

IOIA-produced Videos now on NOP site as part of Sound & Sensible Initiative

Making organic certification more accessible, attainable, and affordable involves collaboration with many partners across the country and around the globe. To support this work, in September 2014 the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) National Organic Program (NOP) awarded 14 project contracts to 14 organizations, including IOIA, with the goal of advancing the NOP's Sound and Sensible initiative. Each team had one year to complete their projects – all aimed at identifying and removing barriers to certification and streamlining the certification process.



Click on the photo to go to this Sound & Sensible video

videos, one demonstrating a sample crop inspection, and the other a sample livestock inspection. IOIA staff and contractors put in many, many hours to create these great resources, and we are pleased that they are now available to the public.

The third launch occurred on Feb 4, 2016, around the theme of Outreach and Education for Candidate Farmers.

NOP will continue rolling out Sound & Sensible tools through 2016, including more IOIA-created resources.

AMS/NOP has started launching these new resources in a series of releases, based on a common theme. The first launch was November 9, 2015, highlighting the Organic Value Proposition: Why Go Organic and Where to Start. The second launch was on January 6, 2016, around the theme of *Understanding Rules, Certification, and Inspections*. This is where IOIA was able to contribute our expertise, with the creation of two

Access the [Sound & Sensible Resources](#)

[Organic Sound and Sensible Resources Blog - Launch 1](#)
[Organic Sound and Sensible Resource Blog – Launch 2](#)
[Organic Sound and Sensible Resource Blog – Launch 3](#)

See the infographic of groups that worked on this project on page 31

Excerpted from USDA Organic Integrity newsletter, 2/12/2016

Notes from the Chair

By Stuart McMillan

I hope that you all have had an excellent holiday season and have enjoyed the slower time in our inspection schedules. I used to think it was a season of no inspections, but now happily realize there are always a few inspections to be done and keep us on the move.

I returned home recently from a trip where I was honored to represent IOIA at the 35th annual Guelph Organic Conference. It is always exciting to staff the IOIA booth, and to meet people interested in pursuing a career as an organic inspector. It was particularly fun to meet individuals who were so driven to start working as an inspector that the thought of traveling across North America to one of the next IOIA trainings was something they were not intimidated by. It reminded me of those first years where I too travelled far from home in order to find a suitable training, because waiting for one to come close to home was not something I was willing to do. The diversity of people coming by the booth was impressive and reflects the diversity of our membership and the sector.

See **Notes**, page 4

On-Site Training Schedule – full details and applications at www.ioia.net

Accreditation News

Congratulations to the following member who has been successful- ly accredited:

Amanda Birk: Crop, Livestock,
Processing

Congratulations – Renewals!

Kelly Monaghan: Processing
Margaret Scoles: Crop, Livestock,
Processing

Welcome New Members

Inspectors:

Gary LeMasters, Wisconsin
Maureen Bostock, Ontario
Terry Crane, Georgia
Dale Doram, Alberta
Stephanie Goldfinch, South Australia
Hugh Martin, Ontario

Supporting Individuals:

Jessica Black, California
Naery Kim, California
Vincent Strickland, Ontario

IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Inspectors' Report is the newsletter of the International Organic Inspectors Association. IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization. Our 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.

Editor: Diane Cooner webgal@ioia.net
Deadlines: Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 & Nov 1.

Advanced Organic Inspector Trainings and IOIA Annual Meeting
Jeju Island, Korea April 6-12

Basic Organic Processing Inspection Trainings
(English and Korean language), April 4-8

See story on page 10 or our website for more information or to register for training events, visit <http://www.ioia.net/AGM.html>

IOIA/OEFFA

Basic Organic Crop & Processing Inspection Training, May 9 - 13

Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Training, May 16 – 20

IOIA and Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) will cosponsor three 4.5 day trainings. These trainings are based on the USDA National Organic Program Standards. The courses will be held in Deer Creek Lodge and Conference Center, Mt. Sterling, Ohio. Basic Organic Crop and Processing Inspector Training will run concurrently, May 9 - 13, 2016. Basic Organic Livestock Inspector Training will be held the following week, May 16 – 20, 2016.

E-Mail: ioiassistant@rangeweb.net

Hong Kong Crop, Processing and Aquaculture Courses, June 11 - 24

IOIA and Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre (HKORC) will cosponsor a 4.5 day Basic Organic Crop Inspection Course, a 4.5 day Basic Organic Processing Inspection Course as well as a 1.5 day Aquaculture Workshop. The courses are using the HKORC-Cert Organic Standards as a reference and will be held at Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong, China. All courses will be given in English. Dates: Aquaculture Workshop June 11-12, Basic Organic Crop Inspection Course June 14-18 and Basic Organic Processing Inspection Course June 20-24, 2016. Application forms and more information about the course will be available at the website of HKORC at www.hkbu.edu.hk. For enquiries, please contact Cyber Hung or Emily Chang Email: cyberh@hkbu.edu.hk / emilyc@hkbu.edu.hk Ph: (852) 3411 2536 / (852) 3411 6620 Fax: (852) 3411 2373

IOIA Basic Organic Crop & Processing Inspection Training
September, 2016 (tentative)

IOIA is planning two 4.5 day trainings using the USDA NOP Standards as a reference. The courses will be held in the western USA. Please check back here for future updates on these trainings as they develop. Please contact the IOIA office for more information about these courses.

E-Mail: ioiassistant@rangeweb.net

IOIA/MOSA

Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training, October 31 – November 4

Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Training, November 7 – 11

IOIA and Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA) will cosponsor two, 4.5 day trainings using the NOP Standards as a reference. The courses will be held at the Mt. Olivet Conference and Retreat Center, Farmington, Minnesota. Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training will run October 31 – November 4, 2016. Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Training will be held the following week, November 7 – 11, 2016. Please contact IOIA for more information about these courses.

E-Mail: ioiassistant@rangeweb.net

WEBINAR Training Schedule for full details & to register please go to: www.ioia.net/schedule_list.html

100 Level Webinar – March 22 & 24, 2016. NOP Processing Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Stanley Edwards.

This basic training course will prepare participants to verify compliance with the NOP Processing Standards. The course is designed as an essential session for the Processing Inspector or Reviewer. It is highly recommended for organic handlers, processors, consultants, educators, extension, and certification agency staff and can be used as a credential to seek work as an entry-level certification file reviewer. This course is also geared to prepare those who intend to take further training to become organic inspectors or file reviewers.

100 Level Webinar – April 20 & 22, 2016. NOP Crop Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Garry Lean.

The NOP Organic Crop Standards webinar is a 100 level course and is designed to prepare participants to verify compliance with the NOP Crop Standards. This webinar training course will focus on topics including the National List of allowed synthetic and prohibited natural inputs for crop production. Participants will also gain skill in understanding and navigating the NOP regulations.

100 Level Webinar – April 27 & 29, 2016. NOP Livestock Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Garry Lean.

This webinar is a 100 level course will prepare participants to verify compliance with the NOP Livestock Standards. This webinar training course will focus on topics including the National List of allowed synthetic and prohibited natural inputs for livestock production. Participants will also gain skill in understanding and navigating the NOP regulations.

100 Level Webinar – May 31 & June 2, 2016. COR Crop Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Lisa Pierce.

This 100 level webinar training course will cover the Canadian Organic Regime (COR) as it pertains to crop operations. The training will prepare participants to verify compliance with the COR Crop Standard. This course is geared to prepare those who intend to take further training to become organic inspectors or file reviewers and for working inspectors and reviewers who have taken a basic crop inspection course to a standard other than the COR. It is also recommended for organic handlers, processors, consultants, educators, extension, and certification agency staff. This course can be used as a credential to seek work as an entry-level certification file reviewer.

100 Level Webinar – August 23 & 25, 2016. NOP Processing Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Stanley Edwards.

See March 22 listing above.

100 Level Webinar – September 15 & 22, 2016. COR Processing Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Kelly Monaghan.

This Webinar Training course will focus on topics including the Organic Products Regulations, the General Principles and Management Standards & the Standard and the Canadian Permitted Substances Lists. Participants will gain skill in navigating the Organic Products Regulations as well as the Standard and PSL, understanding the labeling rules, inspection and certification requirements. It will also cover the issues relating to Canada's two equivalency arrangements with the USA and the EU.

100 Level Webinar – October 12 & 14, 2016. NOP Crop Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Garry Lean.

See April 20 listing above.

100 Level Webinar – October 19 & 21, 2016. NOP Livestock Standards

Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Garry Lean.

See April 27 listing above.

Notes, from page 1

One of the highlights of the event was the bi-annual IOIA advanced organic inspector training. Not surprisingly, it was highly educational and gave me lots of new information. But to me, the best part of it was the opportunity to spend time with colleagues who I speak with so rarely and see face to face even less. We spend so much of our working time alone. Sadly, there is no water cooler to gather around with our peers while on the job.

I am excited for the AGM and advanced training in Korea as there will be many new people to meet. I sincerely hope that many of you will be able to make it to Jeju Island. While this may be a slower time for inspections, it is certainly not a slow time for organic events. Even if you are unable to make it to Jeju, do ensure you take some time to attend one of the multitudines of organic events happening over the next months. The chance to sit down face to face with your peers is invaluable and keeps us going in the months ahead.



Stuart, having way too much fun at the Quelp trade show and conference

GMO News

Study shows GE alfalfa not contained

[A research article](#) published in December in PLOS/One confirms that genetically engineered (GE) alfalfa has dispersed into the environment. The study led by USDA researchers examined roadsides to determine the presence of feral alfalfa, especially transgenic plants. Surveying 4580 sites, researchers found feral plants at 404 sites. Twenty-seven percent of these sites had transgenic plants. Their analysis suggested that feral plant sites tended to cluster in seed and hay production areas. "Our study confirms that GE alfalfa has dispersed into the environment," the researchers wrote, suggesting that minimizing seed spillage and eradicating feral alfalfa along roadsides would be effective strategies to minimize transgene dispersal. *OTA Newsflash 1/26/2016*

Syngenta agrees to \$43 billion takeover by ChemChina

The government-owned China National Chemical Corporation, also known as ChemChina, last week offered Swiss pesticide and seed company Syngenta \$43 billion in a takeover attempt. Syngenta has put the offer on the table to their shareholders, who would need to approve the takeover. The deal would need to overcome antitrust regulatory hurdles in the United States, and could also raise U.S. national security concerns. Syngenta is a major player in the biotechnology arena. *OTA Newsflash 2/9/2016*

FDA plans to test for glyphosate residues on food

Glyphosate will become a subject of pesticide residue testing by FDA for the first time, says Civil Eats. It quoted an agency spokeswoman as saying, "The agency is now considering assignments for Fiscal Year 2016 to measure glyphosate in soybeans, corn, milk, and eggs, among other potential foods." *Ag Insider Feb. 18, 2016*

Notes from the ED

by Margaret Scoles

It was a welcome winter diversion to travel to Savannah, Georgia for the NOP training and ACA training/annual meeting. I soaked up sunshine and history, ate shrimp and grits, and walked through the many green squares, cemeteries, and cathedrals. Not realizing how small downtown actually is (about a mile square), I purchased a trolley ticket. The 90-minute tour was worth every penny. After that, we just walked everywhere. Some cohorts and I took a silly selfie on our walk to the most photographed fountain – which has, according to my trolley guide, no historic significance.

IOIA was slow to join ACA- we joined in 2011. Even though we were not a certifier, we can be a supporting member. The annual event has proven invaluable to IOIA. I rarely feel like a lone voice in the room. Most of the people in that room have been through IOIA training. Many of them do inspections, have done inspections, or will do inspections. And I've worked for a few of them as an inspector, too.

IOIA's primary activities with this meeting, in addition to networking, were three-fold – attend the **NOP training**, present pilot **Peer Evaluation Program** outcomes, and participate in a session on **Refining the Trace back and In/Out Audit**.

Peer Evaluation: This year, with the pilot behind us, I was anxious to share our experiences. Just a year ago at the last ACA meeting, the concept was presented to the certifiers. We had promised a preliminary report. ACA kindly supported Al Johnson's participation by waiving his registration and covering his lodging. Al and I worked out a report, including the surveys of inspectors and certifiers. We were joined by a panel of three certifiers who had participated in our Program. It was validating to hear each of them speak to the value of the program

Notes from the ED, continued

IOIA created. And it was sobering to hear two of the three speak publicly about how deeply they were slashing their inspector lists. One said, "Anyone who doesn't do at least 15 inspections isn't cost effective to evaluate". Certifiers are, at the same, concerned that they will lose their far flung inspectors. Two of the three said they were on a rotation to evaluate one-third annually. Another certifier raised a concern about an un-level playing field. If one certifier is evaluating one-third annually without a noncompliance, and another gets a noncompliance for not evaluating 100%, it is truly un-level. Cheri Courtney, Director of the NOP's Accreditation and International Activities Division, had announced in her NOP update that a revision of *2027 Personnel Performance Evaluations* was underway - to be released around the end of February. We expect that it may soften up the requirement for every certifier to evaluate every inspector, every year.

NOP Training: The Training Modules are all available now on-line, announced Feb 12, link here: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/training> I will include a few tidbits. An encouraging **30,000 USDA employees** have completed the Organic Literacy Initiative! Much significance was placed on the launch of the many projects and outcomes of the Sound and Sensible initiative. NOP is designing a one-hour interactive, scenario-based, on-line training for certifiers and inspectors that will focus on how to conduct Sound and Sensible inspections and record reviews - expected to launch late Summer. An exercise invited input to help them develop content. It was disappointingly easy for a room full of certifiers and inspectors to come up with NOT sound and sensible scenarios! A significant change is underway in how Certifier Instructions are posted. Guidance is posted for pub-

lic comment in Draft form before full implementation in Final Form, but Certifier Instructions (i.e. NOP 2027) can appear overnight. No mechanism exists for posting in Draft form to allow more input. That will be changing. The NOP plans to issue Interim Instructions. Review of the materials list changes underscored the need for inspectors to stay current on implementation dates.

Marsala and sherry came off of 205.606 in Dec. 2015. A proposed rule change was published in December which will eventually remove all of the volatile amine boiler additives, egg white lysozyme, and tetrasodium pyrophosphate. On the other hand, the NOP announced NO CHANGE in dealing with sodium nitrate (205.602) and nutrient vitamins and minerals (205.605). No prohibition of rotenone is expected any time soon. Rotenone is not allowed in the US on food crops, but it is used internationally by some NOP-certified organic producers. Final Guidance 5023 (Post Harvest Handling) and 5020 (Natural Resources and Biodiversity Conservation) were announced. At each of these trainings, someone from NOP usually promises to continue to hire "the best and brightest" from among our sector. And every year, there are familiar faces among the new hires. This year, we saw the familiar but new-to-NOP faces of Penny Zuck (who gave the Accreditation update), Devon Pattillo, and Jessica Walden. Robert Yang gave a great presentation on Reinstatement Requests (good reading for any inspector). Best news for the day? 4.4 noncompliances per certifier on the average, based on accreditation audits. That means 96.1% compliance overall, which corresponds remarkably close to what IOIA found in peer evaluation reports. Noncompliances related to inspection were traceback



Savannah Selfie: Georgana Webster, MT Dept of Ag (left), and Kate Newkirk, Maine, inspector member (right). We were in front of the most photographed fountain in Savannah.

and mass balance, inspectors not citing the regulations, inspectors citing incorrect regulations, and exit interview not being conducted. PM 11-10 was not always followed for grower groups, and some certifiers were not achieving 5% unannounced inspections.

In/Out and Traceback: I moderated this session and shared the results of IOIA's informal survey of certifiers that informed the development of our 200 and 300-level In/Out Balance and Traceability webinars. NOP made it clear in their training that they see both traceback sampling and in/out balance as a required aspect of the inspection, though neither is specifically referenced in the regulation. They see traceback and mass balance activities not being conducted and documented consistently. They do not consider "yes", "no" checkbooks as adequate for reporting the outcome of the audit trail inspection. They said the report must describe the inspector's activities and certifiers should provide inspectors with instructions and perhaps templates and training. Not surprisingly, after I announced IOIA's willingness to provide webinars in-house to staff and contractors, IOIA is getting requests for the 200-level Crop and Processing In/Out and Traceability webinars.

SECTOR NEWS

2016 Sunset Review**Proposed Rule Announced**

On December 16, the USDA published in the Federal Register a proposed rule to implement the National Organic Standards Board's (NOSB) 2016 sunset review recommendations of substances on the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List).

The [proposed rule](#) would remove from the National List five non-organic, non-agricultural substances used as ingredients in or on processed products (egg white lysozyme, cyclohexylamine, diethylaminoethanol, octadecylamine, and tetrasodium pyrophosphate). After considering public comments and supporting documents, the NOSB recommended that the substances are no longer necessary for organic handling. If published as a final rule, the substances would no longer be allowed in organic handling after their sunset date, September 12, 2016.

In related news, the USDA final rule implementing two 2015 sunset review recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) can now be seen on the Federal Register website.

The final rule, which became effective on Dec. 14, 2015, removes four substances from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List). Two are non-organic agricultural substances - marsala wine and sherry wine - and two are expired listings - streptomycin and tetracycline. The removal of marsala wine and sherry wine from the National List is based upon the NOSB's 2015 sunset review. Both streptomycin and tetracycline previously expired from the National List on October 21, 2014, and this rule simply removes their listings from the regulations.

The sunset process requires that substances on the National List must be reviewed by the NOSB and renewed by the Secretary of Agriculture within five years.

View the [Final Rule](#) announced in December 2015.

View [NOP 5611: National List Sunset Dates](#).

DARK Labeling rider removed from spending bill

Efforts by several non-profit sustainable agriculture agencies were successful in removing a "rider" (specific language) in the must-pass federal "omnibus" spending bill that would have blocked states from implementing mandatory genetically engineered (GE) food labeling laws. What's more, a rider was included that would keep GE salmon from being sold until there is labeling that lets consumers know whether their salmon has been genetically engineered.

In July 2015, the US House of Representatives' passed H.R. 1599, what was dubbed the Denying Americans the Right to Know (DARK) Act, which would have preempted state and local authority to label and regulate GE foods. Instead, the bill put in place only voluntary labeling, blocked FDA from ever implementing mandatory GE food labeling, and allowed food companies to continue to make misleading "natural" claims for foods that contain GE ingredients. The Senate chose not to take up that bill, despite heavy pressure from the food and biotechnology industries.

Thanks to public pressure, numerous Senators vocally opposed the inclusion of the rider, successfully keeping it out of the bill. In the absence of federal leadership, states have led the way by passing legislation intended to prevent consumer deception and give consumers the right to know.

Consumers won at this moment, but need to remain vigilant into the next legislative session to ensure that the right to know is protected. The Senate is still very anxious to get federal GE labeling legislation in place in January; it will be a tough fight to make sure it includes mandatory, on-package labeling that clearly states if a product contains genetically engineered ingredients.

The Center for Food Safety team via From EcoFarm GENews 12/21/2015

Final guidance on post-harvest handling of organic products

NOP has published a [Federal Register](#) notice announcing final guidance on the post-harvest handling of organic products. It also clarifies the provisions of the standards for facility pest management, either on-farm or in a handling facility, and supports strong, enforceable standards to protect the integrity of the organic seal.

NOP publishes new Handbook document
[NOP 2040: Instruction: Organic Certification of Industrial Hemp Production](#). This instruction clarifies U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy regarding the organic certification of industrial hemp production by USDA-accredited certifying agents.

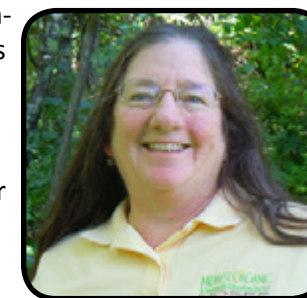
Sharp jump in recalls of organic food products

Organic food accounts for 7 percent of all food units recalled this year, compared to 2 percent in 2014, according to Stericycle, a company that handles recalls, reports the [New York Times](#). The upturn in organic recalls is part of an overall increase in the amount of food recalled for suspected contamination by harmful bacteria, said Stericycle. Its figures were based on data from the FDA and the USDA. The

SECTOR NEWS

New NOSB Members announced

USDA's National Organic Program [has announced](#) the appointment of six new members to the National Organic Standards Board. The five-year terms began on January 25. The new members are Harriet Behar, senior organic specialist at the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service, environmental protection and resource conservation seat; Jesse



Congratulations to Harriet Behar, IOIA inspector, trainer, and past board chair!

Buie, president of Ole Brook Organics Inc., organic producer seat; Emily Oakley, founding partner and co-owner of Three Springs Farm (author of [National Young Farmers Coalition's Guide to Organic Certification](#)), organic producer seat; Scott Rice, organic accreditation and quality manager at Washington State Department of Agriculture's Organic Program, accredited certifying agent seat; Vena Romero-Briones, food and agricultural consultant for the First Nations Development Institute, public/consumer interest seat; and Daniel Seitz, executive director for the Council of Naturopathic Medical Education, public/consumer interest seat. *OTA news flash 1/5/2016*

Certifier Training Presentations Now Available Online

On January 13-14, 2016, the National Organic Program (NOP) presented training to 125 attendees at the annual certifier program held in Savannah, Georgia. NOP staff provided critical information, program updates and reminders to certifiers. The goal was to ensure consistency across all of our accredited certifying agents, and to provide a communication forum between the Accreditation and International Activities Division and its certifying agents.

Access training slides on the NOP website [Training Page](#). From USDA NOP organic insider 2/12/2016

Biodiversity Guidance from NOP

NOP has also published [final guidance](#) providing organic certifiers and farms with examples of production practices that support conservation principles and comply with USDA organic regulations that require operations to maintain or improve natural resources.

The final guidance clarifies the role of certified operations, certifiers, and inspectors in the implementation and verification of these production practices. It also clarifies ways to reduce paperwork burdens for those domestic organic operations that participate in a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service program. [Natural Resources and Biodiversity Conservation guidance](#)

Soil Health Institute Announced in Washington

Healthy soil is a research priority for organic farmers and OFRF is pleased to announce Research Director, Diana Jerkins and Board Member, Klass Martens have both signed on to serve on the inaugural board of the Soil Health Institute formed in 2015. From OFRF 1/19/2016

AMS Releases Report on NOP Compliance & Enforcement Actions for 1Q FY2016

AMS posted an updated Compliance & Enforcement/Appeals Summary report to its website. This quarterly report outlines NOP's compliance, enforcement and appeals activities during the first quarter of the 2016 fiscal year (October 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015). The data high-

lights the number of incoming and completed complaints; the initial actions taken; and case dispositions, including settlements made and penalties levied.

View the [1Q FY2016 summary report](#).

Sharp jump in recalls of organic products

[Organic Trade Association](#) says organic products account for 4.9 percent of food recalls, roughly the same as organic's share of the food market. Sales of organic food are rising more rapidly than conventional foods. An OTA official told the Times that food-safety mechanisms have been strengthened since 2012, which has led to more recalls as well. Stericycle and OTA used different ways to calculate their figures, said the Times story by Stephanie Strom. For example, Stericycle counted each of the 500,000 units of spinach that were recalled in March as individual incidents. OTA says the recalls count as a single incident. Food-safety attorney Bill Marler said a single large recall could distort yearly data. "You have to watch what happens over time," Marler told the Times, to know if there is trend or an aberration.

Chuck Abbott, August 21, 2015

NOP Acknowledges CDFA Input Material Program

This month, the National Organic Program issued a letter to the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Inspection Services to acknowledge that the CDFA Organic Input Material (OIM) program meets the criteria for a material review organization as set forth in Policy Memo 11-4: Evaluation of Materials Used in Organic Crop, Livestock, and Handling Operations. Certifying agents and certified operations may now recognize reviews conducted by the CDFA OIM regarding the acceptability of materials for use in organic processes.

View the [Letter to CDFA](#)

View [Policy Memo 11-4](#)

2017 AGM heads to Ottawa for IOIA's 25th Anniversary!

And the winner is – Ottawa! What makes Ottawa, the capital city of Canada and the fourth largest city in Canada, the ideal location to celebrate IOIA's 25th anniversary? It is clearly time for IOIA to return to Canada for the AGM. Canada hasn't hosted an AGM for four years and our membership is 20% Canadian. Next year will be five years. But why Ontario, where members are not likely to find balmy weather in March or April? British Columbia generally has more attractive late winter weather and more IOIA inspector members than Ontario. But BC has already hosted the Annual Meeting three times. Ontario, the province with the second largest number of inspector members, has hosted just once. Ottawa is also the home of the Canada Organic Office; training partners Canada Organic Growers and Canada Organic Trade Association; and supporting certification agency member Centre for Systems Integration.



Ottawa sits at the confluence of three major rivers: the Ottawa River, the Gatineau River and the Rideau River. The city neighbors Gatineau, Quebec. The Rideau Canal is the oldest continuously operated canal system in North America, and in 2007, it was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city name "Ottawa" is derived from the [Ottawa River](#), which is a word derived from the [Algonquin word](#) "Odawa", meaning "to trade", according to Alan Rayburn (2001). [Naming Canada: Stories About Canadian Place Names.](#)

There are many National Historic Sites of Canada in Ottawa, including the stunning Parliament Buildings (gothic revival architecture). The city's national museums and galleries include the National Gallery of Canada and The Canadian War Museum. The Canadian Museum of History, across the Ottawa river in Gatineau, is the most visited museum in Canada. Designed by Canadian aboriginal architect Douglas Cardinal, the complex also houses the Canadian Children's Museum, the Canadian Postal Museum, and a 3D IMAX theatre. Since 1969, Ottawa has been the home of the National Arts Centre, a major performing arts venue that houses four stages and is home to the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra and Opera Lyra Ottawa.

How was Ottawa selected? At the 2015 Annual Meeting, several locations were suggested and discussed for our 2017 Annual Meeting. Our members asked us to send out the four top selections to the broader membership to help the BOD to make the final selection. Locations were Austin, Texas, USA (known for its year-round natural springs, attractive March climate, and blues music; Northeastern USA (no AGM in this region since 2003); Richmond, Virginia or Charleston, South Carolina, USA (good climate and weather in March and proximity to ocean); and Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA (proximity to Canadian government offices including the Canada Organic Office). A total of 72 members responded to the survey. Of those, 68 (representing about ¼ of IOIA's inspector members) said they were "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to attend. And 25% of those 68 voted for Ottawa. The votes for southeastern US and Ottawa were dead even. Although Austin drew a few more votes, the BOD decided Texas would have to wait a bit longer to host the IOIA AGM.

Typically, IOIA AGMs have been in the US about 2 out of 3 years, in Canada about 1 out of 3 or 4 years, and Latin America about every 4 years. Our upcoming 2016 AGM will be our first ever to occur in Asia. IOIA last celebrated our annual meeting in Canada in 2012.

A few statistics:

- Of 24 AGMs, IOIA has held 58% in the USA, 21% in Canada, 21% in Latin America, and upcoming, one in Asia.
- IOIA's membership is 68% based in the USA, 20.5% in Canada, 5.5% in Latin America, and 5% in Asia.
- IOIA's trainings have occurred 48% in the US, 11% in Canada, 21% in Latin America, and 20% in Asia.

Canada Organic News

Holmes Moves On

Matthew Holmes has left the position of Executive Director, Canada Organic Trade Association, to become President & CEO at Magazines Canada in Ottawa. Magazines Canada is the national trade association representing Canadian-owned, Canadian-content consumer, cultural, specialty, professional and business media magazines in French and English language titles on a wide range of topics. Holmes was the founding Executive Director of COTA and led the organization for nine years.



L to R are Joel Aitken, Stuart McMillan and Tom Cassan, all inspector members of IOIA.

Bill Barkley, Canadian Committee Chair, was a key organizer for all activities. Kelly Monaghan, Garry Lean, and Maureen Bostock joined him in the planning. Stuart and Margaret Scoles joined in planning for and speaking at the training, staffing IOIA's booth, and participating in events including the Food and Wine Dinner; the Keynote Forum; the OMRI Meet and Greet; and a highly sociable social event at the University Centre pub. IOIA's Canadian Committee hosted snacks and beverages at The Brass Taps on Saturday. Conversations continued well past the two hour planned time limit.

IOIA's booth is located on the crowded main floor, strategically placed between Pro-Cert and TCO-Cert and across the aisle from Canadian Organic Growers and Canada Organic Trade Association. Elbow room is sometimes in short supply. IOIA members who stopped to visit often found themselves doing impromptu booth duty. IOIA's booth drew long conversations like a magnet, including one about developing certification in Guyana and another from Greece. Cuba was a recurring theme, as Chuck Mitchell, IOIA member was speaking on his Cuba trip the second day of the show (see article page 17).

Advanced Training was held at the Holiday Inn. Twenty-two participants from across Canada and the US were involved. Bill, the moderator, opened the training with an invitation to share one thing about the revised standards that would impact them as an inspector. Hugh Martin, Chair of the CGSB Organic Technical Committee and new inspector member of IOIA, followed with a quick overview of the standards revision process. Maureen Bostock, Convener of the PSL Working Group and GMO Task Force Chair for Canada's Organic Technical Committee, was next up with "Top 10 Things Inspectors should know about GMOs and New Plant Breeding Technologies". She has offered to provide the same content in webinar format to reach more members. Hugh added to the resources for the day by volunteering his paper on "GE Mitigation Measures for Corn".

Rochelle Eisen, Convener of the Preparation Working Group of the Technical Committee, current President of Canadian Organic Growers, member of the Standards Interpretation Committee and OMRI Canada Review Committee, paired with Kelly Monaghan, IOIA Trainer and IOIA representative on the Technical Committee, to address Q&A about the Preparation (aka Processing or Handling) Standards. They had prepared a pre-course assignment which helped prepare them



Top 10 - Advanced Training in Guelph

Advanced Training in conjunction with the Guelph Organic Conference is a biennial event. The training on January 29 focused on the recent revisions to the Canadian Organic Standards and the implications for inspectors. The theme was "Top Ten" with each speaker focusing on the 10 most critical aspects of their topic. The Guelph training consistently ranks high among Canadian members as a networking event. This year, the energy was even higher after Stuart McMillan, IOIA BOD Chair, announced Ottawa, Ontario would be the site for the 2017 AGM.

Advanced Organic Inspector Trainings and IOIA Annual Meeting Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, April 6-12, 2016

IOIA will sponsor advanced organic inspector training on April 6-8 in conjunction with the Annual General Membership Meeting on April 9, followed by options for field trips to organic operations and aquaculture on April 10. A Train the Trainer course is offered on April 11-12 to Asians interested in becoming IOIA trainers. Two basic Organic Processing Inspection Trainings are also scheduled to run concurrently April 4-8. One will be in English language, based on the USDA National Organic Program regulations. The second training will be in Korean language, based on the Korean national regulations.

Basic training courses and minimum inspection experience are required to receive a Certificate of Completion for IOIA Advanced Training. Auditors are welcome if space is available and will receive Certificate of Completion for Organic Inspection Workshop. Participants may register for one, two, or three days of training.

The organic aquaculture training on April 6 will help inspectors prepare for organic aquaculture inspections. It will briefly address IFOAM Norms for Aquaculture and aquaculture terminology, followed by presentation by an organic aquaculture production expert. Groups will identify Organic Control Points and risk in aquaculture, working with case studies (tropical shrimp, pond culture, net pens, and oysters).



The advanced training on April 7 will focus on key differences between major worldwide standards and prepare inspectors for the challenges of inspecting to multiple standards. Kathleen Purvis of Western Australia, IOIA inspector member, will be the lead trainer. She will be assisted by experts in the NOP, EU, Korean Regulation, NPOP (India), and JAS (Japan) standards.

[continued on next page]

Welcome to Jeju Island and the 2016 AGM by Raymond Yang

Dear IOIA members and friends,

As chair of this year's Annual General Meeting Organizing Committee, I am proud to invite each one of you to beautiful Jeju Island of South Korea. As this will be the very first AGM to be held outside the Americas, IOIA Board member Isidor Yu and I are planning to use this opportunity to share with you the organic side and the beauty of the country we both call home. South Korea may be small in size, but has recently made great strides in the international community by being the only country to host both the IFOAM Organic World Congress in 2011 and the ISOFAR World Organic Expo in 2015.

We will have basic and advanced inspector training courses with on-site visits to organic farms and processor facilities on Jeju Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Trainings will be held in English, in addition to basic inspector training for farm and processor to be held in the Korean language.



Korea is also the perfect place to visit other countries in the Asia region. There are quite a few direct flights from Jeju Island, as well as being only a one-hour flight from Beijing, China and Fukuoka, Japan from Incheon International Airport. If you're coming from the Americas, you'll have to go to Jeju Island from Seoul. While in Seoul, I recommend planning a day trip to visit an organic strawberry farm and the Organic Agriculture Museum, site of the IFOAM Organic World Congress. The strawberries of Korea are some of the sweetest you can find anywhere in the world. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the AGM and inspector training, traveling to Jeju Island, and Korea in general, and hope to see you here in Korea in April.

Raymond Yang, raymond_yang@outlook.com 양한강님

Advanced Organic Inspector Trainings and IOIA Annual Meeting

The advanced training on April 8 will focus on topics for the processing inspector including Good Manufacturing Practices, ingredient issues including flavors, and addressing the transition between organic and nonorganic runs in a split operation. Lead Trainers Bob Durst, USA, and Sandeep Bhargava, India are food scientists and inspector members.

FIELD TRIPS: Confirmed field trips for April 10 include tea processing, mandarin orange production, and aquaculture (fin fish). The field trips will be scheduled so that participants can attend all field trips in one day. Bus transportation is included in the fee. Lunch is not included.

The AGM on April 9 will begin at 10 a.m. Inspector members are asked to pay a nominal fee (\$20) for logistical purposes. Supporting members and others may register for \$50 per person. Lunch will be served at 12:30 P.M. Keynote address - "**Organic 3.0 - our new collective vision**" will be offered by Andre Leu of Australia, current President of IFOAM – Organics International. Andre Leu is the author of *The Myths of Safe Pesticides*. He has over 40 years of experience in all areas of Organic Agriculture, not only in his home country of Australia, but also across Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. He was recently invited by the UNEP to present research findings from the organic movement at a "Science Fair for a Safer Tomorrow." A welcome will be offered by the mayor of Seoul, Mr. Park Won-soon.



AGM Keynote Speaker Andre Leu, current President of IFOAM – Organics International.

MORE ABOUT THE LOCATION: Jeju Island is a very special place with a strong environmental ethic and is a cultural treasure to Koreans. Because of the relative isolation of the island, the people of Jeju developed a culture and language that are distinct from those of mainland Korea, including a matriarchal society. Often called "the Hawaii of Asia", Jeju is a natural history treasure including Mount Hallasan Park (dormant volcano) at the center of the island and many waterfalls. Hiking the lava tubes and caving are popular activities for visitors. Jeju is home to thousands of local legends. Perhaps the most distinct cultural artifact is the ubiquitous dol hareubang ("stone grandfather") carved from a block of basalt. The Jeju economy has traditionally been supported by primary industry, agriculture and fishing, but tourism has taken a more and more important role as the island receives ten million visitors per year.

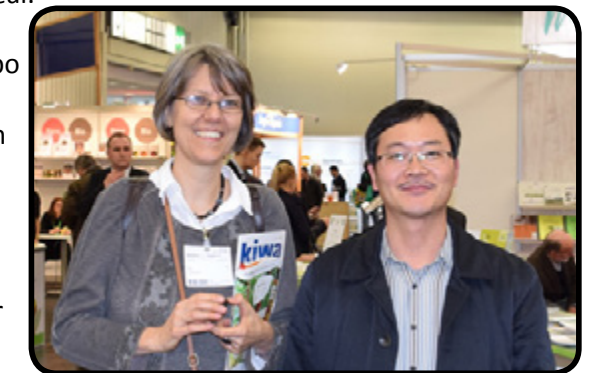
Accommodations: All events will be held at the Bareve Hotel in Seogwipo City, Jeju, Republic of Korea. The hotel is readily accessible from the Jeju Airport by bus or taxi. This is a new, modern, 4.5 star hotel with Western style bathrooms and beds. IOIA has reserved a room block and will prepare the rooming list. And by the way, EVERY ROOM has an ocean view!

Travel Questions and Hints? Ask the experts:

Raymond Yang (funsk8@gmail.com); Isidor Yu (Isidor.yu@gmail.com), or Mutsumi Sakuyoshi (mu-saku@cap.ocn.ne.jp).

Deadline to apply was February 19. Every effort will be made to accommodate late applications with no late fees. All registration is on-line. Note that an additional application, review, and acceptance process applies for the basic trainings and Train the Trainer.

Organic Aquaculture Inspection Training, April 6: \$225, \$200 for IOIA members
Advanced Training Day 1 (April 7): \$300, \$25 discount for IOIA members
Advanced Training Day 2 (April 8): \$300, \$25 discount for IOIA members
Annual Meeting (April 9): \$50; \$20 for IOIA members. Includes lunch.
Field Trips (April 10): \$30 per person for a day. Lunch is not included.
Train the Trainer: \$500, \$450 for IOIA members.



Silke Fuckshoven and Isidor Yu met up at the recent BioFach show in Germany

WEATHER: Typical weather in Jeju is warm and humid. Average daily temperatures in early April are 16°C (60°F) high, 10°C (48°F) low, with light to moderate rain likely. Snow is possible in April, but rarely accumulates. Traveling with enough clothing to allow layering is recommended for comfort.

2016 Andrew Rutherford Scholarship Recipient - Arthur Bassett

My organic journey began with coffee. After graduating with a BS in Forestry from Northern Arizona University, I sought a means of applying my interest in, and knowledge of, agricultural methods. I took an internship at non-certified organic, cross-cultural, Fair Trade coffee growers collective based in Chiapas, Mexico. The farmers there shared with me their organic coffee growing techniques. I learned (from hands-on experience) such techniques as the necessity to include both the cherry skins and parchment husks in organic production. I taught the growers' children English. Thus began (and continues to the present time) a mutually beneficial relationship that became the basis of my organic foundation.

I applied this knowledge and found my next calling in Vanuatu as a Peace Core volunteer. There I learned from the people the subsistence farming techniques that had been utilized for thousands of years. I also learned more about organic coffee growing practices and production in an area so remote that there were no other options. In addition, I realized that equally as important as the quality standards for organic growth are the basic needs (such as clean water and family healthcare) in order to successfully implement community based organic growing projects.

Recently a coffee project led me to Haiti, where I was invited to work with local growers as a member of a multi-national coffee development project. It was in Haiti that I learned about the inspection aspect of organic production. A colleague, who worked as an inspector with IOIA, encouraged me to apply for a basic crop certificate with IOIA. I applied and completed my course in North Carolina in May, 2015.

Since receiving my certificate I mentored with two inspectors who gracefully showed me the ropes of working in the US and in Mexico. Since then I have worked extensively in Mexico and the United States. I plan to use the Rutherford Scholarship to continue to deepen my knowledge of organic growing, production and inspection with a processing training in the beginning of 2016. To date I have not inspected any coffee plantations or operations but I know that I will in the future. I hope to share what I have learned to do what I can to improve economic quality and equity in organic agriculture.



2016 Organic Community Initiative Scholarship Recipient - Evans Kwaku Duah



I am Evans Kwaku Duah, just call me Evans. I am the 2nd child among 3 children, however I grew up intellectually with a religious family of the Venerable David Okyere Korankye, who is also an animal nutritionist. We used to live in Asante Mampong, Ghana West Africa. I enjoy company of people with traits like mine. What matters is I could reflect myself to them. I love friends who also love me. On the other hand, I despise persons who are insensitive (though sometimes, I am one).

They say High School Life is the happiest moment of one's life. Maybe because this is the time where you will experience all one's "first"... and I supposed you know what does this 'first' mean... First love, first heartbreak, first kiss? But I will also say College has been my great progress as that is where I met a lovely colleague called Isaac Kwasi Ofoe who introduced me to world of ORGANIC agriculture (Inspection/Auditing).

By working with a certification body in Europe for the first time I earned lots of memories and I could not tell you much of it as that would take me more pages to tell you the experiences I've had. With the help of Mr. Kolja Braun, formal head of Africa (West- Africa) department for CERES GmbH, I discovered IOIA which is about to help me become an organic inspector. I believe growing of organic movement in the near future is through the career of its inspectors in a positive diverse of sustainability which prolongs bio-diversity. [contined on next page]

Thank you, Linda Kaner, from IOIA!

In September 1991, nearly 25 years ago, a Steering Committee gave birth to the fledgling Independent Organic Inspectors Association. That month in Baltimore, Maryland a group of fewer than 20 inspectors plunked down their founding dues to launch the organization. From the beginning, inspectors said that a rigorous accreditation program was a key priority for IOIA, so the Accreditation Committee was born at the same time. Newly elected Accreditation Committee Chair Pete Gonzalves nominated his committee members for BOD approval in September 1991.

Linda Kaner was on both that list of founding Accreditation Committee members and founding IOIA members. She was also elected to serve as an alternate on the Board of Directors. A few months later, OGBA and OCIA endorsed IOIA's first training effort. IOIA, not quite ready to take on inspector training, acted as a contractor to OGBA and OCIA to do their inspector training in Aurora, Nebraska in January 1992. This was the forerunner of what would become the most widely recognized inspector training in the world. Again, Linda was there, in Nebraska. She worked with an agricultural consulting business. Her crop scouting experience and B.S. in Crop and Soil Science from Michigan State University were excellent credentials for organic inspecting.

Linda has been a dedicated volunteer in support of the Accreditation Committee for 25 years. She helped formulate the program that was presented to the membership for a vote at the AGM in 1994 in Florida. That program has stood the test of time. Linda has served as Accreditation Committee Chair, Interim Chair, and just plain hard-working committee member. Her clear thinking, depth of understanding of the Accreditation Program, commitment to consistency, and keen awareness of what makes a good inspector have been assets to the committee.

She is the sort of IOIA member who doesn't always get the recognition due.

So hats off to you, Linda, and thank you for 25 years of service to IOIA!

2016 OCIS Recipient - Evans Kwaku Duah, from page 12

Organic farming as a whole does not mean of giving the people healthy food but other incentives like better standard of living. It gives me much enthusiasm to be part of thousands members of these movement which promote or enhance our healing nature.

I am very astonished to be the recipient of Organic Community Initiative Scholarship (OCIS) monitored by International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA).

Together we build organic movement; together we achieve its principles.



IOIA Board of Directors in 1993, Fayetteville, Arkansas, the location of the first IOIA training. Left to Right: Rick Martinez, Alternate (Florida), Margaret Scoles (Montana), Jim Riddle (Minnesota), Bernardo Rojas Montoya (Costa Rica); Norm Bernhardt (Maryland), Linda Kaner, Alternate (Minnesota), Chip Kraynyk (Colorado).



Co-sponsored In-House Farm Course with BerryMex - November 30 - December 4, 2015

Luis Brenes was the trainer for this course, held in Jacona, Michoacán, México with 15 participants.

Es un gusto y placer saludarlos y compartir que del 30 de Noviembre al 4 de Diciembre del 2015, se llevó a cabo el curso "Inspectores de fincas orgánicas" en la ciudad de Jacona, en el estado de Michoacán, México.

Quince participantes de las empresas Berrymex y Driscoll's estuvieron presentes y los objetivos comunes para tomar el curso eran, fortalecer las herramientas para la implementación de las prácticas orgánicas en ranchos y conocer un sistema de inspección aplicado a fincas orgánicas.

Fue un curso con información y bases valiosas, todos los participantes estuvieron atentos, interesados, con dudas, y además con participaciones valiosas que enriquecieron las actividades.

Al final, comentarios excelentes de los participantes y el compartir su motivación como necesidad de continuar y querer aprender más sobre la cultura de la producción orgánica en el mundo, recomiendan ampliamente a otras empresas a tomar y conocer los cursos impartidos por IOIA.

por Raúl Saavedra Hernández
Supervisor de Certificación Orgánica y Sustentabilidad
BerryMex a Reiter Affiliated Company



Experiencia Curso IOIA por Rigoberto Gaona

Mi nombre es Rigoberto Gaona Herrera, tengo 44 años soy de Jacona, municipio del estado de Michoacán, México, estoy casado, soy el penúltimo de una familia de 7, somos 4 hombres y 3 mujeres, mi padre se dedica al campo y mi madre al hogar.

Yo no soy un ingeniero, terminé mi preparatoria hace algunos unos meses, me gusta el campo, lo disfruto demasiado, he trabajado 18 años en la producción de berries con manejo convencional.

- Durante el tiempo en el que he estado trabajando prácticas convencionales y la experiencia adquirida, me he dado cuenta que, entre más productos biológicos aplicas el impacto que causas a nuestro planeta, y a los seres vivos es menor.
- En este curso de IOIA he aprendido muchas cosas, y me he dado cuenta cómo es el proceso de certificación, y lo más importante, lo que se puede y no hacer dentro de una finca con manejo orgánico, sus limitantes, perímetros, áreas de amortiguamiento, etc.
- También, aprendí algo muy importante para minimizar el impacto al medio ambiente, - antes de aplicar cualquier producto, debemos de tratar de implementar y controlar con prácticas culturales.
- La verdad, ahora estoy más comprometido con el medio ambiente, creo que valió la pena tomar este curso, ya que lo que no sabía me quedó muy claro y lo puedo llevar al día a día en mis labores diarias, actualmente estoy a cargo de cultivos orgánicos y la verdad me siento orgulloso de poder contribuir a que la gente consuma nuestros frutos hechos de forma orgánica.



Rigoberto Gaona

Curso Básico Inspección de Fincas Orgánicas, Costa Rica

El curso básico de inspección de fincas orgánicas IOIA, llevado a cabo en Costa Rica del 23 al 27 de noviembre y organizado por la certificadora de productos orgánicos Eco-LOGICA contó con la participación de inspectores de las agencias certificadoras Mayacert de Guatemala, SCS de México, Biotrópico de Colombia, CCOF de Estados Unidos, Eco-LOGICA de Costa Rica, representación de la Universidad de San Carlos (Guatemala), del Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario, del Banco de Desarrollo Agropecuario de Panamá, de productores de Costa Rica y Estados Unidos, inspectores independientes, Asociación Ecológica Paquera - Lepanto - Cóbano de Costa Rica (ASAPALECO) y Natures Touch de Canadá.

La representación de cada uno de los sectores mencionados fue muy enriquecedora pues todos compartieron sus experiencias desde el ámbito laboral de cada uno, con aportes realmente valiosos, además los participantes, contamos con la enriquecedora experiencia del inspector Luis Brenes como instructor, quien durante toda la semana del curso se encargó de transmitirnos a los participantes todo el conocimiento posible, al punto de extender un poco el horario del curso.



Como parte de las actividades prácticas, tuvimos la oportunidad de visitar dos proyectos de hortalizas orgánicas, por lo que se dividió el grupo con el objetivo de realizar el ejercicio de inspección; actividad que permitió conocer a los productores y su forma de vida, además de lidiar con las comunes inclemencias del tiempo, características de cada zona, lo cual tuvo un aporte importante en la práctica, pues es parte de la realidad del trabajo de campo, tanto como productores como inspectores de finca.

Cabe resaltar que se contó con un grupo integrado y unido, se tuvo una convivencia muy amena y permitió hacer del curso una experiencia aún más agradable, por lo que aparte del conocimiento adquirido, pudimos ser un equipo, crear lazos de amistad y reflejar que a pesar de venir de distintos sectores y agencias, todos participamos por un mismo fin: el interés por la agricultura orgánica.



Experiencia de IOIA curso, continua de p 14

- Para mí es importante implementar el manejo de cultivos orgánicos porque representa un reto muy grande y sobre todo me llena de orgullo estar cultivando productos que no causan daño alguno al consumidor, y más aún que no contribuimos al impacto en el medio ambiente.
- Me gustaría recomendar ampliamente este tipo de cursos e invitar a las personas a que se convenzan, de que si se puede hacer el manejo de cultivos orgánicos, solo es cuestión de empezar y cambiar las culturas que traemos arraigadas, mejor dicho es cuestión de actitud, creo yo, y hay una frase que me gusta mucho y la quiero compartir:

"SI NO TE GUSTA LO QUE COSECHAS, ANALIZA Y CAMBIA LO QUE SIEMBRAS"

IOIA Peer Field Evaluation A Resounding Success

By Margaret Scoles

IOIA has submitted the final report on the pilot IOIA Peer Field Evaluation Program to the USDA NOP. IOIA developed the Program in 2014-2015 in response to concerns arising from the implementation of NOP 2027 *Personnel Performance Evaluations*. Both certifiers and inspectors had expressed concerns about the added cost in money and time to implement field evaluation of every inspector, every year. IOIA supports the value of more rigorous field evaluation to improve inspection consistency and quality. However, IOIA has concerns about the potential negative impact of 2027 on independent contractors, especially those who work for multiple certifiers, if each certifier is required to do a separate evaluation.

NOP 2027 states the field evaluation can be performed “by a supervisor or peer (another inspector)”. IOIA’s program created a mechanism for peer evaluation and sharing Peer Evaluation Reports among multiple certifiers. A total of 51 inspectors were evaluated by nine peer field evaluators for ten certifiers, who contracted for a total of 99 evaluations.

In IOIA’s report, IOIA requested from NOP:

- Written confirmation that certifiers may use the IOIA Peer Field Evaluation Program again in 2016 to meet the requirement for the field evaluation aspect of inspector performance.
- If NOP 2027 is revised, to include by reference the IOIA Peer Field Evaluation Program as one option to meet the requirement for annual field evaluation.

To help assess the program, IOIA surveyed certifiers and inspectors to obtain feedback on the program. Response rate was very good - 100% for certifiers and 72.5% for inspectors.

Some key findings from the Certifier Survey:

- 10 of 10 certifiers answered “yes” to “Would you participate in the program again, if it was available in 2016?”
- 8 of 10 experienced no negative impacts for the certified operations.
- 9 of 10 answered “yes” to finding the program user friendly.
- 9 of 10 answered “yes” to “Was the Peer Field Evaluation Report informative, useful, and adequately detailed?”
- Most used IOIA’s program for a portion of their evaluation program. Two of 10 responded that they used the IOIA program for 75 – 100% of their inspector pool.
- Comments in the report were more useful to certifiers than numeric scores.
- Some commented that the checklist was skewed to the positive. These comments match similar comments from the evaluators. Final numeric scores tended to be high.

Some key findings from the Inspector Survey:

- Most worked for more than one certifier.
- More than half of the inspectors had more than one field evaluation in 2015.
- 8 of 39 said the evaluation caused the inspection to take longer. This was consistent with comments from certifiers’ own in-house evaluations and the NOP witness audits. Adding another person to the visit can add time.
- Most found the evaluation useful. The following response shows how.

Answer Choices –	Responses –
Satisfied the requirement of NOP 2027 so that I could continue working as a contract inspector.	91.67% 33
Provided useful tips and ideas on how to do inspections better.	55.56% 20
Increased my understanding of specific NOP regulations.	27.78% 10
Avoided having so many certifier evaluations.	44.44% 16
Total Respondents:	39

Regular progress reports have been published in past issues of *The Inspectors’ Report*. Results of the pilot program were shared with certifiers via the annual ACA training in Georgia on January 15. Al Johnson and Margaret Scoles participated in a panel presentation with three certifier representatives. All three used a combination of the IOIA program and their See **Peer Evaluation**, p 27

What’s Up in Cuba? Interest in Organic!

Interested in making organic certification attainable in Cuba? Join IOIA’s Cuba discussion group. The discussion started in Canada at the Guelph Organic Conference a few years ago and has percolated among interested inspector members since. All of the inspectors currently engaged in the discussion are Canada-based. However, with the US recently resuming trade with Cuba, US members can also be involved. All interested members are welcome.

The ad hoc committee is exploring the idea of submitting a proposal for a presentation at the upcoming annual conference of The Cuban Association of Agricultural and Forestry Technicians (ACTAF), May 24-26, at Varadero Beach, east of Havana. This is the eleventh edition of the International Meeting on Organic and Sustainable Agriculture, which is described in the call for proposals as “a space for reflection, exchange and participatory development of for people engaged in presenting proposals for the development of a sustainable agriculture, aimed to ensure food security for all.” For more information about the conference in both Spanish and English, see www.actaf.co.cu.



Chuck Mitchell, right.

A pre-event course (May 21-22) “Transition to future agriculture in Cuba” aims to update participants on the scientific basis for the agroecological conversion of conventional agriculture; to build capacities on the main components for the design and management of agro-ecological transition; and to conduct a systematic analysis of agricultural production on agro-ecological basis.

A post-event Study Tour (May 27-28) “On the paths of local agroecological transition”, will give participants a close look at the results achieved in the development of sustainable agriculture in harmony with nature and the society. Participants can exchange experiences and opinions with the protagonists of a Municipal four year agroecological project. The Study Tour has been organized in the Ciego de Avila Municipality, and will include visits to technical services units, and Urban and Suburban Agriculture entities, all of them integrated on municipal sustainable land development efforts.

ACTAF is currently working to develop an organic Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). PGS could be a cost-effective way to start working toward certification, especially for domestic consumption. Third party organic certification will be essential for the export market. Historically IOIA has done little with PGS. However, all certification systems, both third party and PGS, need well-trained inspectors.

Chuck Mitchell, an IOIA Inspector Member with dual US/Canadian citizenship, has worked in Cuba three times. Most recently, last year he gave the first organic certification training at the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture. He was the first American ever allowed entry into this building. His trip was as a consultant for Winrock International based in Little Rock, AK, without using US funds since, as he puts it, “many of the details of diplomacy are still in the making”. In a prior exploratory trip to determine collaboration priorities, organic certification training organic certification, setting standards, establishment of certification bodies and selection and training of inspectors was rated as the highest priority by the Cubans.

Mitchell presented about his trip to Cuba at the Guelph Organic Conference, “*Report on International Organic Agriculture Movements: Myanmar, Republic of Georgia, Cuba, and Nicaragua*” on Jan 31. Shortly afterwards, with encouragement from IOIA, Chuck put together talking points about IOIA for DeAnn McGrew of Winrock Int’l. McGrew promised to carry them with her on a trip to Cuba this month. Winrock International is a nonprofit organization that works with people in the United States and around the world to empower the disadvantaged, increase economic opportunity, and sustain natural resource.

Link to Winrock news article about Mitchell’s trip in 2015 -

<http://www.winrock.org/news/winrock-volunteer-shares-organic-farming-certification-expertise-cuba>

Chuck has a small certified organic farm in Meaford, Ontario and is an organic farm inspector in Canada and the US. He fell in love with working with “developing country” small farmers in 1976, working for three years in Guatemala in the US Peace Corps doing soil restoration and reforestation. He is retired from the US Dept of Agriculture. His international work over the past 40 years around the world has centered on soil conservation, agroforestry, and organic practices.



You Are Invited to Attend a Special Meeting of

IFOAM Organics International
at Natural Products Expo West

Organic 3.0: Our New Collective Vision

Regeneration | Resilience | Relationships

Friday, March 11, 2016

11:30 am - 12:45 pm PST

Anaheim Convention Center, Room 208A

Anaheim, California USA

Join international and North American leaders and members of IFOAM Organics International in a dynamic discussion of what's next for Organic, as well as its emerging role in feeding the world, reversing climate change, and regenerating our communities, economy and environment.

We'll also be talking in concrete terms about how IFOAM Organics International can organize in North America.

RSVP: D.Gould@ifoam.bio

IOIA is a member of IFOAM Organics International and is currently part of the steering committee to organize IFOAM's regional structure in North America.

Organic Academy Leadership Course - Europe

July 2016 - February 2017

IFOAM - Organics International is proud to announce the fourth edition of the European Organic Academy Leadership Course.

The Organic Academy is calling for applications from candidates in a position to further develop the organic sector from within or to support its growth from outside.

A limited number of places are available on this course.

To apply, [please visit their website](#) and complete the application process by 15 April 2016.

Guelph, from page 9

in turn for the questions. Maureen finished off the morning with "Top 10 Things Inspectors should know about revisions in the Crop Standards – including apiculture, maple syrup, greenhouse, biodegradable mulch, and microgreens".

After an abundant lunch, Stuart presented a riveting and provocative "Seeking the 2%" regarding strategies for ferreting out fraud. His title came from a CERTCOST study in Europe showing that 1-2% of organic operators were guilty of serious violations. Garry Lean, IOIA curriculum developer, Trainer and OMRI Canada Review Committee, presented next on Livestock Standards, identifying "10 Key Changes with the 2015 Revisions" before breaking the group up and assigning three groups to identify additional key changes in dairy/cattle; hogs/chickens; and the PPSL. Margaret Scoles, IOIA ED, finished off the training with "Top 10 Learnings from the IOIA Peer Evaluation Program". Highly positive marks on the evaluations can be attributed to the high level of interactive learning, good opportunity for sharing, and the many experts in the room, all of whom were also IOIA Inspector members.

IOIA Joins NOC as Affiliate

The National Organic Coalition (NOC) describes itself as a national alliance of organizations working to provide a "Washington voice" for farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, consumers and industry members involved in organic agriculture. NOC seeks to advance organic food and agriculture and ensure a united voice for organic integrity, which means strong, enforceable, and continuously improved standards to maximize the multiple health, environmental, and economic benefits that only organic agriculture affords. The coalition works to assure that policies are fair, equitable, and encourage diversity of participation and access.

NOC's primary activity is working nationally in the US on policy issues. They lobby in Washington, DC in support of their positions, such as protecting organic farmers from GMO contamination and fighting for more organic research dollars. Participating in the National Organic Standards Board meetings is a key activity. NOC has two types of affiliates. The 14 coalition members serve on the organization's board and determine the organization's positions. In addition, more than a dozen network affiliates like IOIA bring in broader perspective and collaborate on key issues. For example, network affiliate Wild Farm Alliance worked as them on biodiversity issues. IOIA and NOC already shared some common affiliations, such as membership in IFOAM Organics International. Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA is NOC's fiscal sponsor and a 501(c)(3) non-profit. For more information about NOC, www.nationalorganiccoalition.org

The 14 current Coalition members are: OEFFA, Center for Food Safety; Food and Water Watch; MOSES; Organically Grown Company; Organic Seed Alliance; MOFGA; National Cooperative Grocers; Beyond Pesticides; NOFA; Equal Exchange; NODPA; Consumers Union; and RAFL.

The next NOC Pre-NOSB Meeting will be Sunday, April 24, 2016, in Washington, D.C.

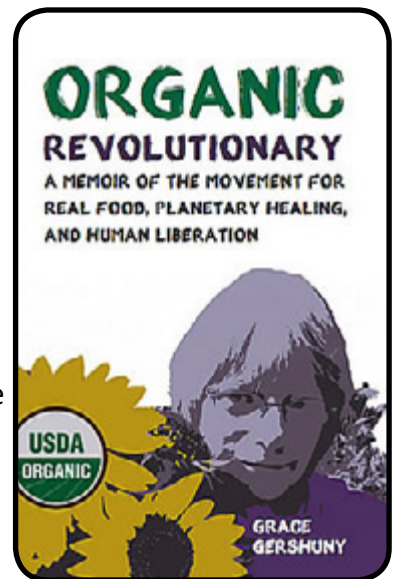
Organic Revolutionary - Latest book from Gracy Gershuny - Now Available

Congratulations to Grace Gershuny upon the publication of her latest book, *Organic Revolutionary*. The book tells the story of how a marginal social change movement grew into today's \$39 billion dollar organic industry. Where did the ideas embedded in the true organic vision come from? In Grace's words: "My own story--recounting my intellectual influences and friendships, my life changes and my passions--is intertwined with the story of the work of defining 'organic' and attempting to unify a rather disparate bunch. Many of the philosophical and ideological controversies that divided the movement early on persisted as it entered the mainstream.

"Today many consumers are confused by a proliferation of eco-labels and claims like "all natural." Passionate food system activists believe that 'organic' has lost its meaning, largely because the corporate-dominated USDA took it over and watered down the standards. By telling the story of my own journey towards the true organic vision, and what *really* happened at USDA, I hope to help everyone understand what this vision is really all about.

"There is plenty of cause for hope. I recently had the honor to be the only North American to address the Regional Conference on Marketing & Innovation in Organic Farming in Goesan Province, South Korea. There I met farmers, researchers, and organizers from many parts of the Global South. They are the ones we need to lead the way to the 21st century organic revolution, working to realize the true organic vision of real food, planetary healing and human liberation in their own communities."

You can read more about Grace's new book at <http://www.organic-revolutionary.com/>
Or you can order your print copy here: <http://lulu.com/spotlight/organicrevolutionary>



Ask the Experts**A recent Forum Discussion on Boiler Additives**

Q. A company I am working with has run into a boiler chemical issue that I've not heard of before. When they submitted their OSP, they included labels for boiler chemicals... none of which are volatile amines, and no ammonium hydroxide. This is what happened: The boiler chemical is a monooleate. The chemical supplier says this same certifier has required another facility that is serviced by the same supplier to turn off this chemical and purge it from their system prior to an organic run because it is injected directly into the steam lines and so carries over into the steam. The supplier said that the "other facility" referenced was required by the certifier to turn this chemical off 2 weeks prior to an organic run.

Chemical info:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION - CHEMTREAT BL-1562 is a stable emulsion of a unique non-amine filming corrosion inhibitor specifically designed to protect metal surfaces in steam condensate systems. CHEMTREAT BL-1562 forms a non-wettable protective film on exposed metal surfaces, making them impervious to attack by oxygen and carbon dioxide.

For the record, this is a large well-known certifier with clients across the country.

What's up with this? Who can tell me why a monooleate is now a problem, after no comment on this for decades? What is the problem? To me it looks like it is designed to coat the pipes, but carry over into the steam. Does this material carry over into the steam or not?! Patti Bursten-Deustch

A1. There has been at least one study conducted by the EPA where the use of a monooleate boiler chemical (of which there are a number of "blends") was traced to the effluent being discharged into a nearby river. The conclusion was that the trace amounts were "trivial" and considered of no consequence (whatever that means)...but this appears that it would verify carryover. Brian Magaro

A2. Patti, I have 2 questions:

1. What is the specific chemical compound? "Monooleate" is a general term for a class of polymers, and Chemtreat xxx is only a brand name. What does the MSDS call it? i.e., can you match it up with one of the entries on FDA's list of allowed boiler additives (21CFR173.310)?

2. Can you clarify where in the system is this product being added? To the boiler itself? Or to the steam lines? Your analogue to the "other facility" seems to imply that the chemical is being injected directly into the steam distribution system, not the boiler. If so, volatility is irrelevant because the boiler is being bypassed and there is no opportunity for the additive to remain in the boiler (water)...so it would likely be transmitted directly to any product or product-contact equipment that have steam contact. This could also potentially happen during sanitation if steam is used then.

[Code of Federal Regulations] [Title 21, Volume 3]
[Revised as of April 1, 2015] [CITE: 21CFR173.310]

Tony Fleming

A3. "I read your e-mail with interest on the use of a fatty acid i.e., monooleate (Chemtreat BL-1562) since this boiler additive as a film forming product seems or appears to be a substitute for Octyldecylamine, a film forming volatile amine.

This is a positive issue because all volatile amines including the non-amine, ammonium hydroxide, are pre-carcinogens and form nitroso compounds, sometimes called nitrosamines, which are powerful carcinogens.

Fatty acids, i.e., monooleate, are not carcinogens by nature and therefore appear not to be a risk to health. However, I would have to review all other ingredients in the Chemtreat BL-1562 product in order to verify my opinion.

My question is that if this oleate product is volatile, why not just inject it into the boiler via a typical feed line since it would vaporize in the boiler and carry thru in the steam.



[continued on next page]

Boiler Additives, continued

Since you indicate it is injected directly into the steam line (i.e., pipes that deliver the steam from the boiler) suggests that it is not volatile and is simply a coating to protect the inside walls of the steam pipes from corrosion.

Now, to verify if the oleate is carried over in the steam and travels into the product when there is direct food contact or packaging contact, there is a simple test. If a sample of steam condensate is taken and tested by GLC (gas liquid chromatography) the oleate fatty acid is easy to detect and measure so here are my suggestions for consideration.

1. Any boiler additive is an NOP compliance issue if there is direct food and/or packaging material contact.
2. Any company using this product should test the condensate if there is direct food/packaging contact by GLC and if not detected, then its use really should not be a compliance questions.
3. However, if it is detected, then the company should show by GLC analysis how much time it takes to clear the steam lines prior to organic production. I think you mentioned two weeks. I am thinking hours as the amounts injected generally are moderate and from my experiences with other additives, would think that the lines would be purged somewhere between 4-12 hours of purging but only actual testing should verify length of purge prior to organic production.

Joe Montecalvo, PhD

Professor Emeritus of Food Chemistry, California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, CA"

A4. This is an interesting and new twist to the boiler additive area, and is the first I have seen anything about it, so this is all 'off-the-cuff'.

While this material (monooleate) is not an amine, it is a semi-volatile material that is clearly designed to be carried in the steam to protect the pipes from corrosion. This material would not be expected to just stick to the pipes, but to be continuously present in the steam and thus if there is direct contact of this steam with organic product, it would constitute an unacceptable contamination, as monooleate is not an allowed ingredient.

I would agree with the certifier that is requiring that it be turned off well in advance of an organic run. How long in advance would be highly dependent on the individual system. If I was inspecting such a facility, I would ask if they had any way to test the steam at point of use (where it would contact the organic food) to determine if any oleate was present. This was a fairly easy test with amines (pH), but not sure how feasible it would be for oleate. They would not have to do this test all the time, but to have info about how long it takes to purge the oleate would be necessary to insure that whatever time period they are using is adequate.

Bob Durst

Simple Organic Solutions, LLC

2016 IOIA OFFICIAL BALLOT IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING BALLOTS BY MAIL, FAX OR E-MAIL IS APRIL 6, 2016

- Martha Santizo Castillo (Quetzaltenango, GUATEMALA)
- Stuart McMillan (Manitoba, CANADA)
- Matthew Miller (Iowa, USA)
- Mutsumi Sakuyoshi (Shizuoka, JAPAN)
- Karen Troxell (California, USA)

Full candidate statements are available on the [AGM page](#) of our website

Three candidates will be elected. Voting is by secret ballot. IOIA Bylaws limit voter eligibility to Inspector Members. For a current copy of the Bylaws, visit www.ioia.net. If not attending the Annual Meeting, you may designate an attendee to be your proxy for all matters not the subject of this mail ballot. To designate a proxy, please send that person an IOIA Proxy Form or a signed letter and have them present it to the Board of Directors before the Annual Meeting.

Celebrating 2015 – A brief review of the IOIA Annual Report

Prepared by Stuart McMillan, IOIA Board Chair, and Margaret Scoles, IOIA Executive Director

Note: The complete Annual Report will be posted on the IOIA website (www.ioia.net) by March 1. Copies will be available at the Annual Meeting on April 9.

Year 2015 was one of ambitious goals attained, a stride forward in financial stability, an extraordinary and visionary Annual Meeting, and of new and continued successful collaborations -

In 2015, IOIA focused energies on three big projects that furthered the three arms of IOIA's mission and diversified funding. First, the successful completion of a contracted project funded by the USDA Sound and Sensible initiative brought in over \$100,000. This was one of the largest projects IOIA has completed. The outcome was a significant contribution of publicly available resources (including training resources, on-line self-directed learning modules, and videos) that **promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process**. These educational resources are free for the use of organic inspectors as well as others.

The second arm of IOIA's mission is to **provide quality inspector training**. In a very busy project year where IOIA "cut back" our training program, 41 separate events trained 674 people (an increase of 13% over the previous year) in 3 languages. Working with a regional partner, Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center, and grant funds through the Montana Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop program, IOIA developed and delivered on-farm food safety trainings for organic inspectors, others interested in verifying food safety, and farmers. In the first year of this two-year project, IOIA recouped all of the 2014 investment and contributed to earnings.

And third, IOIA successfully launched an ambitious project in support of our membership to **address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors**. In response to NOP Certifier Instruction 2027, which requires field evaluation of every inspector annually, IOIA created and launched a pilot Peer Evaluation Program to keep inspectors working and enhance inspection quality. Rather than each certifier evaluating every inspector in the field every year, IOIA's peer field evaluation can be used by multiple certifiers. In a post-survey, 92% of the inspectors evaluated said they found the program useful. A bonus for involving certifiers in the shaping of the pilot program was enthusiastic participation by certifiers and a welcome boost to IOIA's bottom line.

IOIA, an international organization with global impact, at work:

Spotlight on Asia-Pacific – With BOD member Isidor Yu as liaison, Mutsumi Sakuyoshi of Japan stepped up to chair the first Asia Committee. The committee soon requested a name change – to the Asia Pacific Committee. Members of the committee are from Korea, Nepal, India, Australia, Thailand, and Japan. The committee has worked hard preparing for IOIA's first-ever Annual Meeting in Asia – on Jeju Island, REPUBLIC OF KOREA in April 9, 2016. Raymond Yang chairs the organizing committee. Both Raymond and Isidor promoted the events at expos in Korea and at Biofach in Germany. IOIA worked with NASAA in Australia in collaboration with Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETcom) to deliver training in Fiji. The Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA) also continues to support IOIA through membership and continues to lead trainings.

Spotlight on Canada – IOIA members were surveyed for advice on the location of the 2017 AGM, the BOD considered the responses, and the location is – Ottawa, Ontario, the capital of CANADA! IOIA anticipates engaging with the Canada Organic Office during this event.

Spotlight on Latin America – Three basic farm inspections were held in Latin America (Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Mexico). In addition, IOIA cosponsored Advanced training in Spanish with Bioagricert. The lower membership rate for Latin American members, implemented for 2015, has increased member retention. IOIA is now hosting a discussion group of inspectors and others interested in promoting organic in Cuba.

Spotlight on Africa – Evans Kwaku Duah of Ghana was awarded the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship for 2016. This scholarship goes to a recipient with potential to have a positive impact on their regional organic community.

Spotlight on Membership Service and Issues and Concerns of Organic Inspectors:

- IOIA launched the pilot Peer Field Evaluation Program in 2015, playing a key role in the industry-wide response to

IOIA Annual Report - Overview

the NOP Certifier Instruction 2027 on Personnel Performance Evaluations. Al Johnson and Lois Christie co-chair the volunteer committee. NOP contributed Lars Crail, NOP Lead Auditor, as a member of the committee. This program prevents duplication of effort, keeps contract inspectors on the lists of multiple certifiers, and helps satisfy the NOP's requirement for annual field evaluation of all inspectors. One IOIA member was requested by eight certification agencies! More importantly, the program has the potential to improve both inspections and inspectors and to inform IOIA's inspector training program. In late 2014 and early 2015, procedures were developed, a peer evaluation checklist tool was trialed, certifier contracts were signed, and peer evaluators were trained. A total of 51 inspectors were evaluated for 10 certifiers, who contracted for a total of 99 evaluations of 1 to 30 inspectors each. To assess the program, IOIA surveyed inspectors and certifiers who participated in the program. Results of the pilot program were shared with certifiers via the annual ACA training in Georgia on January 15. Learnings from the program were shared with inspectors at Advanced Organic Inspector training in Ontario on January 29. Based on the success of the program, the viability of the business plan model for IOIA, and the positive feedback from both inspectors and certifiers, IOIA plans to continue to offer this program. All 10 certifiers surveyed said they would participate again. IOIA has submitted a full report to the NOP on the pilot program, urging continued recognition of the program as one way to comply with 2027.

- A newly envisioned Accreditation Program for IOIA was presented at the 2015 AGM after brainstorm sessions and consensus building among the BOD, trainers, and Accreditation Committee. The new structure was heartily endorsed in principle by the membership. The new model proposes a continuum of training through inspector credentialing, that would replace the current voluntary program with low participation. The Peer Evaluation Program is expected to fold into the new Accreditation Program.
- The 2015 Annual Meeting – the first ever in Montana, was a full day of events including a welcome from The Honorable Senator Jon Tester of Montana, a certified organic farmer; presentation on a study of organic inspectors by graduate students, "Inspectors in the U.S. Organic Food Industry: Characteristics, Roles, and Experiences", published Nov. 2014; introduction to Korean food; and a fundraising auction.

Other Key Activities and Alliances:

- Accredited Certifiers Association continues to be a key partner. ACA was a partner in IOIA's Sound and Sensible contract. IOIA participated in the ACA Annual Training and Meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas; presented the concept of the Peer Evaluation Program; and sought and received certifier perspective.
- The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) was a partner in IOIA's Sound and Sensible contract.
- IOIA is a member of the Organic Trade Association and attended the OTA AGM in Baltimore.
- Canada Organic Trade Association continues to cosponsor the 100-level COR Processing Standards webinar. The broader support enhances enrollment by increasing press and drawing in more participants from the organic sector.
- IOIA and the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) continued collaborative training on inputs with two 200-level webinars on Livestock Inputs. IOIA bid farewell to OMRI's Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador with the first webinar and welcomed Johanna Mirenda in her place for the second one.
- Continued membership support in IFOAM and participated in the Steering Committee to form IFOAM North America. IOIA contributed some hours of support in coordinating activities by Sacha Draine, IOIA International Training Manager.
- Commented to the NOSB in writing, via webinar comment, and in-person.
- Continued our sponsorship of the Guelph Organic Conference in Ontario.
- Participated in Guelph Organic Conference (Ontario), Expo West (Anaheim), Expo East (Baltimore).
- Continued to participate on the Canadian General Standards Board's Organic Technical Committee. Kelly Monaghan is IOIA's representative. During 2015, the Canadian organic standards were revised. Kelly did an outstanding job of gathering input and questions. IOIA initially voted "no" on the first revision but supported the final version with a positive vote.
- Hosted three Certifier-Inspector Dialogue conference calls. The ongoing dialogue is invaluable in shaping the training program and addressing inspector issues and member concerns. The calls engaged certifiers especially in the development of the Peer Evaluation Program and the new Accreditation Program model.
- Published the quarterly newsletter, *IOIA Inspectors' Report*, including three technical articles and other contributions

See Annual Report, p 24

Annual Report - from page 23

by inspector members. The Asia Pacific Committee provided two articles on equivalency. Lois Christie reported on the Mexican organic regulation.

Training:

IOIA training continues to increase in diversity and global recognition. IOIA sponsored in-person training in Barbados, Japan, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Mexico, Fiji, and in the USA - Montana, North Carolina, Oregon, and Iowa. IOIA trained 674 people in 2015.

Webinar enrollment increased by 46% for 100-level webinars, 15% for 200-level webinars; and 26% for 300-level webinars. In-house training by webinar is an increasingly popular format. Five webinars took training to two Australian certification agencies in a collaborative effort between IOIA, NASAA Certified Organic (NCO), Australian Certified Organic (ACO), and OMRI. The 200-level IOIA/OMRI Livestock Inputs Webinar was delivered to ACO and NCO. It was also delivered in collaboration with OEFFA in the US as part of a SARE-funded project to introduce livestock professionals, including veterinarians, to inputs allowed for organic livestock production. Year 2015 was the second year of a two-year project.

Nineteen webinars were delivered. IOIA continues to make rigorous training accessible and affordable to inspectors via webinar format. New webinar topics included a new 200-level webinar – In/Out Balances and Traceability Tests for Crop Inspection under NOP and COR. The 300-level In/Out Balances and Traceability Tests for Processing Inspection under NOP and COR was also delivered for the first time in 2015. It challenges even the most experienced inspector. A new and improved 200-level Biodiversity and Natural Resource Assessment on Organic Farms was delivered by IOIA trainer Garry Lean with assistance from Sarah Brown of OTCO/NRCS and JoAnn Baumgartner of Wild Farm Alliance.

In addition, **Non-GMO Verification Training** was made available to organic inspectors via webinar through collaboration with FoodChain ID for the first time since 2011.

Technical Service Provider and Biodiversity Training, a 300-level course, was delivered in Oregon in collaboration with OTCO and NRCS.

Stanley Edwards, IOIA Trainer, prepared and delivered a one-day NOP Processing Standards workshop in collaboration with Utah State University to 20 participants.

Scholarships- Two scholarships were awarded in 2015. Evans Kwaku Duah of Ghana was awarded the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship. Arthur Bassett of Arizona, USA received the Andrew Rutherford Scholarship. Ariel Russell of California took the Basic Crop training in Oregon in 2015 with her 2014 scholarship award.

A summary of in-person training activity by language:

Basic Crop Inspection Training	–	1 Japanese, 3 Spanish, 4 English
Basic Processing Inspection Training	–	1 Japanese, 2 English
Basic Livestock Inspection Training	–	1 English
Advanced Organic Inspector Training	–	1 Spanish, 1 English

Finances:

IOIA maintained a solid financial position and gained significantly in 2015, with an unprecedented positive bottom line of nearly \$83,000. Members enjoyed no dues increases for 2015, based on this strong year-end position. IOIA successfully diversified funding in 2015 with a combination of grants, contracts, training, membership, and fundraising. This year strengthened an ever-elusive third leg of sustainability – public funding support. The training program and membership have historically been the basis of IOIA’s revenue stream. Grants and substantial contracts were few and far between. In 2015, both training and membership remained strong. But the real financial gains that finished off the third leg of the sustainability stool were a result of some large, new, and successful projects. The single largest project was the Sound and Sensible project for USDA. The work was completed largely by current staff, BOD members, and trainers, with a modest increase in support staff. Peer Evaluation, Food Safety training, and strong webinar participation were other significant factors. Largely due to the efforts of Jonda Crosby, IOIA Training Service Director, IOIA recouped the previous year’s investment in training staff and developing our On-farm Food Safety training.

In 2015, based on recommendation of the Finance Committee, cash reserve was increased by 40%. The IOIA Audit Policy was also revised to include a wider range of options to a formal financial audit.

Annual Report - continued

A highly successful fundraising auction at the AGM raised more than \$4000.

Board of Directors in 2015:

IOIA’s Board of Directors enjoyed continued stability following the re-election of both incumbents (Stuart McMillan, CANADA and Isidor Yu, KOREA) in 2014. Again in 2015, all four incumbent board members (Ib Hagsten, USA; Pam Sullivan, USA; Garth Kahl, USA; Margaret Weigelt, USA) agreed to run again and were re-elected. Amanda Birk (Pennsylvania, USA) was elected to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Bill Stoneman (Wisconsin, USA) late in 2014. She was welcomed onto the board and immediately became fully engaged in BOD activities. However, the BOD regretfully accepted her resignation in January 2016 after she was promoted to a management position within PCO, a certification agency.

Bylaws were amended in 2014 to increase the length of BOD terms from 2 to 3 years. This bylaw change was implemented with BOD members elected in 2015 taking 2 or 3 year terms to implement staggered terms.

The BOD met in person at the AGM in March in Montana and 8 times via conference calls. The ‘theme’ for the BOD in 2015 continued as before – giving! When the BOD decided to propose to the membership the first-ever AGM in Asia, each board member agreed to pay a third of their own airfare to the AGM in Korea.

Ib Hagsten, Ph.D., BOD Chair, handed over the reins of the Chair to Stuart McMillan of Manitoba, CANADA after the 2015 AGM. However, Ib continues to represent IOIA at key meetings in the organic sector and agronomic meetings. In July, he presented “Support people, the planet and increase profit through using organic soil conservation practices” to the Soil and Water Conservation Society. He also addressed the Fall meeting of the NOSB.

Staff: A huge thank-you goes from the BOD to staff for their many hours of work on the Sound and Sensible project. Hand in hand with continued stability on the BOD, IOIA acknowledges and values continued stability in staff.

IOIA Training in 2015

Type of Course	Number of Events	Participants
Basic Crop	8	144
Basic Livestock	1	15
Basic Processing	3	46
Advanced	2	52
Webinars (100 level)	10	144
Webinars (200 level)	7	117
Webinars (300 level)	3	27
Standards Workshops (in-person)	1	20
Non-GMO Verification (webinar)	1	19
On-farm Food Safety (in-person)	3	62
Technical Service Provider	1	8
Introduction to Organic Inspection	1	20
Total	41	674

Board of Directors Minutes Highlights

(full minutes available to inspector members on the IOIA website.)

Conference Call – Dec.ember 1, 2015

BOD Members present: Stuart McMillan (SM), Ib Hagsten (IH), Garth Kahl (GK), Pam Sullivan (PS), Isidor Yu (IY), Margaret Weigelt (MW), and Margaret Scoles, ED (MS), Absent: Amanda Birk.

SM report from chair: Recent meeting with Organic Federation of Canada. Stuart was interviewed along with a farmer and an accreditor about the new regulation.

NOSB Report: IH reports from NOSB meeting. His comments to NOSB focused on the “split personality” referring to the USDA both pushing GMOs and being charged with protecting the organic sector and the burden being placed on the organic grower. Was great to see so many IOIA members on the NOSB.

Financial Issues - 2016 Preliminary Budget and 2016 Cash Reserve:

Pam opens discussion of financial issues. MS and Pam request that any changes to the budget wait until our meeting in Jan. Pam notes the E and O insurance for training and accreditation programs was added. Pam reports that finance committee wishes to increase our “hard cash” reserves from \$60,000 to \$100,000. MS supports this proposal. MW moves/GK seconds motion that that we support recommendation by finance committee to increase cash reserves to \$100,000. Unanimously approved. PS moves/IH seconds motion that the BoD after considering the 2016 budget, conditionally approve the budget with the understanding that it will be finalized in Jan. 2016. Unanimously approved.

Agreed Upon Procedures for 2016? Discussion of how we want to deal with the perennial question of whether the BoD wants an audit in 2016. Stuart asks about range of costs. Currently budget has \$5,000 for accounting, assuming that “agreed upon procedures” will cost about \$2,500. MS relates benefits for having the treasurer

International Organic Inspectors Association Balance Sheet (Cash Basis) As of December 31, 2015		
ASSETS	Dec 31, 2015	Dec 31, 2014
Current Assets		
Total Checking/Savings/CDs	272,543.87	187,778.07
Accounts Receivable	-7722.49	-6420.74
Total Other Current Assets	13,745.56	12,318.56
Total Current Assets	278,566.88	193,673.89
Fixed Assets		
Total Building	38,768.86	38,768.86
Other Assets		
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>10,690.95</u>	<u>8636.51</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	306,644.79	193,873.89
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Equity		
Contributed Property-FM Value	29,031.80	29,031.80
Restricted (Scholarship Travel Fund)	573.42	573.42
Retained Funds	194,201.02	200,219.58
Net Income	82,788.55	-6,018.56
Total Equity	<u>306,644.79</u>	<u>223,806.24</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	306,644.79	223,806.24

present for the meeting with the CPA when we do perform the “agreed upon procedures.” Pam asks if the BoD wants an “agreed upon procedures” in 2016. GK moves/PS seconds motion that we have a CPA complete “agreed upon procedures” in 2016. Unanimously approved.

NOC – Network Affiliate Invitation: Discussion of whether or not to join NOC. IH moves/GK seconds that we become a member of NOC and propose to pay dues of \$300. This will come out of next year’s budget. Unanimously approved.

PS moves/MW seconds that we spend the money we already budgeted on Christmas bonuses. Unanimously approved.

Peer Evaluation, from page 16

own in-house evaluation to evaluate their inspectors in the field. A handout “*Preliminary Summary of IOIA Peer Evaluation Program Findings and Observations based on Peer Field Evaluation Reports – Trends in areas where inspectors scored lower*”, was shared at that training. Learnings from the program were also shared with inspectors at Advanced Organic Inspector training in Ontario on January 29 with a presentation, “*Top Ten Learnings from the IOIA Peer Evaluation Program 2015.*” Weaker areas were summarized into the general categories of Inspection Protocols (especially open meeting and exit interview); Regulations; In/Out Balances & Tracebacks; Communications; Reports; and Other.

The average overall score for 50 reports in 2015 (based on 0 to 5) was 4.71. This can be interpreted as the program finding inspectors 94.2% “compliant”. This is encouraging. However, further analysis of reports identified areas where inspectors most often scored lower than 5. This summary of observed trends can help certifiers identify areas where inspectors may need direction or remediation and where IOIA can be proactive with more training.

Based on the success of the program, the proven viability of the business plan, and positive feedback from both inspectors and certifiers, IOIA plans to continue to offer this program in 2016.

Top 10 Learnings from the Peer Evaluation where could inspectors do better?

#1 Peer Evaluation has value for IOIA (identifying areas for training) and for certifiers.

#2 Most inspectors are doing a good job, even though there are opportunities for improvement. Average score was 4.71 or 94.2% compliant.

#3 Regulatory: It is not always clear that we are inspecting to a regulation, which is sometimes never visible or physically referenced. Citations aren’t always used in report or exit interview document, even when the certifier’s form has a place for them. Inspectors miss opportunities to inform and educate (not the same as consulting) by not using the regulation during inspection. A few failed to address annotations for input materials.

#4 Closing Meetings/ Exit Interview: Often very brief. Not apparent when inspection ends and the exit interview begins. Frequently no time is taken separate from operator to prepare the exit interview. Purpose of exit interview is not always stated. Key findings were not always reviewed verbally. Regulations were not always referenced for issues of concern.

#5 Opening Meeting: Often very brief. Inspectors sometimes forget to reference the certifier, state the purpose of the inspection, reference the regulation by name, or mention the Exit Interview.

#6 Inspectors should verify, not just ask the questions - balance operator interview, observation, and documents. Inspectors can get distracted with the paperwork and do a cursory physical inspection. We sometimes over-rely on paper documents and don’t ask corroborating questions. Some inspectors never got out of the truck, walked in any fields, looked in any bins, or looked in any equipment.

#7 In/Out Balances: Inspectors are not consistent with how we do in/out balances, with how much rigor, and how we report them. Inspectors don’t always choose appropriate time frames or follow through to sales. They sometimes use a mock recall or audit just one lot for in/out. Or, they do a good in/out balance but the report is too skimpy in describing it.

#8 Communication: Inspectors forget to ask the applicant if they have questions, or ask closed and leading questions. “Consulting” is happening – not often – but it happens.

#9 Professionalism and preparedness: Inspectors were sometimes not prepared for biosecurity (livestock inspections - no foot covers), or didn’t have a camera. Late reports – not often – but it happens.

#10 Complacency: Complacency is the enemy of keeping sharp. “I saw it last year”. “You are right. I should have” “looked at _____”; “asked about _____”; “I just figured it was the same as last year.” Most inspectors admit to getting “complacent” when they go back year after year, have an established rapport, and are under pressure to be efficient.

Essential Reading for Organic Inspectors - 2 Book Reviews by Tony Fleming

Dirt – The Erosion of Civilizations
by David Montgomery
The University of California Press,
2007

Turn Here, Sweet Corn – Organic Farming Works
by Atina Duffley
The University of Minnesota Press,
2012

The Middle East is widely understood to be the cradle of civilization, a distinction that in no small measure coincides with the domestication of familiar foodstuffs like barley, lentils, and goats, to name a few. Mesopotamian cultures near the Mediterranean coast were the first to develop intensive agricultures that ultimately supplanted the hunter-gatherer paradigm that had been the norm since the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age. This development was nothing short of transformational: for the first time in human history, it enabled societies to become rooted in one place, leading to dramatic population growth and the appearance of the earliest cities by about 6,500 BC.

Communities became increasingly sedentary as intensive exploitation of soil resources discouraged the long-standing traditions associated with seasonal migration in pursuit of food resources—and the limits they imposed on human populations. The advent of intensive agriculture also ushered in the age of specialization because, for the first time, a growing percentage of the population no longer spent a majority of time engaged directly in obtaining food and could pursue other vocations. The annual rhythm of following seasonally-available resources across large territories had come to an end.

While this brave new agriculture may have alleviated some of the inherent

limitations of the old hunter-gatherer paradigm, it brought its own set of existential challenges. The pressure to produce more food intensified as population growth kept pace with increasing food production—a pattern that persists to this day. Yet, as early as 6,000 BC, topsoil erosion and degraded soil fertility began undermining crop yields and forced entire settlements to be abandoned in what is now central Jordan.

By 4,500 BC nearly all of the level, fertile bottomland in Mesopotamia was under intensive cultivation—a period that happened to coincide with the appearance of two yield-boosting innovations, the plow and irrigation—forcing agriculture to expand onto increasingly marginal and erosion-prone soils on uplands. By 2,500 BC, more than half of the once-fertile bottomlands had become toxic to cultivation, a direct consequence of the build up of salts in the soil from hundreds of years of non-stop irrigated agriculture in an arid climate, while thick silt eroded from plowed uplands choked the canals that irrigation depended on.

The increasing militarization of Mesopotamian societies during this period is not coincidental: wars were fought over soil resources, but the patterns and methods of cultivation failed to change, leading to the eventual collapse of Sumerian civilization, a decline that is readily tracked by the erosion of its soil resources.

As David Montgomery documents in *Dirt*, this pattern has repeated itself over and over among civilizations so utterly different from one other—in time, geography, climate, and technology—that the only thing they have in common is they all ran out of dirt. As one of a very small number of soil geomorphologists—geologists

who study the history of soil and its relationship to landscapes over very long periods—Montgomery brings a unique perspective to a vastly underappreciated problem. As he shows, the spread (or spontaneous appearance) of cultivated crops and domesticated animals into other regions, including Europe, Asia, and the New World, is readily recognizable in the geo-archaeological record by, among other things, pronounced evidence of severe soil erosion. The habitations and artifacts of dozens of prehistoric cultures are buried by silt—in some places tens of feet thick—representing the upland topsoil that once sustained these cultures. Interestingly, radiocarbon dating of these deposits repeatedly demonstrates that the appearance, rapid growth, and decline of intensive agriculture that accompanied the rise and fall of each of these civilizations, regardless of location or technological prowess, occurred over similar spans ranging from 800 to 2,000 years, or about 30 to 70 generations.

The remarkable consistency in the lifespans of ancient civilizations coincides with another basic truth unearthed by geologists: we are losing our topsoil at rates between 20 and 50 times faster than the geological norm. The distribution and volume of sedimentary rocks deposited on Earth since the beginning of the Paleozoic Era indicate a natural erosion rate of less than an inch per millennium. Today, however, it takes rain and wind an average of 40 years to strip an inch of topsoil off agricultural fields, a rate that is often much greater on sloping terrain.

And therein lies the paradox: at most places soil erosion occurs at a rate too slow to be noticed over a single generation – much less to merit societal attention – yet far faster than

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new topsoil is produced by natural processes (about an inch every 1,000 years). In other words, soil erosion threatens civilizations at timescales longer than social institutions last. As Montgomery puts it, soil is an awkward hybrid – an essential resource renewable only at a glacial pace, irreplaceable over human timescales.

By some estimates, about four million humans lived on Earth when the vast Pleistocene ice sheets melted. Once agricultural societies developed, humanity began to double every thousand years, reaching a population of perhaps 200 million by the time of Christ. Two thousand years later, millions of square miles of cultivated land support nearly 6.5 billion people—some 10% of all the people who ever lived, and over 100 times more people than were alive when Mesopotamian society peaked. Yet, the familiar boom-and-bust pattern of soil exploitation continues to repeat itself right up to the present day—by some estimates, more than 50% of the arable land ever present on the planet has lost most of its topsoil and corresponding fertility.

The rapid degradation of soil resources following European settlement of the New World, as chronicled in *Dirt*, is a particularly egregious example of the ignorance and hubris of American culture—or perhaps we should call it American optimism, fueled by the manifest idea that there is always more land available over the horizon. But we can't honestly say we really didn't know: the details of soil degradation and how it is accelerated—or prevented—by the choice of agricultural practices have been well understood for millennia, and have been prominently publicized by Jefferson, Franklin, and a host of other luminaries throughout the

nation's history. From the sterilized soils of the antebellum southeast to the windswept Palouse of eastern Washington, large swaths of the continent's most agriculturally productive regions are losing their fertility.

While chapters like “The Graveyard of Empires” and “Let Them Eat Colonies” are a depressing reminder of how civilizations that fail to heed the lessons of history are destined to repeat it, Montgomery's dispatch also serves as a self-help guide for societies willing to indulge in the kind of critical thinking and self-assessment that is often prompted when facing an overwhelming body of facts that run counter to conventional wisdom. Weaving together research from sources as diverse as ancient Greek philosophers, Charles Darwin, Sir Albert Howard, and state extension services, *Dirt* makes a compelling case for a return to an agriculture centered on soil husbandry and economically sustainable farms, while systematically dismantling the myopic thinking of the “Green Revolution” and the chemo-centric model and genetically compromised crops it depends on. As it turns out, not all ancient civilizations were doomed to extinction from soil erosion. Using meticulously documented accounts of the soil husbandry practices of cultures dating from as far back as 3,000 BC to the present, Montgomery shows how time-tested practices like crop rotation, fallowing, adding organic matter to the soil surface, and more recently, cover cropping and no-till farming, not only sustain soil fertility, but can actually increase the rate of topsoil production above geological norms. Useful lessons abound in the study of ancient agricultures, if only modern institutions were receptive to the message.

When asked, many people say they support organic food and farming first and foremost for their lack of toxic chemical inputs and the perceived health benefits that follow, which are perfectly valid reasons. Yet all of the ancient agricultural societies chronicled in *Dirt* were, in a chemical sense, organic by default, but as the repeated history of soil depredations so clearly shows, organic agriculture isn't defined simply by the absence of synthetic chemicals. It is much more, something fundamentally rooted in the care of the soil. *Dirt* provides a valuable and scientifically irrefutable perspective for supporting a more sustainable agriculture, one which the survival of civilization as we know it may well depend upon.

If David Montgomery's *Dirt* represents a global call to arms to change our agricultural paradigm or else doom ourselves to repeat our ancestors' familiar pattern of soil-inspired decline, then Atina Duffley's *Turn Here, Sweet Corn* is the embodiment and ultimate fulfillment of that challenge as applied at the most personal of scales. Part autobiographical, *Turn Here* is an inspiring account of the life, death, and rebirth of one of the Midwest's first certified organic farms. From the smallest microbes in the soil to the human protagonists who endure all manner of trials and tribulations with grace and humor, the narrative delves deeply into the complex and evolving web of relationships that define what it means to be a farmer.

Though its genre is so completely unlike *Dirt* it is hard to compare the two, *Turn Here* is at heart a story of soil as well. As the author makes clear in many ways and places in this volume, everything on the farm, from its crops to its people,

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springs from healthy soil. Indeed, the battles to save the farm's soil from the depredations of encroaching subdivisions, erosion, and other intrusions are central to the storyline. And the story is both compelling and engrossing: I repeatedly found myself rooting not only for the protagonists (Atina and Martin Diffley, the farmers who run the Gardens of Egan), but for the very soil itself and the myriad earthworms and other organisms that inhabit it. But unlike Michael Ableman's *On Good Land*, a somewhat similar account of a community farm in California published a decade and a half earlier, not every battle ends well in the encroaching suburbia that overtakes the Gardens of Egan. I won't spoil the story with too much detail here; suffice to say, there are many lessons to be learned from this farm, some by the proprietors, and even more by readers, as alluded to by the book's subtitle.

Inspectors will find much to like in *Turn Here*, not least the author's recounting of the organic certification process, from the early days of local certification committees composed of farmers and consumers (inspectors of a certain vintage will remember the dearly departed Organic Growers and Buyers Association) to the advent of USDA Organic. Readers learn about organic system plans—Diffley's is 40 pages—not only in an administrative sense, but from a bug's-eye perspective. Indeed, the value of a good OSP is illuminated in a most unusual way: as a legal instrument that ultimately saves the day, not just for this particular farm, but for all organic farms facing existential threats to their soil. And inspectors are portrayed in a very good light here.

Other parts of the book read like a history of farm implements, with amusing anecdotes of auctions,

cider presses, recalcitrant tractors, and nomadic caravans of farm vehicles going from field to field in an increasingly alien world of sprouting subdivisions and disappearing fields. Chapters like "Drought of '88" and "Kale Versus Koch" present gripping, first-person narratives of the kinds of challenges farmers of all stripes routinely face. And the reflections on the myriad pressures faced by both suburban farmers and the land they farm will resonate with anyone who lives and eats in an urban area.

But behind all of these stories, the protagonists' deep and abiding relationship to the soil suffuses nearly every thread of this book. While Diffley may not always articulate the basis of soil quality in the specific scientific and cultural contexts Montgomery does in *Dirt*, she nevertheless captures its essence in terms any lay farmer or eater can understand: profitable farms with high yields of healthy crops spring from careful attention to the soil and a deep understanding of the landscape it occurs in. Indeed, the yields of many vegetables raised by Gardens of Egan will seem staggering, especially to those of a conventional mindset conditioned to believe that farms that refuse to use synthetic inputs can never prosper, much less feed the world. Yet the numbers speak for themselves (yes, they are well documented by a solid audit trail!), and hammer home what long-time organic practitioners have known for decades about the relationship between a healthy, living soil and economic viability.

The author clearly views the NOP standards as an unmitigated success for small family farms looking for a way to survive in the increasingly industrialized landscape of modern agriculture: "It is so amazing and

valuable that we have national organic standards that recognize the importance of biological diversity and soil health. This is our legacy and our future. Farmers and buyers wrote the original standards. They are ours".

But Diffley also has a keen sense of history in recalling the many challenges along the way, and acknowledging that not all organic pioneers of the pre-USDA Organic era were so keen about turning over the reins of the movement to an agency that had basically spent decades undermining the basic tenets of the organic method, and sometimes ridiculing its practitioners. This fundamental contradiction was certainly manifested in the serious problems—many would say fatal flaws—that characterized early drafts of the NOP rule, and by a reticence on the part of the agency and some of its certifiers to regard the soil building and natural resources parts of the rule as anything other than voluntary during its first decade of implementation.

Diffley acknowledges the contradiction and admonishes us to stay vigilant: "It is important that we always remember how hard-won the organic standards and label were. They are the only legal protection we have. It is crucial that farmers and organic consumers continue to claim, support, and guard them. Staying involved helps maintain the integrity of the label...sending a clear message to the USDA of the growing numbers of organic farmers and the increasing demands of consumers for organic food".

But whatever the shortcomings of institutionalized organic standards may be, they haven't altered the philosophy and practices that permeate the narrative in *Turn Here*.

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There are no short cuts here: the protagonists of this story fully understand that you can't mine soil fertility, as is so often the case in a modern agricultural paradigm driven by the need for short-term profits to pay off debt or fill the coffers of distant investors. As recounted in a chapter entitled "Nomads", even when the Diffleys are temporarily rootless and relying entirely on rented fields, soil-building measures are never far out of mind; they are as much a part of the drill as they would be on a fourth-generation organic family farm. As Diffley asserts: "Organic farming is so much more than just a set of standards and a marketing label, more than just a way to make money in a competitive industry, more than just a growing system that doesn't use chemical inputs. Our experience is proof of our success, but knowing is not enough". Indeed.

While this attitude may seem altruistic by modern standards, it is emblematic of the paradigm shift Montgomery concludes is essential to avoiding a long, unpleasant decline of modern civilization or, as Diffley puts it: "If we don't change directions, we're going to end up where we've been going". *Turn Here* is ultimately about the deep sense of place that must necessarily undergird such a transformation in the way we produce food.

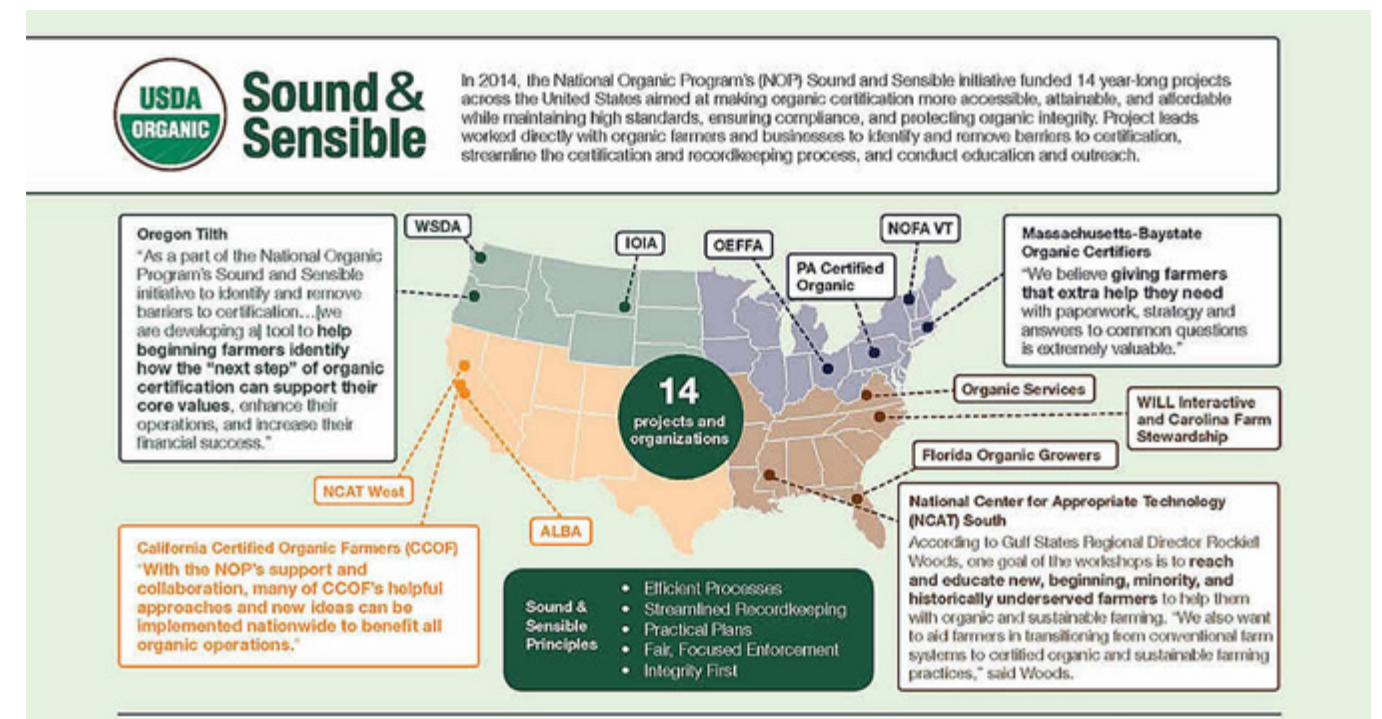
Despite their seemingly divorced genres, *Dirt* and *Turn Here* are, in the final analysis, two complimentary sides of the same parable. For inspectors who really want to know what's at stake here – those who seek a larger calling for this profession than merely enforcing a rule – and for that matter anyone who eats, both are essential reading.

Resources

Series of excellent articles about the new Food Safety Modernization Act landscape: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/category/food-safety/>

Great resource of [Temple Grandin](#) interview regarding what do animals want. From the IOIA Forum, thanks to Bob Howe.

[IATP.org](#) always has thoughtful discussion and analysis about agricultural trade policy. E.g. how agricultural impact was left out of the recent Paris climate talks.





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2016 Calendar

February 25 - 27 [27th Annual MOSES Organic Farming Conference](#), La Crosse, WI.

February 26 - 28 COABC 2016 Conference, Vandana Shiva keynote.

March 9 - 13 Expo West. Education, Events & Trade Show. Anaheim, CA.

April 25-27 National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) [meeting](#), [Omni Shoreham Hotel](#) in Washington, D.C. This meeting marks the first stage of the 2018 Sunset Review for five crop inputs and ten processing inputs. It is critical that NOSB hear from certified produc-

ers and handlers on whether the inputs scheduled to expire from the National List are consistent with and essential to organic production, or whether there are other effective natural or organic alternatives available.

May 23 Organic Confluences Summit. Kicking off Organic Week in D.C. in May, this one-day conference The Organic Center Subtitled "A Summit to Turn Environmental Evidence into Public Policy," will focus on bringing together

scientific experts, farmers, policymakers and organic stakeholders to explore how organic research can influence policy practices that create incentives for sustainable agricultural practices. Participants will learn about the latest environmental research and public conservation initiatives, and take part in round-table strategy discussions. You [can register now](#) for Confluences for \$79, or add on OTA's Policy Conference and Hill Visit Days for a discounted rate.

May 23 - 27 Washington, DC OTA's Policy Conference & Hill Visit Days 2016 [info ota.com](mailto:info@ota.com)

Please see pages 2 & 3 for the current list of IOIA on-site trainings and webinars