.5 day Organic Crop Inspection Training, at the MADREN Conference Centre in Clemson, South Carolina August 07-11 2006. The event was partially funded by a SARE grant, obtained by Dr Geoff Zehnder at CU.

The lead trainer for this customized Organic Training was Monique Scholz from Québec, assisted by **Sue Baird** from Missouri for the first two days. Eleven of the twelve participants were from the Clemson University Department of Plant Industry, i.e., state inspectors or extension staff whose workload includes many other types of inspection work (grain, seed, dairy etc.) or crop advisement.

This course enabled trainers Scholz and Baird to inaugurate some of the new standardized curriculum material recently developed by IOIA. The “virtual inspection”, graciously provided by **Harriet Behar** from Wisconsin, had added realism: farmer Calvin, ably played by the multi-talented Department of Plant Industry / local TV personality

Tony Melton, was interrupted during the “inspection” by a call on his cell phone for a pesticide recommendation!



An intense field trip was generously hosted by **Joe Bassett** of the CU Demonstration Market Garden, which is a certified operation within earshot of the CU 85,000 seat stadium. Joe was also a participant in the entire day class. His diverse organic operation includes strips devoted to heritage varieties, bio-diversity refuges as well as experiments conducted by students in the areas of composting and compost teas. For a lead trainer from the cool north east, the field trip was also an introduction to fire ants and heat advisories, as well as fabulous fresh figs.

The traditional “Outrageous Statement Award” was graciously accepted by **Bob Bett**. During a session focussing on the NOP labelling requirements, Bob showed us a potatoe bearing a wee sticker, which he had purchased from his local grocer and said “this potatoe looks to be about 70% organic!...”.

The course ended with an exam taken by all 12 participants. É



‘Aggressive Increase’ in Organic Market Predicted

A report on the US organic market by Mintel published in October 2006 predicts a strong growth over the next five years and changes to the playing field with the increased availability of organic food throughout mainstream channels.

The report values the organic food market at \$3.6 billion in 2006, against \$2.5 billion in 2001. Furthermore, it predicts a 44% increase in prices, headed by a strong demand for organic fruit and vegetables and prepared food, between 2006 and 2011.

According to the report, around 58% of organic foods in the US are sold through the food, drug and mass merchandisers (FDM) whose sales of organic foods increased by 38% between 2004 and 2006, illustrating the extent to which shoppers have begun to depend on mainstream channels for their organic products. Organic meat alone saw sales increase by 140% over that period.

Price remains a barrier; 65% of respondents said they would purchase more organic foods if it were less expensive. Even so, 65% of consumers normally purchase store brand organic products. Wal-Mart’s major effort to expand organic offerings is expected to boost overall sales.

The report also stated that consumers recognise the difference between organic and natural products even though they have overlapping qualities. According to Mintel’s Global New Products Database, the number of new product launches with ‘natural’ claims decreased 23% between 2004 and 2006, while new product launches with ‘organic’ claims increased 6.9%.

Source: *FoodNavigator-USA.com* www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/

Record-setting Expo East 2006

Natural Products Expo East 2006, held October 4-7 at the Baltimore Convention Center, was a testament to the surging popularity of the natural and organic healthy products industry with record attendance and exhibition growth. Once again, IOIA was there networking at our booth.

The Booth: IOIA staffed a booth at two events in Expo East in Baltimore. New Hope provided a complementary non-profit booth for the 3 days of the trade show. In addition, IOIA sponsored a booth at the first-ever **OFRF Benefit** event on Oct. 3. The benefit was a festive all-organic event from 4-9 PM, just preceding the opening of the Trade Show to follow on Oct. 4-6. The booth was staffed by **Margaret Scoles** and BOD member **Maarten Samsom**, ably assisted by mega-volunteers and Inspector Members **Elaine Ferry** (WV) and **Laura Rankin** (MD). **Brian Magaro** (PA), former IOIA Board Chair, also volunteered for a day at the booth.



Members who stopped by: **Dag Falck** updated us on the Canadian regs. **Michelle Sandy** of VA is now Mid-Atlantic Producer Relations rep for Horizon Organic Dairy. Other visitors were Inspector member **Kelly Monaghan** (Ontario); **Brian Canfield** (new member); supporting business member **Laura Montenegro** from ARGENCERT, and former member **Bob Mack** of Costa Rica.

Other connections: **Gay Timmons** suggested a Personal Body Care Products inspector training module, complete with field trip to Dr. Bronner's, as part of the Advanced Training in CA 2007. This grew rapidly to a reality in the weeks after the conference [see AGM article, page 4 in this issue].

The nonprofit section is not a high traffic area, but it does provide a place for people to seek out basic information and get their questions answered. In addition, we visit amongst each other. For example, IOIA explored with Transfair the idea of joint organic-fair trade training for inspectors (an ongoing discussion). Transfair certifies Fair Trade based on desk audits, rather than on-site inspection, so it never seemed to apply to IOIA. However, they said they plan to begin doing on-site audits. É



Federal judge: Officials cut corners with biotech crop permits

HONOLULU (AP) - A federal judge ruled in August that U.S. agriculture officials violated environmental laws in permitting four companies to plant genetically modified crops in Hawaii to produce experimental drugs. The order involves plantings of corn or sugarcane on Kauai, Maui, Molokai and Oahu between 2001 and 2003.

U.S. District Judge Michael Seabright said the Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service flouted both the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act by not conducting preliminary environmental reviews before issuing the planting permits. "APHIS's utter disregard for this simple investigation requirement, especially given the extraordinary number of endangered and threatened plants and animals in Hawaii, constitutes an unequivocal violation of a clear congressional mandate," the judge said in the order issued August 15.

The islands are home to 329 rare species _ a quarter of all threatened and endangered species in the nation, Seabright noted.

The four companies issued the permits were ProdiGene, Monsanto, Hawaii Agriculture Research Center and Garst Seed. All of the companies' plants used to make pharmaceutical crops already have been harvested and the companies have stopped planting the crops under the permits, according to the order. *Source: Associated Press*

2006 - 2007 Calendar

December 6 - 7 A Recipe for Success: Organic Production and Consumer Driven Marketing for the Farmer Entrepreneur, Bloomington, Illinois. Two meetings in one. www.asap.aces.uiuc.edu/orgconf/index.htm

December 7 - 9 Acres U.S.A. Conference St. Paul, Minnesota. An information-packed, three-day conference for organic/sustainable farmers covering all facets of ecological soil, crop and livestock management. www.acresusa.com/events/events.htm

December 10 - 13 3rd National Conference on Grazing Lands St. Louis, Missouri. www.glci.org/3NCGLindex.htm

December 12 Organic Livestock Production and Marketing Seminar, Mankato, Minnesota. This is a free educational seminar on the production and marketing of organic livestock. Contact: 507-345-7418 ext 127, email: Joseph.Domeier@rcdnet.net

January 8 - 9, 2007 OSA Winter Workshop - Producing Organic Vegetable Seed, Twin Falls, Idaho. www.seedalliance.org/

January 10 - 13 National No-Tillage Conference Des Moines, Iowa. <https://www.lesspub.com>

January 12 -13 Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference, "Paths to Prosperity", Des Moines, Iowa. Numerous workshop sessions will address grazing, high-tunnel greenhouses, eating locally, and transitioning to organics. www.practicalfarmers.org/

January 19-20 2007 Organic Conference & Trade Show, St. Cloud, Minnesota Contact MN Dept of Ag, St. Paul, MN. 651-201-6277 or 651-201-6616. Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us or Meg.Moynihan@state.mn.us

January 21 - 24 US Composting Council 15th Annual Conference and Tradeshow Orlando, Florida. www.compostingcouncil.org/

January 24 - 27 Ecological Farming Conference, Pacific Grove, California. 27th

annual conference offers numerous speakers, many concurrent workshops, tours and social activities. www.ecofarm.org/efc_07/index.html

January 27 Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference - 8th Annual Grayling, Michigan. Keynote speaker Dr. George Bird - Soil & Small Family Farms - Pioneering in the 21st Century. www.msue.msu.edu/iac/farmconf

January 28 - February 1 National Water Conference, Savannah, Georgia. <http://www.soil.ncsu.edu/swetc/waterconf/2006/main.htm>

February 1 - 3 Farming for the Future Conference, State College, PA. www.pasafarming.org/conferences/

February 3 Deadline to sign up for ACC Distance Courses. Details page 3.

February 5 - 8 4th USDA Greenhouse Gas Conference: "Positioning Agriculture and Forestry to Meet the Challenges of Climate Change". Baltimore, Maryland. A forum for presentation of scientific, technical, and policy information related to the impacts of climate change on agriculture and forestry, and the potential role of management practices in mitigating climate change. www.acsmeetings.org/carbon

February 8 - 9 OSA Winter Workshop - Producing Organic Vegetable Seed, Mount Vernon, Washington. www.seedalliance.org

February 9 - 10 Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society 28th Annual Winter Conference Aberdeen, South Dakota. Keynote speakers Dr. John Ikerd, Sustainable Economist and Dr. Paull Dettloff, DVM, Organic Veterinarian, and 20 plus breakout sessions. www.npsas.org 701-883-4304.

February 22-24 2007 Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference, La Crosse, Wisconsin. www.mosesorganic.org/umofc/intro06.htm

March 2 - 3 IOIA Advanced Inspector Training, see page 3 for details.

March 4 IOIA Annual General Meeting, Encinitas, California. See page 3 for info.

March 8 - 10 Georgia Organics 10th Anniversary Conference Douglas, Georgia. Keynote speaker Joel Salatin, more than 25 cutting edge workshops, in-depth educational sessions, farm tours. www.georgiaorganics.org

March 9 - 11 5th International Congress on Food Technology, Thessaloniki, GREECE. Topics include Progress in Food Science and Technology; Recent Achievements in food process engineering; Food Quality, Safety & Microbiology www.congress5.petet.org.gr

March 12 - 16 IOIA Basic Crop Training, San Jose, Costa Rica. See page 3 for details.

March 16 -18 Gardening with Guinea Fowl - Organic Pest Control, State College, Pennsylvania. Guinea Fowl are one of the worlds best non-pesticide bug and weed control options. www.gfba.org/

March 16 - 19 From Cafeterias to Capitol Hill: Growing Healthy Kids, Farms and Communities Baltimore, Maryland. Join hundreds of farm to cafeteria and food policy enthusiasts to get the latest, up-to-date info on institutional purchasing on both the organizing and policy perspectives. A major focus of the conference will be issues related to the Farm Bill. www.foodsecurity.org

April 13 -14 Agriculture in the City Conference Boston, Massachusetts. www.thefoodproject.org

April 16 - 22 IOIA Basic Crop and Livestock training, Columbus Ohio. Details on page 3.

April 27 -28 Organic Beekeeping Workshop Chestnut Ridge, New York. A workshop for active beekeepers as well as for beginners including a hands-on session. www.pfeiffercenter.org

Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!



INDEPENDENT ORGANIC
INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION
PO Box 6
BROADUS, MT 59317 USA
(406) 436-2031
IOIA@IOIA.NET WWW.IOIA.NET

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
WILLISTON ND 58801
PERMIT NO. 8