



The Inspectors' Report

Highlighted
resource
pages

Volume 5, Number 2, Spring 1996 Published by the Independent Organic Inspectors Association

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

by Rick Martinez

Well, I survived another election so it appears you all are stuck reading my "Notes from the Chair" for another year. As difficult as it is for me to write these, I do occasionally come up with something noteworthy to say. Such as the dubious honor of the "Most Outrageous Statement Award" at New Mexico. But it is totally untrue and don't believe a word. It is a typical political smear campaign. And as a result of these rumors, I had to endure a kiss from Earl Hiatt!

Speaking of New Mexico, aside from the fun, there was quite a full slate. It began with the board retreat followed by the 1996 Annual General Meeting and the Advanced Inspector Training. The board meetings were attended by current board members as well as many of those standing for election for the first time. There were also individual members in attendance. After the Annual Meeting, the first meetings of the newly elected board were held, where officers for the coming year were selected. Additionally, we took advantage of the event to put together some working groups

(see Notes, page 2)

IOIA Accreditation Program Supported by OCC

By Janine Gibson

The Board of IOIA is pleased to announce the appointment of Paul Burkhouse of OCBA as Organic Certifiers Caucus (OCC) rep to the IOIA Accreditation Review Panel (ARP). This recognition of the important role accreditation plays for inspectors and certifiers reflects the continually improving relationship between the OCC and IOIA. We also thank John Burns, who will serve as IOIA rep to the OCC, now that we have an official position on the Caucus. The board thanks all involved in this process of improved communication and cooperation.

In a letter from OCC Coordinator Tony Cleese, presented during the IOIA Board retreat in Santa Fe, the OCC expressed its "commitment to work diligently towards our (two organizations) common goals." In response to IOIA Board communication on issues raised by our members, the OCC have discussed IOIA representation on the OCC; OCC representation on the IOIA ARP; the OCC response to IOIA complaint procedures; group insurance information; the OCC procedure for improper action by an OCC member; inspector non-payment policy; and standardized inspection forms.

The letter concluded that OCC feels comfortable with the IOIA complaint procedure, and we should proceed on its adoption. (WE ARE!)

The OCC is working with Gales Creek Insurance to establish group coverage and strongly encourages IOIA to participate in this process by filing an application. (We Have!) The OCC has developed an internal complaint procedure for its members that has yet to be tested. A copy of the procedures will be sent to IOIA for feedback in developing a sound process. (We Will!) OCC members feel that certifiers should be the conduit for inspector payments; that in no case should clients/members be paying inspectors directly. In conclusion, there is a joint IOIA/OCC project to develop uniform inspection document templates that should be, when completed, adopted throughout the industry. The FSMIP grant to support this project also includes a proposal for the apprenticeship program and an updating of the IOIA Training Manual. This project could help foster OCC participation in IOIA Training and Apprenticeship Programs.

What's Inside....

AGM Summary	p. 3
Election results	p. 5
Accreditation Info	p. 8
Inspector Issues	p. 10
Farm Bill Review	p. 16

And More!....

In Brief...

1996 Membership Dues

Joyce has sent 1996 membership renewals to all members. This will be your only billing so please get your 1996 dues in to IOIA as soon as possible.

Ethics Revised

The IOIA Codes of Ethics and Conduct have been revised. Copies are available from the IOIA office in Winona upon request.

Legault Appointed IOIA Rep

Christian Legault, Quebec, Canada, has been appointed by the IOIA Board of Directors to represent inspector issues on the Table filere biologique, setting provincial organic regulations in Quebec. IOIA members interested in participating in this process should contact Christian, ph: (819) 562-7868.

IOIA/OCC Collaboration

by Joyce E. Ford

IOIA and the Organic Certifiers Council (OCC) are collaborating on a Federal State Market Improvement Program (FSMIP) grant from the USDA. The project would develop a comprehensive set of template forms to be used in the certification process and establish a formal apprentice inspector program. IOIA is also requesting funds to update the IOIA Organic Inspection Manual with US federal regulations and develop a training manual to be used by IOIA training coordinators. The total request is \$36,450.00, with matching contributions provided by IOIA and OCC.

Notes, from page 1

who spent evenings working on specific projects.

The board meetings were grueling as usual, but there is a tremendous amount of work to be done. The attendance by so many new faces brought a broader base of view-points to the many important issues with which we had to deal. There were many talented people present who brought much experience and sound advice for the board. Their participation was very helpful and deeply appreciated.

The Annual Meeting held the usual committee reports, election of officers, by-law votes and some open discussion time. The results of the election have brought some new blood to the board which illustrates an evolution of IOIA. We also said good bye to several board members, which included alternates Bob Mack and Linda Kaner, board members Gabriella Soto, Norm Bernhardt, and Jim Riddle. It marks the end of Jim's service on the board having been a founding board member and the first Chair of IOIA. His leadership has been excellent, and I think he deserves special recognition for his dedicated contribution to IOIA. We held our first conference call without Jim on line, and to tell you the truth, I felt a little odd not having him there.

In discussing my mixed feelings about the changes in IOIA with a member, he stated that this is a period of tremendous growth, of transition in which IOIA is changing from an organization of personalities to an institution. Institution is such a cold sounding word, but in reality we are being faced with the problems every institution faces. The problems of financing our organization to properly service our members and carry out the various associated programs; developing a structure under which our organization can operate democratically, yet avoid excessive or unnecessary bureaucracy. And most important, keeping our members interested and actively participating in the process, be it serving on the board, doing some

committee work, writing a newsletter article or phone conversations with a board member. In some way making an effort to make your voice heard and have an impact on our direction. It is only in this way we can be an institution that more accurately reflects our collective personality. So as IOIA continues along it's evolutionary path, I welcome the new board and look forward to working with them facing the challenges ahead.

The Annual Meeting marks the ending and the beginning another IOIA year. The past year has brought many accomplishments that I, as an IOIA member, am very proud of. But I suppose what brings me the greatest satisfaction is the respect we as an organization have earned within the organic community. This respect is a reflection of all of the dedicated hard work that has been performed by our members, the board and Jim and Joyce. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have worked so hard to make it all possible.

It was great to see some of the old faces, renew the friendships and make new ones. Until next time, Happy inspecting!

IOIA Board of Directors

Rick Martinez	Chair
Chip Kraynyk	Vice Chair
John O'Malley Burns	Treasurer
Janine Gibson	Secretary
Gary Ulbrich	Member-At-Large
Raphael Pinto	Board Member
Phillip Hale	Board Member
Dag Falch-Nelsen	Alternate
Rochelle Elsen	Alternate
Leon Kaplan	Alternate

The INSPECTORS' REPORT is the newsletter of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). Editorial Staff: Diane Cooner, Box 1259, Guerneville, CA 95446 USA. Phone/FAX 707-869-3017, email wofpop@aol.com. Deadlines are August 1, November 1, February 1 & May 1. All relevant articles are welcomed. Published quarterly on recycled paper.

Fifth Annual General Meeting Summary

By Janine Gibson, Secretary

Over 40 IOIA members and friends gathered for our fifth Annual General Meeting on March 25, 1996. Held in conjunction with the Advanced Inspector Training, it was an important communication event. While munching on delicious organic snacks from Wild Oats in Santa Fe, we digested the updates on our organizations' functioning.

The Report from Chair Rick Martinez focused on accomplishments. The Organic Certifiers Caucus has recognized our accreditation program. This recognition reflects the maturing of our young organization and the respect with which our accomplishments and goals are held. Rick thanked those members active on committees and asked for increased involvement by members in the work of IOIA. It is challenging to be organic inspectors and keep an organization functioning efficiently. Rick felt the challenges of being chairperson have been balanced by the enthusiasm generated by working for change.

Jim Riddle has completed his term as treasurer and presented a budget for our review. We thanked Jim for his dedicated work on the board, as he will be participating in meetings as a coordinator, no longer as a board member. Volunteers Liza Lanza and Zea Sonnabend stepped forward to serve on the new Finance Committee. An economic development plan is being created and various fundraising activities are under consideration, including a four part USDA FSMIP grant proposal.

Phil Hale presented the Membership Committee report. He thanked Joyce Ford for her diligent work on the Membership Directory. He also credited Margaret Scoles for her assistance. Their goal is to have our directory available each January.

In 95/96 we have 122 voting members and 50 apprentice members for a total of 172 voting members, 21 supporting individual memberships and 11 supporting organization memberships. Phil thanked Diane Cooner for her important work as newsletter coordinator. The newsletter plays a key role in connecting our

membership. We thanked Phil for his efforts as chair, as he wishes to remain active on the committee, though no longer as chairperson.

Chip Kraynyck offered reports from the Accreditation, Communications and Forms Committees. The Accreditation Committee is restructuring with the goal of improved functioning. Chip summarized the results of the board phone outreach to members. Much appreciation of the newsletter and IOIA was expressed. Concerns about lack of work, training needs and liability needs were also expressed. Steve Wisbaum, as Forms Committee chair, has initiated an inspector survey. We encourage all members to participate.

Jim Riddle reported on the Training Committee and is asking for a new chair to step forward. Approximately 500 people have taken IOIA training, 100 so far in 1996. Working groups make trainings a reality. The Regional Training Oversight Committee is Rick, Chip, Margaret and Jim. The Rutherford Scholarship Review Panel is Rick, Chip and Joyce and this year chose Marty Mesh from Florida, who attended the Advanced Inspector Training. Jim presented 3 bylaw amendments as chair of the Bylaws Committee. The wording of our mission statement was agreed upon. We changed how we elect board members, hopefully to encourage greater participation by the membership and we changed voting procedures for mail-in ballots.

Gabriela Soto-Munoz gave the Latin

American Committee report. Many of the people who have trained as inspectors in Latin America are not working as inspectors. The trainings and manual in Spanish are scarce resources in organic management. Gabriela stressed that developing the apprenticeship program is crucial for regional inspector skills. IOIA Latin America members called for more trainings and increased networking.

Janine Gibson, as the Canadian Committee chair, shared information on the Canadian Organic Advisory Board, COAB. COAB is considering requiring certification bodies to hire IOIA accredited inspectors/verification officers. The current facilitator of COAB is Celia Guilford, an IOIA member. The Canadian Committee serves as a communication vehicle for Canadian inspector response to COAB and Agriculture Canada.

(For election results and terms, see page 5.)

We discussed the importance of coordinated IOIA response to NOP (see article page 4). John Burns presented some insurance information. The OCC is exploring group coverage and invites IOIA participation. We opened the floor for New Business for future discussion. Topics included: Bibliographies, file maintenance, grouping of inspections to reduce travel, in kind remuneration, inspection check lists, IRS requirements, and piece rate inspections. (For more indepth information on these topics, see page 10.)

We then adjourned and ate cheesecake!



El Presidenté Rick Martinez fields questions during the 1996 Annual Meeting in Santa Fe.

NOP Response Task Force Seeks Comment

By Jim Riddle

IOIA has formed a task force to formulate an IOIA response to the National Organic Program's (NOP's) proposed rules for implementation of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA). The proposed rules are likely to be published in the Federal Register in early June. There will likely be a 60 or 90 day public comment period.

IOIA would like all interested members to review and comment on the proposed rules. In order to receive a copy, you should place your name on the NOP's mailing list:

USDA, AMS, TMD, NOP
P.O. Box 96456
12th & Independence
Rm. 2510 S Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20090-6456
Work: (202) 720-8331,
(202) 205-7806
Fax: (202) 205-7808

You also will be able to access the proposed rules on the Internet. The address for the USDA home page is:

<http://www.usda.gov/agencies/agencies.htm>

Scroll to Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Services, click on the Agriculture Marketing Service and look for the Transportation & Marketing Division, National Organic Program. I understand that the proposed rules will also be listed on Cascadian Farms' home page. Or you can do a search for listings of the federal register.

Please take the time to review the proposed rules as soon as they are released. Review them with the eyes of an inspector. How will they impact our work? Are they consistent with the OFPA? Are they realistic, based on your inspection experiences? Are

there areas where you feel the rules are too lax? Too strict? Unenforceable? Or just right?

Please forward your comments to the IOIA office within 30 days of the release of the proposed rules. Respond by mail, courier, fax or email. Make sure to be clear and concise. Site your comments to the exact page and reference number of the proposed rules. Include both positive and negative comments.

All comments will be tabulated by the NOP Response Task Force, and a draft IOIA response will be formulated. The draft response will be forwarded to the IOIA Board for review. The Board will then submit an IOIA position paper to the NOP and Organic Trade Association (OTA). We will be working with the OTA to assure that our positions are understood and supported by other sectors of the organic community.

You may also want to submit your individual comment directly to the NOP.

Thanks for your participation in this important task, and Happy Reviewing!

IFOAM Accreditation Programme Board Appoints Jim Riddle

Jim Riddle of rural Winona, MN, has been appointed to the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements' (IFOAM's) Accreditation Programme Board. The announcement was made April 11, 1996, by IFOAM's World Board of Directors.

Jim Riddle is the founding chair of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). He served as IOIA's chair from 1991-1995. Riddle now serves as co-coordinator for IOIA, working in partnership with his wife, Joyce Ford. Riddle has been an organic inspector since 1987, and served as president of the Winona

Farmers Market Association from 1987-1993.

IFOAM serves as an democratic federation which coordinates the networking of organic agriculture movements around the world. IFOAM has over 500 organizational members in 100 countries. IFOAM members share knowledge and expertise and inform the public about organic agriculture. IFOAM also represents the organic movement at international parliamentary, administrative and policy making forums.

IFOAM has established the international "IFOAM Basic Standards of Organic Agriculture and Food Processing," which serve as guidelines for the implementation of national and regional organic certification programmes. In order to make an international guarantee of organic quality a reality, IFOAM established the IFOAM Accreditation Programme, to which Mr. Riddle has been recently appointed.

The IFOAM Accreditation Programme is designed to ensure equivalency of certification programmes worldwide by allowing certification programmes a means to be assessed in reference to IFOAM's basic standards and criteria. The IFOAM Accreditation Programme Board conducts rigorous evaluations of documentation provided by the certification programmes and reports filed by an on-site evaluators. The Programme includes continued monitoring of accredited programmes' standards, policies and performance.

Jim Riddle will serve as one of two representatives from the United States on the programme's twelve member board. Riddle's first board meeting will be held June 15-19, 1996, in Minneapolis, MN. Mr. Riddle will also be traveling to IFOAM's 11th Scientific Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, August 11-15, 1996, where he will participate in board meetings and speak on "Organic Inspection: Training for Consistency and Quality."

Please Reconsider Election Changes

By Al Johnson

I usually don't take a strong interest in by-laws. I prefer to leave their development to those whose minds are more conceptual than my own. However, I believe that the recent passage of the election by-law change, whereby elections are now slated to occur by write-in ballot during and after the annual meeting, rather than before and during the annual meeting, will have serious negative repercussions for the organization.

By the approved changes, election of the board of directors will not be finalized until a period not to exceed 90 days after the election. Think hard what this will mean! To ensure adequate membership attendance, annual meetings are held in winter in conjunction with a training or other meeting. I have attended several of these annual meetings and know that much of the energy that sustains our organization through the board and the various committees is generated from this gathering. A new and enthusiastic board is established, hopeful that the new blood will correct some of the pasts' weaknesses and that the old blood will provide the wisdom for keeping the organization focused. The energy from these gatherings induces members to volunteer for the many committees. The newly elected and energized board of directors and the committees have the opportunity to meet in-person immediately after the elections and create a focus, a direction and hopefully some progress on the issues to be tackled in the next year. It is this energy which I believe sustains IOIA.

By changing the election procedures, results may not be known until 90 days after the annual meeting, creating a potential lame-duck period. Since in-person gatherings are so rare in IOIA, this means the board will not meet as a group until the Baltimore Trade Show in September. The board will have to be

organized by phone at a time which is probably the busiest for all inspectors - spring and early summer. Will board members have the same amount of energy to devote to IOIA at this time of year? Will recruitment of volunteers for committees be as effective by phone at this time of year as at the annual meeting? Will these new committee members have the time or energy in the spring and summer to devote to organizing and starting the work of the committees? I believe the answer to all these questions is NO.

The IOIA by-law voting process is not perfect. Part of the reason for change was to give the membership an opportunity to hear or read the discussion which accompanies the election at the annual meetings. The passage of this by-law was a good example of this problem. The vote of the mail-in ballots approved this amendment by a margin of 26-2. The vote of those at the annual meeting disapproved this amendment by a vote of 18-2 after the arguments had been heard. Included with the disapproval votes were those of most of the board of directors who had previously unanimously recommended this measure for approval.

In a like manner, the IOIA election of the board of directors is not perfect. But, I believe it has functioned reasonably well. Candidates are given the opportunity to introduce themselves and their views in the IOIA newsletter, and in the material accompanying the election ballots mailed prior to the annual meeting. All members are given the opportunity to volunteer for the elections. All individuals present at the annual meeting are highly encouraged to use their talents as committee members or chairs.

It is my belief that the problems encountered with the old system are far less detrimental than what will be a zapping of the organization's energy with the new system. Let us repeal the new election system and then work towards creating elections which can solve past imperfections without creating more serious problems.

Inspector Resources

In this issue, the resources listed have a number of publications available. Please contact the resource to get a complete listing of pamphlets and/or books available.

1. Woods End Agricultural Institute, Inc., P.O. Box 297, Mt. Vernon, ME, 04352. Ask for their Publications List which has some interesting short books on organic soil amendments, composting, green manuring, and use of compost in potting soil mixes. A long term study comparing organic, biodynamic and conventional systems from Sweden (crop nutrient content, storage quality and energy yields, effects on soil composition) sounds particularly interesting.
2. ATTRA Materials List, 1-800-346-9140. ATTRA has an extensive list for free pamphlets on organic production (including tropical fruits, vegetable crops, alternative crops), strategies for organic management, sustainable livestock production including exotics such as ostrich and emus, marketing, and soils. Also available are videos and slides on sustainable agriculture.
3. Midwestern Bio-Ag, Hwy 1D, Box 126, Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, 53517. For low cost booklets and videos on earthworms, lime, anhydrous ammonia, using a refractometer, making soil recommendations, and more.

IOIA Election Results

Rick Martinez, 2 year term, Chairperson, Executive Member
Chip Kraynyk, 1 year term, Vice Chair, Executive Member
John O'Malley Burns, 2 year term, Treasurer, Executive Member
Janine Gibson, 1 year term, Secretary, Executive Member
Gary Ulbrich, 2 year term, Member-At-Large, Executive Member
Raphael Pinto, 2 yr term, Board Member
Phillip Hale, 1 yr term, Board Member
Dag Falch-Neilsen, Rochelle Eisen, Leon Kaplan, 1 yr term, Alternates

Advanced Training Course in Santa Fe

By Zea Sonnabend

Over 40 inspectors gathered at the Glorietta Conference Center outside of Santa Fe, New Mexico at the end of March for an advanced training course. We came from as far away as Florida, Saskatchewan, Costa Rica, Argentina and Japan for a session which was rich in networking, learning, asking questions, and



Advanced trainees at Howard Shapiro's Farm

interacting with our kind.

The first day opened with a report from Michael Johnson of the USDA National Organic Program about implementing the Act. While he still couldn't answer the big question: "WHEN?" in his talk, he did say some things of interest to inspectors. According to him, we inspectors will only have to know one set of standards when the law is implemented, the National ones. He also stated that inspectors will not

have responsibility to police or report violations of regulations that do not apply directly to the organic standards.

The rest of the day was filled with a materials discussion, led by Zea Sonnabend of CCOF and Rod Crossley of the NOSB. The materials proposed for the National List were discussed along with their annotations, or restrictive language. Many questions made the day seem to fly by. In the evening there was an

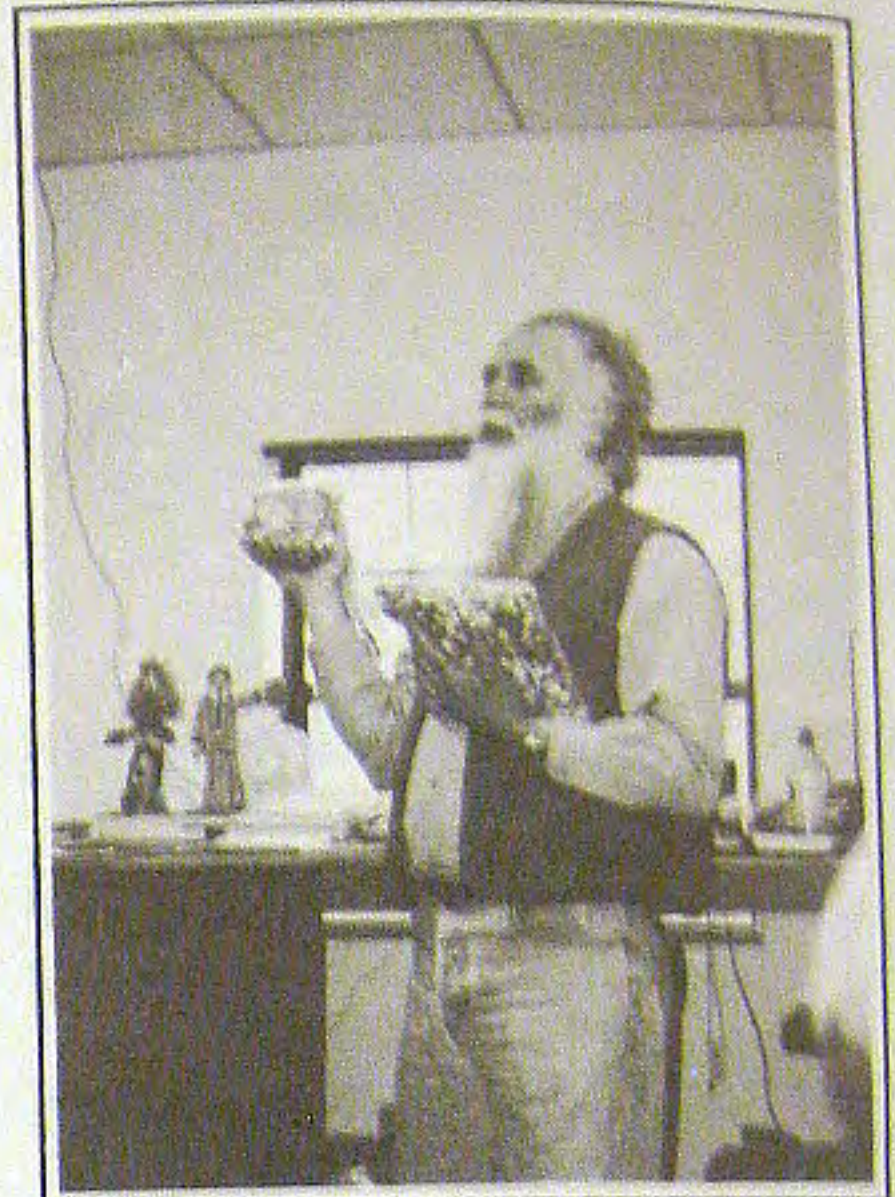
informal discussion among inspectors of issues such as insurance, dress, and accepting hospitality from inspected parties.

The middle day was the most

entertaining because we got to go on a field trip. But first we heard an excellent presentation on residue sampling from a guy who should know: Michael Scauornec, of the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Materials Bureau. It made our sampling jobs seem easy compared to the toxic waste that he has to sample regularly.

The field trip to the Seeds of Change farm and warehouse/office

complex was thrilling even though nothing was growing at this time of year. Howard Shapiro of Seeds of Change estimated that the land, near Espanola, NM has



Keynote Speaker Howard Shapiro of Seeds of Change, showing us red parching corn from Bolivia.

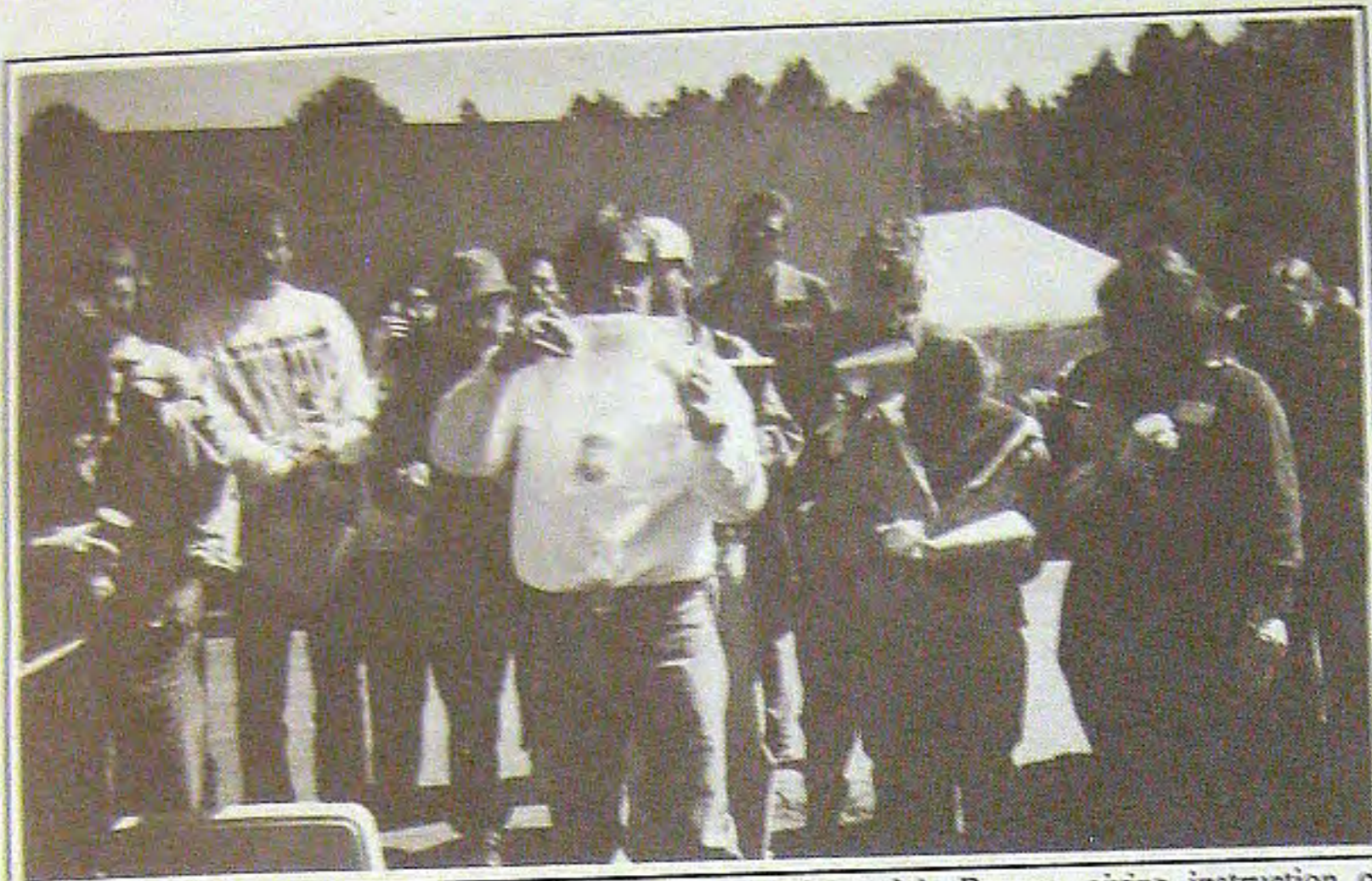
been in continuous cultivation for 3500 years! The farm is not used much for production, but is used for trials, experiments and seed increase for their ever expanding organic seed company. At the headquarters we saw seeds being packeted and shipped, as well as such exotic acquisitions as nitrogen fixing corn and red corn from Bolivia with the largest, flattest kernels you've ever seen, used particularly for parching corn.

The last day had presentations on Total Quality Management by Kim Burton of Smuckers and Jim Riddle and an exercise in putting together an audit trail on particular processed products. The talk by John O'Malley Burns on report writing gave me a few things to argue with (like writing your report the same day as the inspection!) but had interesting tips as well. Finally we broke into small groups for a feedback session on reports which each inspector had brought with them.

One of the prime traits of being a successful inspector in my opinion is having an inquiring mind. The value



Small town inspector makes good - Phil Hale showed up in a (rented) Caddy and had the ladies swooning.



Michael LeScauornec of the New Mexico Hazardous Materials Bureau, giving instruction on collecting samples for residue analysis.

of the advanced course was in exercising that inquiring mind with others who often work in considerable isolation from each other. It was swell to meet with so many inspectors with such wide-ranging experience for a few days and share.

The 1996 IOIA Board Retreat

By Janine Gibson

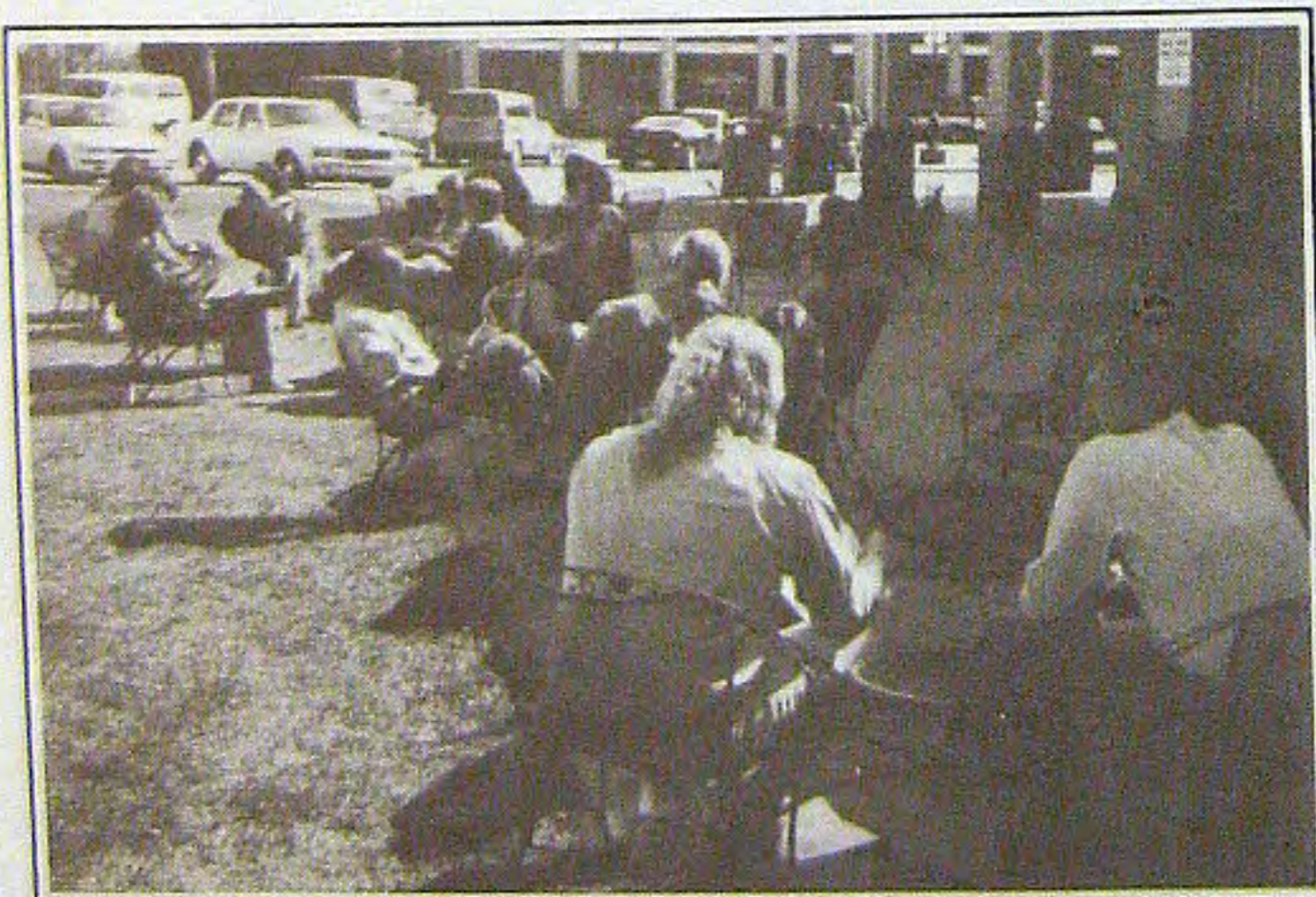
We had a number of guests present at our board retreat in Santa Fe. It was great to discuss why we are involved in IOIA, and where the seed of our inspiration lies. Most guests went on to join the board and

take on committee work. Phil Hale presented a video on Effective Non-profit Board Leadership and we discussed the need to determine how we measure performance of committee members and staff.

We like planning for the AGM well in advance, so we discussed plans for 1997. A National Organic Program Response Task Force was established with Marty Mesh, John Burns, Chip Kray-nyck, Leon Kaplan and



Fertilizer Quiz - "I know I've seen that stuff before - What does it taste like, Madonna?"



Swapping inspection reports for critical review in the sun.

Jim Riddle. The task force will ensure that inspectors wanting to respond have that opportunity. All IOIA members should put themselves on the USDA mailing list. A task

force was struck to develop the questions for the Wisbaum Survey which may also be useful in expressing inspector experience. Mail forms to Steve by May 31st! We discussed working with the OCC (see article page 1). We updated our Codes of Ethics and Conduct. We want to create a list of who we recognize as regional training coordinators. Joyce is developing a trainers' manual for use when conducting trainings. We discussed using regional trainings as an opportunity to carry out focused committee work. Chip's phone tree membership outreach met with mixed results, as not all calls were conducted. A good sampling of the

membership were contacted and are in regular communication with the office. The organization and the newsletter were felt to be helpful to members. John Burns and Al Johnson planned to talk to lawyer friends to answer some IOIA legal questions Chip is developing. We discussed finances and bylaws and the Membership Directory process. We accomplished a lot - it was sort of an extended board meeting and plan to do more visioning for the organization at the next retreat.

Inspector or Site Evaluator? You Make the Call

By Jim Riide

During the recent IOIA Inspector training course in Ann Arbor, MI, Peter Murray and Ernie Otter revealed that OCA is changing its term for us from "inspector" to "site evaluator". They explained that they feel that the term is more neutral and descriptive of the job we do. They also feel that the term "inspector" has prior legal definitions not related to organic certification.

I looked up the terms in the American Heritage Dictionary. The definition of inspect is "to examine carefully and critically." This sounds like an accurate description of what we do while visiting organic farms and processing facilities.

The definition of evaluate is "to ascertain or fix the value or worth of" or "to examine and judge carefully." The definition of site is "the place where something was, is or is to be located." Putting those together, it follows that a site evaluator would be someone who "examines and judges the places where things were, are or are to be located." Does this sound like the job you do as an organic inspector? The term evaluate relates to the act of passing judgement or assigning value. This contradicts both IOIA's Code of Ethics and OCA's "Site Evaluator DONOT's" which say that organic inspectors should not make final decisions.

The Organic Food Production Act defines us as "inspectors", as does FOAM, who has accredited OCA. We are referred to as "inspectors" by the European Union, and in the Codex Alimentarius debate. The only country that I am aware of where the term inspector is regulated is Canada. For that reason, we are called "verification officers" in that country. I think that "officer" is a bit intimidating, but then I'm not

Canadian, eh?

This change by OCA has been developed without the involvement of the inspector community. It is not just a semantic change, either. With its new site evaluation scoring system, (whereby evaluators assign scores on 68 different categories during the inspection), OCA is attempting to shift many decision making responsibilities from review committees to "site evaluators", according to Ernie Otter. How would this impact our liabilities? How would it impact OCA's tax liabilities, since it would appear to push us closer to being categorized as "employees"?

How would this new dynamic change the inspection process, since OCA members would know that they are being evaluated, not just inspected? The process currently is most successful when trust, rapport and open communication are established with inspected parties. Would this make the process more adversarial, similar to some government regulatory inspections?

Parts of this new program show promise for improving the inspection process, but I see no need to overhaul the entire system. What do you think? If you do inspections for OCA, I encourage you to get a copy of the new "Site Evaluator Criteria and Policies" and "Site Evaluation Worksheets." Read them carefully and give your feedback to OCA and IOIA.

Applying for Accreditation?

By Chip Kravnyk

The IOIA Inspector Accreditation Program is up and running. To date, the Accreditation Review Panel has reviewed ten applications. The review of this first batch revealed that some revisions to the program were in order. Many of the revisions address the program's flexibility, which is one of its key features. Perhaps some background would be useful here.

When developing this program, the Accreditation Committee realized that it could not say with confidence that particular academic credentials or vocational backgrounds necessarily equaled qualified inspectors. Of course, we recognized the value of formal education in disciplines like agronomy, biology, animal and food science, etc., or growing up on a farm, or working at a food processing facility. But we were also aware of very successful inspectors that were carpenters, artists, philosophers, and furniture makers, or educated in disciplines such as political science, sociology, and history. It became apparent that a truly meaningful inspector accreditation program should not only maintain high standards, but that this should be accomplished with flexible criteria. So, in an attempt to create an "organic" organic inspector accreditation program, we rejected the utilization of rigid accreditation criteria in favor of a more holistic approach.

Whether it's a farm or something like an inspector accreditation program, improvement in organic systems is typically characterized by evolution from the simple to the complex. This means that successful applications will have to present more than a list of jobs and degrees. Unless there is a very obvious relationship between an applicant's education and work background, the burden is then upon the applicant to make the case regarding how his or her education and work/life background relates to the applied for category(s). This is the basis of the program's flexibility. Many of the revisions involve wording that clarifies this point.

The revised program is now available. So, anyone applying for accreditation should use it. The new applications are white, and they are available from the main office in Winona. Each application comes with an explanation of the accreditation program (which is blue) and a Certifiers Inspector Evaluation Form (which is buff). These colors are different from those used in the previous program so the two are not confused with one another. It is very important that the applicant thoroughly read and understand the program or

ambiguous applications will jeopardize the applicants' accreditation.

There is also a change in the schedule that the Accreditation Review Panel (ARP) will follow. There will be two application deadlines per year, October 1 and March 1. Applicants can submit their completed application to the IOIA office at any time. Upon receipt of the application, the office will provide the ARP with copies of the application. Twice a year, on the dates of November 15 and April 15 (45 days after the deadlines) the ARP will be required to have its work complete and turned in. Applications received by the office with postmarks prior to October 2 will be reviewed by November 15. Applications received with postmarks prior to March 2 will be reviewed by April 15. Accreditation notifications will also follow this schedule and will be sent out the second half of November and the second half of April.

Are You Getting Paid?

By Joyce E. Ford

Several inspectors have called the IOIA office with specific problems of non-payment for inspection work. The IOIA Executive Committee has directed me to collect information on this issue in order for IOIA to develop inspector payment policy proposals. If you have not been paid for your inspection work within a reasonable amount of time, please send the following information to me in writing at the main IOIA office:

Name, amount of non-payment (inspection fee plus expenses), date of inspection, date bill sent to certifying agency, name of certifying agency, and what steps you have already taken to get paid. Was certification granted? What are your suggestions for inspector payment policies?

The Organic Certifiers Council, in their 3/18/96 meeting, clearly stated that certifiers should be the conduit for inspector payments. In no case should clients/members be paying inspectors directly.

Martinez Takes Outrageous Statement Award in New Mexico

By Chip Kraynyk

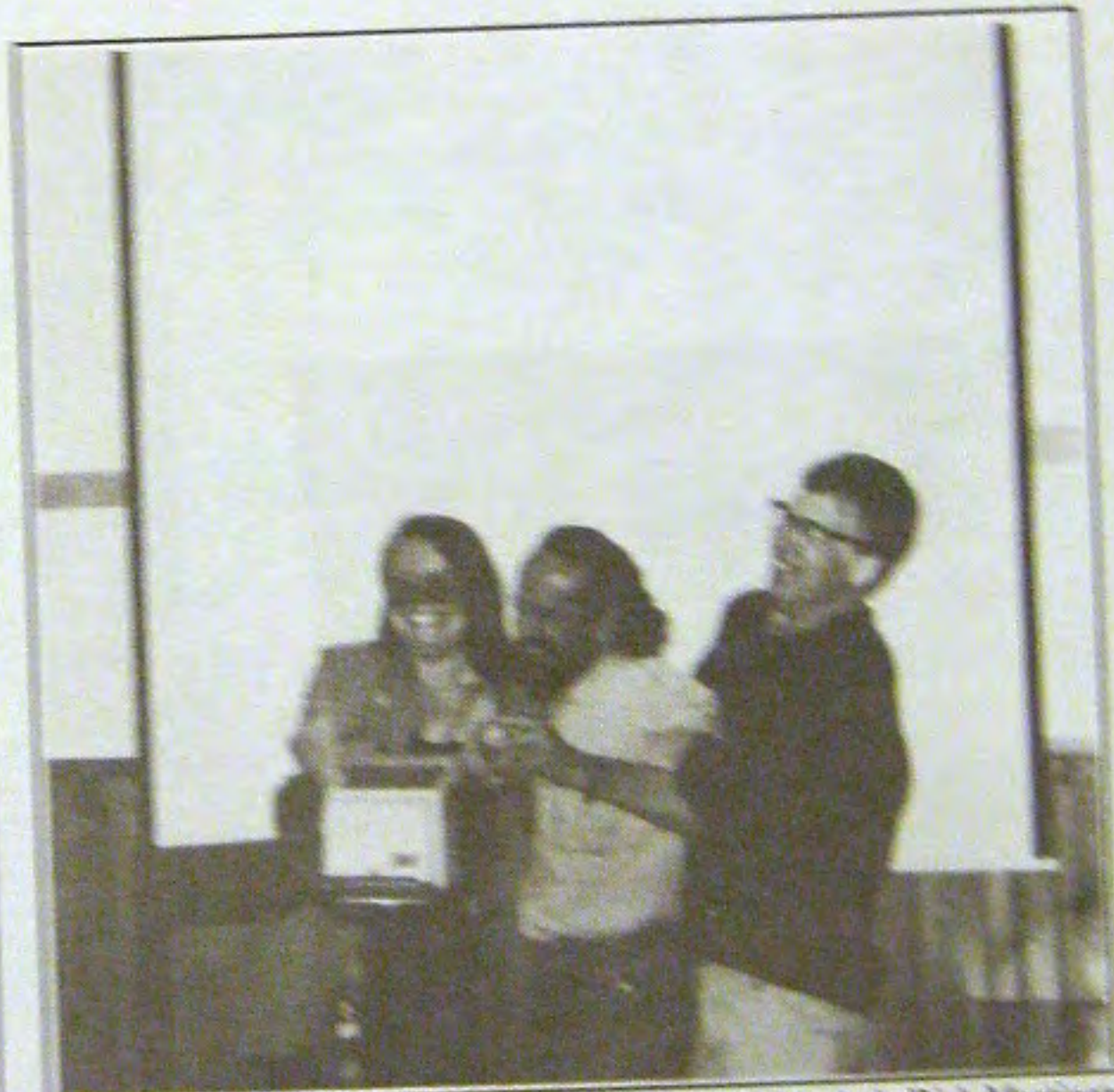
As many of you know, the IOIA has evolved a tradition of recognizing the most noteworthy, absurd, or outrageous statements heard during its events. Participants are encouraged to be on constant alert for such statements. The quotes are collected and the winner is decided by acclamation from the attendees. On March 28, 1996, during the advanced inspector training seminar at Grants, New Mexico, IOIA Chair Rick Martinez took the award with the following quote: "After the second glass of wine, I can't tell the difference between a skirt and a pair of trousers."

been well known for his capacity in this regard. Perhaps we'll hear more from Joyce in the future. Leon Kaplan, on the other hand, (a board member), had little difficulty reaching the final round with his quote when referring to the IOIA code of ethics: "You guys are violating everything that I do." Leon Kaplan was the only nominee to challenge Rick Martinez at this level, but it became apparent that Rick would take the award as the applause came thundering in.

This is the first time that this award has been received by an IOIA chair. But perhaps even more significant is the fact that Rick took the award in the presence of such perennial stars as Rod Crossley and Philip Hale. What does it all mean? After deep thought, one cannot avoid the conclusions that this is no trivial matter and the im-

lications can be mind boggling. Just think! With the use of democratic processes, we have now unified the positions of IOIA Chair and holder of the Most Outrageous Statement Award. Is this sound organizational development? Can we trust democracy? What's the rest of the world going to think? Or how are you, the inspector, going to explain this when asked about it on the job? Though I am obsessed with

these questions, I must admit that the answers escape me. Perhaps only after significant development. There is one thing, however, that I do think I can say with confidence: Do not underestimate the power of wine in the Land of Enchantment.



With the help of Janine Gibson and Phil Hale, IOIA chair Rick Martinez receives the Outrageous Statement Award in Santa Fe.

There were a total of twenty nominees. Most received little applause. Exceptions to this were strong quotes from Joyce Ford, Leon Kaplan, and Rick Martinez. Though Joyce's quote did not make the final clap-off round, her nomination is noteworthy as she has heretofore not

Inspector Issues

By Al Johnson, with help from Kevin ODare & John O'Malley Burns

At the advanced 1996 training in Santa Fe, an informal round table meeting was held to discuss issues of concern to inspectors. The agenda was open-ended and based primarily on a list developed at the end of the previous day's annual meeting. More topics were added both formally and by tangent as the night progressed.

Although this meeting was optional and planned only earlier in the day, the majority of inspectors in Santa Fe who were not at the Board of Director's Meeting that evening were in attendance. In my opinion, this indicates that inspectors have a strong need to discuss issues with colleagues.

In response to this need, I will try to give a summary, probably tainted by my opinion and additions, on what was discussed that evening. However, I hope that this is just the beginning of using the IOIA newsletter as a forum for discussing relevant issues. I hope to turn this article into a regular column, raising several issues in each newsletter, and providing the forum for all inspectors to comment on issues previously raised, or to introduce discussion on a new topic. The Santa Fe meeting addressed less than half of the agenda list of 18 items, so there is an abundance of material. The issues that were addressed that evening were:

HOW LONG SHOULD FILES BE KEPT?

The consensus on this issue was that our files, as well as all our business records, should be kept a minimum of 5 years. Several people felt the need to keep some records for longer, but there was little disagreement on this minimum. Several people pointed out that this period is a standard IRS requirement for business records and that all our documents should be equated to this.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS

Several inspectors expressed concern that the concepts of confidentiality and conflict of interest were not well understood by the growers and processors being inspected. The group felt that it was important to explain at the outset of the inspection that the inspection was confidential between the inspector, the inspected party and the certification agency. The group also felt it was important to explain the need to avoid conflict of interest and what this might mean between the inspector and the inspected party (anyone out there have a good way of wording this?). It was suggested that these be explained routinely even if it was assumed that the inspected party already knew this.

WHAT IS APPROPRIATE DRESS?

The consensus of the group was that there was no one appropriate dress for all occasions. Dressing for farm work is different than dressing for a processing plant. It was a consensus that inspectors should look professional. At whatever level inspectors are dressing for, it should be neat and appear professional. In other words, blue jeans and boots are OK for a farm inspection, but the jeans should be neat jeans and accompanied by a neat shirt. Howie Ross of Quality Assurance International stressed that certification agencies want neat professional people to inspect because although inspectors are often not employees of the agency, they are the only representatives of the certification program that the client will meet. A professional impression is very important.

Ideas inspectors and processors had for making a neat professional appearance were:

- * Bring an extra change of clothes and/or boots if necessary.
- * Dress at the level of the people whom you will be working with. If you will be dealing with people in coats

and ties, suits or dresses, wear clothing that will fit in, yet allow you to do your work.

FINANCIAL

I. In Kind Reimbursement

In this discussion, in-kind reimbursement referred to such practices as:

- * Accepting a meal from an inspected party
- * Accepting lodging provided by the inspected party
- * Accepting a product either as payment or as a gift (not really reimbursement)



Author Al Johnson snipping leaves during a sample collection exercise in Santa Fe.

There did not seem to be a clear consensus from this discussion. Some of the points made were:

- * Inspectors should think of conflict of interest as how certain situations

might appear to others rather than what the intention of the parties was.

* The present direction of the Federal Organic Program may make inspectors federal agents or the equivalent of federal agents who will be subject to the same guidelines as all federal inspectors. No one present knew what those guidelines are.

* Many inspectors presently accept in-kind reimbursement for items which would otherwise be billed to that client. This involved mostly food and lodging. Other inspectors felt this might be a potential conflict of interest.

* Some inspectors say they have been offered products which would otherwise be thrown out. Some felt comfortable with this situation, but many did not.

* Most inspectors have been offered product to take home. In most cases, it was felt that this was a gift and should not be done. However, some inspectors have dealt with this situation in various ways and there was not a consensus if these were right or wrong. Several of these ideas were:

a. Be prepared with cash to pay something for those items.

b. If the item is food, consider this a meal and do not charge the client for a meal for which he or she would normally be charged.

c. If a client insists on giving something that could be considered a gift and the refusal of this would be culturally insulting, a gift could be given in return. This would involve some foresight and planning, but one certifier suggested carrying an item or two in preparation of this.

2. How can we get certifiers to group (bunch) inspections to reduce travel expenses?

Several ideas were proposed both by inspectors and by representatives of certification agencies present.

a. Calling or writing a certification agency with one's own personal travel agenda was a practice to which there

were no objections. A certification agency representative present felt that an inspector should not be dealing with the farmer or processor on this issue, but with the agency.

b. Write a letter and submit this with an inspection report with the inspectors suggestion that because two processors were located close to each other and they were inspected close to the same time, scheduling them to be inspected consecutively by one inspector would have saved "5X" amount of traveling expense. A request to add this to the inspection file of the inspected parties should be made in this letter.

3. Can we influence how to keep small grower's fees affordable?

a. Bunching inspections as noted above would reduce costs.

b. Suggest another closer inspector if appropriate.

c. Forewarn the farmer or processor what will be needed for the inspection so that everything is together and inspection time does not have to be wasted looking for more information.

d. In-kind reimbursement for lodging and food can help, but there was no consensus as to its acceptability.

Insurance

(From a presentation at the annual meeting by John O'Malley Burns, who helped write this section)

There are three kinds of insurance relevant to IOIA and its members. The first is Errors and Omissions insurance to provide potential protection for individual inspectors. The second is liability for Board Members in the event that the Association is. The third was liability for IOIA (John felt that this was primarily a need stemming from the inspector accreditation program).

The Organic Certifiers Caucus was trying to negotiate a reasonably priced policy for its members. It was felt that IOIA could also be included in this policy. John felt that the price of these policies could be \$2,500 per year or less if a fairly large number of groups signed up. This would cover liability insurance for the board of directors and for IOIA. Errors and Omissions insurance could be purchased individually by inspector members under this policy (price unknown).

John felt that the best way for inspectors to protect themselves from liability would be to conduct a thorough inspection and write clear, concise reports, making the distinction between who said what and what is the inspector's opinion. Insurance will probably become a cost of doing business to inspectors in our efforts to become more professional.

Translations/Interpreting

Spanish to English or English to Spanish. Inspection reports, Farm & Processor Questionnaires, etc. Contact Mike Pratt at Tel/Fax 513-593-6699 or email at mmpratt@bright.net

Various certifying agencies now require specific documents, such as the basic inspection report, in the English language. Other language services and assistance are also available. You may also write to Visions of Spain, 1703 Co Rd. 130, Bellefontaine, OH 43311 USA for more information.

Translations/Interpreting

Español al inglés al español. Informes de Inspección, Questionarios de Finca o de Proceso, ect. Llamar a Miguel Pratt al Tel/Fax 513-593-6699 o al mmpratt@bright.net

Varias agencias de certificación ya piden documentos específicos como los informes básicos de inspección al inglés. También disponibles son otros servicios de traducción o otras asistencias. Se puede escribir a Visions of Spain, 1703 Co. Rd. 130, Bellefontaine, OH 43311 USA para más información.

Inspector Training in Ann Arbor, Michigan

By Kacey O'Connor

The unofficial theme of the April 14-19 farm/processor inspector training in Ann Arbor, Michigan, was "tenacity." The course was a challenging growth opportunity on several levels.

Communication with the hotel was difficult, but we were very fortunate to have organic food donated for all the meals. The chef had trouble with inventory control (some of our food was "misplaced") and preparation was a challenge for the kitchen staff (a growth opportunity for them?). Sharon Renier of OGM donated delicious game hens, and Susan Houghton, also of OGM, must have cleaned out her greenhouse to supply the wonderful salad mix. Whole Foods of Ann Arbor also donated considerable supplies, which were all appreciated!

Hotel hassles aside, the training itself was a good value. Instructors Jim Riddle, Phil Hale, and Madonna Brock emphasized use of the IOIA Organic Inspector's Manual, a valuable tool for training and in the field. Knowledgeable presenters included

Dean Berden of Thistle-down Farms in Stover, Michigan, who shared inspiring sides of his immaculate grain and bean operation. Dean focuses on management techniques that build healthy soil to avoid the need for "salvage" measures. Dean's farm demonstrates that organic is not synonymous with weedy or neglected. In fact, he told about several University of Michigan "bigwigs" who visited his farm themselves last fall because they did not believe the extraordinary soil sample results comparing Dean's operation to neighboring conventional farms.

Joe Scrimger, soil consultant with Bio-Systems in Mariette, Michigan, detailed tools for assessing soil fertility and techniques for improving soil health. The comparison of healthy soil to healthy bodies is elementary, but worthy of review. Overdependence on antibiotics damages the entire body and creates resistant strains of bacteria just as overdependence on commercial fertilizers and chemicals damages microbe populations and depletes the soil of minerals needed for crop vitality and food flavor. In fact, Joe contends that

sugar cravings are caused by mineral deprivation. Because so many minerals are found in naturally sweet foods, lack of minerals in our soils and foods confuses the body to crave sugar when what we really need is minerals.

Pest management by facility management is the best way to avoid the use of fumigants and sprays, according to L. Ernest Otter, of Pestco, Inc. He teaches clients about pest habits and how to eliminate habitats. Ernie believes that eradicating pests is impossible and that managing the environment to prevent infestations is more cost effective. Processors should understand the habits of pests, change their practices to prevent infestations, and monitor constantly to eliminate problems immediately. Ernie uses common tools such as pheromone traps and pest boxes, but he uses them as monitoring devices to indicate problems that need to be solved by changing the environment.

Peter Murray, OCIA certification committee, met with some resistance when he unveiled OCIA's new management plan. Under the new model, inspectors become "on-site evaluators" requiring extensive education and proof of competency. Participants expressed concern that although the plan is "based on Total Quality Management principles," it seems to be coming from the top down. Another concern was that good inspectors may become unqualified to work for OCIA because education standards will become too stringent. OCIA has published a pocket-sized processor handbook and is revising processor inspection forms to simplify inspecting and reporting.

Inspection trips included the Robert Fogg Farm, the Black Sheep Farm, Ann Arbor CSA, Eden Foods Prosper and Eden Foods Pasta Plant. John Ardry of Eden Foods discussed the need for the organic industry to participate in training inspectors.



Farm tour host Robert Fogg showing buckwheat to inspector trainees in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Although the main role of inspectors is toward protecting the consumer, he stated that they provide valuable learning opportunities for growers and processors to improve their operations.

At New Mexico, a roundtable discussion was added to the agenda and IOIA plans to continue the tradition. In Ann Arbor, development of an IOIA apprenticeship program was discussed, with many practical suggestions emerging regarding the FSMIP grant that Jim Riddle is writing. One phase would fund implementation of a formal apprenticeship program.

Comments on this topic? Forward them to Jim. The consensus of the group was that a program is needed; the certifying agencies should be encouraged to participate, both financially and by providing feedback to inspectors regarding their reports; apprentices should pay nominal fees to support both IOIA administration and pay mentor inspectors; IOIA should be the clearinghouse for apprentices and mentors with help from regional coordinators; and mentoring should be available to veteran inspectors as needed. The program was regarded as an "investment in quality, which does not cost, it pays."

(See Ann Arbor, page 18)

News Flash: Murray Wins IOIA Award

by Jim Riddle

Peter Murray of AgriSystems International, who is chair of OCIA's International Certification Committee, won the "Notable Quotes and Outrageous Statements" award at the recent IOIA Organic Inspector training in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

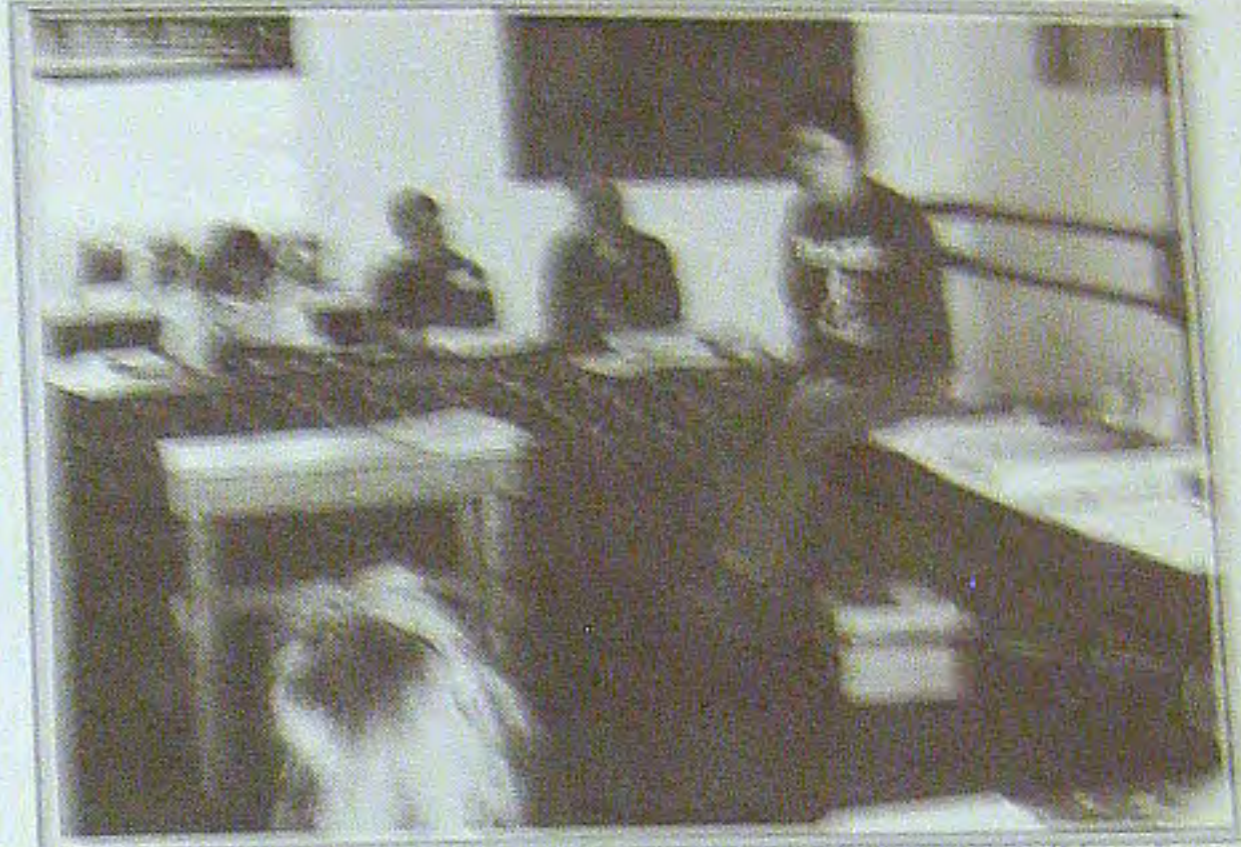
Murray won a bottle of Golden Promise organic ale and a jar of Arrowhead Mills organic peanut butter with the statement, "When applying for OCIA inspector accreditation, it will certainly be in your favor if you attended an IOIA training course - where Ernie (Otter) and I were on the agenda." Peter had some stiff competition, but won by acclamation of the crowd.

Runners up included:

Eric Feutz of Missouri, who told us why he closed his bakery, "When two old women came in, bought a cookie

for \$25 and split it, I knew business was going nowhere."

Wolfgang Durr of San Diego told about a woman's rose garden tattoo on her chest, "She was willing to let me wander through her rose garden."



Sara Stover of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association talking about the National Organic Program.

Phillip Hale of Ohio, "I can't over-emphasize that more!"

Paradigm shift farmer/inspector Cita Posselt of Michigan observed, "I think, on the ultimate level as an inspector, you have to determine the karmic energy of the farmer."

Susan Houghton of Indiana told about the production of her salad mix, "I'm not packaging, I'm only putting them in a bag."

Melanie Toews, project coordinator for Quality Assurance International San Diego, shared this geography lesson, "You're in Ohio, not too far from me in California. Oh no, I think that's Oregon."

During our farm inspection field trip, Kacey O'Connor of Idaho saw a kernel of corn on the ground and asked, "What is that orange berry?"

Jim Riddle of Minnesota when talking about flow charts said "it takes some type of clarification to clarify the schematic."

Phil Hale summed it all up with, "It gets even more hairy!"



Attendees of the IOIA/Virginia Assn. of Biological Farmers/Carolina Farm Stewardship Assn farm inspector training course held in early March at The Farm in Tennessee, USA

Some Thoughts On Compost

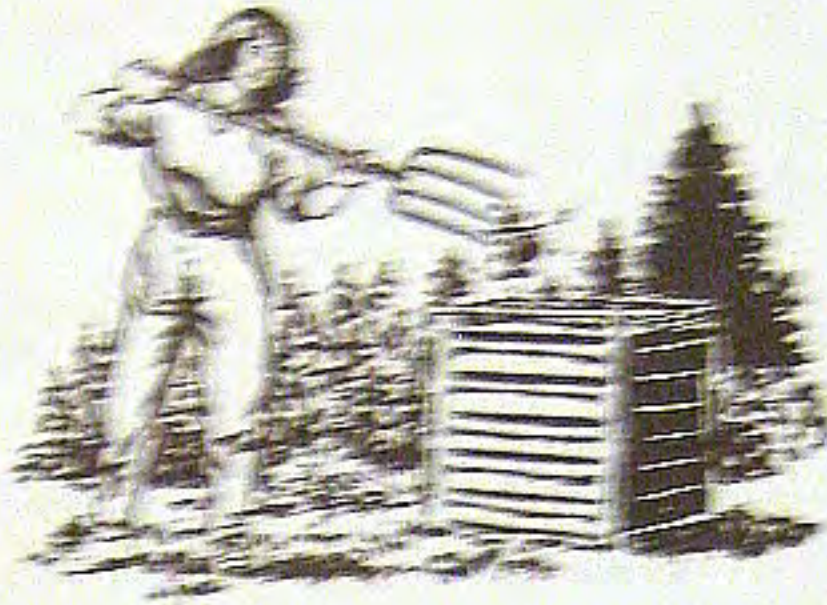
By Jim Fulmer, Philomath, Oregon

At the recent IDA training in New Mexico the topic of what compost is came up. There was discussion about what compost is and where to draw the line between finished compost and a pile of decaying organic mass. Setting the debate on anaerobic composts and stories aside and concentrating on aerobic composting, I want to point out that this delineation in many aspects has been defined.

I have come to understand the delineation between finished compost and rotting organic material in two ways. I feel like I have to put this out on the table in case these thoughts haven't come up already.

The first is raw intuition. Mastering compost production is much like mastering bread baking. In both you can start with what intellect tells you is precision. There are certain ingredients and ratios. You follow them to the letter and walk away certain you're going to have the most butt-kicking compost or bread ever to bless humanity. Enter alchemy. We can quickly learn how isolated and microcosmic our silly little intellects can be. "What is that awful smell?", proclaims your neighbor. You thought you had it together but now this amorphous mass of organic material you have created has taken on an identity of its own. In many aspects it has become a living, digesting organism. Suddenly we have this biological thing with the wisdom of the universe. In order to exercise the role of crown of creation, a farmer or good compost manufacturer will rely on intuition to a large degree here. In other words, they can stick an arm in a compost pile, visually observe it, smell it, run it through their fingers and know that it is ready for any given application. The ability to do this takes years of development. Intuition is foundational to farming. We need to

understand and accept that as we go about dissecting the farming process into this or that category. If this were an ideal world, all inspectors, certifiers, NCSB and USDA personnel would have experimental compost piles going on a continual basis, perhaps for lifetimes, so as to grasp this.



The second way I have come to understand what compost is has been illustrated to me by raw science in concert with intuition. In our modern day there is the technology to monitor the biological process of a compost pile. Essentially what is coming to light from this is that a given compost pile will go through 3 biological phases of decomposition if they are properly built and nurtured. First there is the pile of raw ingredients. These ingredients rapidly lose their independent qualities and in unison embark on a phase of microbiological fury and rapid decomposition. This phase can be and has been mapped by the presence of specific bacteria and fungi. Usually this first phase is characterized by high temperatures. In the second stage, intense biological activity continues but the pile makes obvious strides towards a less violent equilibrium. Visually the nature of the initial ingredients is less defined. This phase can be mapped by the presence of a new specific set of bacteria and fungi. Heat is still present but the whole thing appears to be on

a more intentional and grounded path. The third phase involves the stabilization of organic matter into humus compounds. The original nature of the individual compost ingredients is no longer detectable. In addition to it's own specific regime of bacteria and fungi, this phase also is delineated by the presence of larger and visually detectable flora and fauna such as earthworms and fungi.

So, at what stage is compost really compost? From my own experience as well as the shared experience of others, compost can be utilized as a fertility management tool in two somewhat different scenarios. In farming systems with a heavy nutrient demand, such as many vegetables, and in situations where soil fertility levels are low and the goal is to receive plant nutrients via a composting system, compost in the later stage of the second phase of decomposition is often used. Plant nutrients are more soluble in this stage and available for plant uptake. Compost at this stage is by no means raw and is teeming with beneficial biological critters. While compost decomposed to the state characteristic to this second phase is applied to help meet immediate crop nutrition needs, compost which has been allowed to decompose to the full extent of the third phase is applied to develop the humus content of the soil. At this stage plant nutrient is released steadily and slowly over longer periods of time. It is compost at this stage that truly starts to address concerns of farm sustainability regarding fertility cycles and soil tith as long as other factors such as reduction of tillage and careful crop rotation are adhered to. Compost at this stage is not a "plant food". It is a biological catalyst that ignites the activities of the internal fertility dynamics imprinted into the ancient identity of a farming systems' soil base.

This, my friends, is sustainability.

Case Studies Document Successful Alternatives to Methyl Bromide

from the Pesticide Action Network North America Updates Service

A report released by the Australian government presents four working examples of successful agricultural production in flowers, strawberries, cucurbits and tomatoes, without the use of the ozone depleting pesticide methyl bromide. The farmers profiled in the report have either never used methyl bromide, have stopped using it, or are phasing it out - in each case with little effect on production yields. The study, "Agricultural Production without Methyl Bromide - Four Case Studies," was prepared by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) Division of Entomology in Australia, in collaboration with the governments of Colombia and the Netherlands, and funded by environmental protection agencies in Australia, Canada and the U.S.

Cut flower production in Colombia supplies 10% of the world export market of floriculture products. Historically, Colombia has never used methyl bromide due to prohibitive costs and difficulties of importing, managing and applying this highly toxic chemical. Additionally, soils used in Colombian floriculture are generally acidic and very high in organic matter content, resulting in extended methyl bromide retention in the soil. Rather than using methyl bromide, flower farms in Colombia disinfect the soil through a combination of composting, steam, and application of various biocides, nematicides and fungicides (such as tolclofos methyl and metalaxyl). The Colombian floriculture industry has succeeded without methyl bromide through the utilization of integrated pest management (IPM) and knowledge-intensive methods that have enabled farmers to increase efficiency and compete successfully in

the world market.

Strawberry and cucurbit production in the Netherlands are also examined in the report. In 1981 the Dutch government instituted a gradual phaseout of methyl bromide due to studies that showed clear evidence of extensive contamination of air, soil, water and food, as well as public health risks when methyl bromide application sites were close to housing areas. The phaseout consisted of several steps including improved application methods to reduce emissions, adoption of an IPM system and development of new cultural techniques.

When the last methyl bromide permit was canceled in 1991, strawberry and cucurbit production continued unabated with little or no loss in yields. In fact, according to the CSIRO report, Dutch glasshouse strawberry and cucurbit producers have actually doubled their yields since the phase out of methyl bromide.

Important changes in Dutch strawberry production include:

- 1) the development of techniques to chill plants, providing farmers with greater flexibility in the timing of fruit production to optimize market prices and improve management of fungal diseases;
- 2) the introduction of double cropping, whereby greenhouse farmers produce two crops from one planting; and
- 3) the development of artificial substrates which helps avoid pests and diseases associated with producing strawberries in soil.

The primary change in Dutch cucurbit production was the introduction of artificial substrates, which is now used in approximately 90% of production. As with strawberries, greater management flexibility has enabled Dutch cucurbit farmers to market produce when demand and prices are high, due to the absence of cheaper imports.

The CSIRO report also reviewed tomato production in Italy, that nation's most important vegetable crop. National legislation passed in June 1994, placed restrictions on methyl bromide, including lowering the maximum application rate, prohibiting its use within 50 meters of human dwellings and restricting its use to every second year for a given plot of land.

According to the report, Italian tomato producers still use substantial quantities of methyl bromide, but several alternatives are also used, such as soil solarization and associated techniques, pest resistant varieties, crop rotation and specific lower toxicity pesticides. Although solarization produces yields and quality comparable to or better than methyl bromide, the majority of Italian tomato producers have yet to make this switch in production and technology. However, with recent changes in Italian law governing methyl bromide application, it appears likely that growers will be forced to adopt new strategies.

These case studies demonstrate that alternatives to methyl bromide do exist and that the crops most dependent to methyl bromide in the U.S. (strawberries and tomatoes) are being grown profitably without the pesticide in other countries.

Source: "Agricultural Production Without Methyl Bromide - Four Case Studies," H.J. Banks, editor/coordinator; Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Division of Entomology, 1995. Contact Michelle Horan, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Division of Entomology, GPO Box 1700, Canberra A.C.T. 2601, Australia; phone (61-6) 246-4201; fax (61-6) 246-4202; email michelleh@ento.csiro.au.

(For more info on the Pesticide Action Network North America, see page 18.)

Farm Bill Review

Excerpts from "The Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture Update", April 1996.

Submitted by Mariah Cornwoman

Final passage of the "1995 Farm bill," now called the "Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996" (FAIR), didn't happen until March 28, 1996, after much wrangling between the Senate, the House, and the Administration.

The earlier Senate version of the Bill provided significant gains for sustainable agriculture, especially in conservation programs. The House, however, passed provisions nearly diametrically opposed to the Senate version. During long and hard Conference Committee negotiations, the line was held on many conservation programs, while commodity programs were largely dismantled. Generally speaking, this legislation will apply for the years 1996-2002. Conferees left the 1949 Act in place until 2003, which will force Congress to act again on farm programs before the expiration of this Farm Bill in 2002. Key issues include the following:

- The bill maintains the "Freedom to Farm" format, with fixed, declining payments for the next seven years. Receipt of federal support will no longer be linked to production. (According to Larry Swartz, a farmer with the National Family Farm Coalition, "The Freedom to Farm' approach....will primarily promote the kind of corporate welfare that the Republicans claim they want to eliminate. It will force smaller farm operations to bear the brunt of the cuts, while maintaining existing loopholes for the largest farms and agribusiness.")

- The research title includes some objectives to direct research towards environmental quality and economic opportunity in farming and rural areas. The research title is only a two year

authorization, unlike most of the rest of the bill.

WINS FOR THE CAMPAIGN

All of the programs that the Campaign worked on received funding in the final vote, including the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (a 10% increase over the last two years), and the Organic Foods Production Act.

- The Fund for Rural America. This Fund provides \$100 million a year the three years in mandatory spending for rural programs and research. Because the spending is "mandatory", it won't be subjected to appropriations cuts every year. The Fund is to be divided one-third for rural development, one-third for research and one-third for either, at the discretion of the Secretary.

- The Community Food Security Act. It provides \$1 million in 1996 and \$2.5 million a year through 2002 in mandatory matching grants for food security initiatives linking farmers with low income communities.

- Full extension of the Conservation Reserve Program, including targeting to the most environmentally sensitive areas. This policy, basically written by the Campaign, allows landowners who hold contracts of limited environmental value to "bid out" early, freeing funds for 650,000 acres of new enrollments with a high environmental value. Also, more environmentally beneficial acres were enrolled last year.

- A new Conservation Farm Option, which will allow innovative use of conservation programs to support whole farm approaches, such as use of CRP to support pesticide reduction.

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program, with mandatory spending levels almost double current funding levels which will not be subject to annual appropriations cuts.

- Wetlands Reserve Program, which includes permanent easements and mandatory spending not subject

to yearly appropriations cuts.

- Farmland Protection Fund, which provides federal matching funds to state and local farmland protection programs.

- Extension of Permanent Law, this will force Congress to reconsider farm programs after the seven year farm bill term.

The Campaign also made great progress in the following areas:

REFORMS

In response to Campaign requests, the USDA held an unprecedented series of meetings to educate its agency heads and high ranking Washington staff on sustainable agriculture.

USDA also formed its own internal Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, which is expected to be developing and releasing USDA's internal plan of action on sustainable agriculture in April 1996.

MEDIA

The Campaign gained coverage in over 500 print stories, generated 150 radio interviews, 3 national AP stories, numerous state coverage of AP stories, LA times, The Christian Science Monitor; and a feature in the December 1995 issue of National Geographic (a great article, by the way). They generated many more letters to editors, conducted media blitzes, participated in a nationally televised meeting with Ag. Secretary Glickman, and held a press breakfast at the National Press Club to introduce the Campaign and sustainable ag issues to national media outlets.

NETWORKING

The Campaign united different constituencies to develop common agendas and participate in the Campaign. The 576 participating organizations include family farm groups, consumer groups,

environmental/conservation groups, rural/community/minority/native groups, Ag education and research, and the list goes on and on. CSA also developed an infrastructure for engaging and educating the sustainable agriculture community in federal policy debates.

APPROPRIATIONS FY 97

The good news is that sustainable agriculture is now firmly on congressional radar screens! As the appropriations cycle begins for Fiscal Year (FY) 1997, a surprised Congress is aware that the sustainable agriculture community nationwide is a force to be reckoned with. Not only our tenacity in the Farm Bill fight, but our hard work on FY 96 appropriations left quite a mark.

The danger is that interests opposing our agenda are now forewarned that we're defending our programs and we are organized. We can't expect to have the benefit of minimal opposition on many of our funding efforts this year. Still we can make the kind of impact we did last year if we play on our strengths - committed grassroots supporters that voice support at critical moments, and our continued excellent representation in Washington.

The President submitted his budget (with pretty much level funding for sustainable ag programs) later than usual this year, due to continued



Participants at the 1996 Quebec training.

wrangling on FY 96 funding matters.

But it looks like the House, which proceeds first, will dig in fast. Its Ag Approps Subcommittee is holding

hearings now and will likely "mark up" (vote on) its bill by late May or early June. The Senate will follow in late June or July, followed by a House-

S e n a t e conference vote, possibly before **C o n g r e s s** recesses for August vacation. Therefore, we need to get our messages to key House and **S e n a t e** Subcommittee members during the spring.



Group leader Monique Scholz, walking out to the sugar bush.

What to do next? Write your

member to voice your support for specific sustainable agriculture programs, complete with numbers, facts, and key arguments. Please write! (For info, contact national contact Amy Little at 914-294-0633)

In these tight budgetary times, every program is vulnerable. The fate of federal sustainable ag programs depends on how well we demonstrate that last year was no accident - that we're numerous, we're passionate, and we are here to stay!



Farmer explaining maple syruping at Quebec training.

Effect of Some Soil Parameters on Availability of Mineral Elements

Excerpted from an article by Alex Kelavitch & Maria Filimonova, Kerr Center Newsletter, May/June 1995

This article deals with some of the parameters that affect availability of nutrients in soil, and hence influence ultimate productivity of plants.

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil moisture influences uptake and accumulation of nutrients which affects the following physiological factors:

- General physiological activity of plant. regular, good watering helps increase photosynthetic activity and protein biosynthesis which cause plant absorption of mineral nutrients.

- A well developed root system improves absorption ability.

It is an established fact that the optimum moisture content in soil helps increase the accumulation of elements, such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper, manganese, cobalt, iron, molybdenum, and boron, in plants. If moisture is deficient, accumulation of these elements can be decreased several times. The term "physiological dryness" means that the osmotic potential of the soil solution is close to or higher than the osmotic potential in the plants. This depends on the excessive content of nitrogen and potassium fertilizers, which are responsible for designing the general ion-power of the solution.

TEMPERATURE

The absorption rate of mineral elements increases with the increase of temperature. This occurs until the temperature reaches 100°-120°F. High temperatures suppress enzyme systems in plants causing a decline in salt absorption. The concentration of ions in soil also changes at high temperatures. The concentration of ions is normal at temperatures of less than

100°F. However, as temperature increases further and more moisture is evaporated, the concentration of several elements can become lethal.

SOIL PH

Soil pH has a direct and indirect influence on plant ontogeny. Soil pH influences the availability of mineral nutrients for plants. It also effects topical features of some elements which accumulate in high concentrations in plants and soil. Acidic soil reaction increases the content of available forms of iron, manganese, cobalt and copper for plants. In this situation, the quantity of nitrogen, phosphorus, molybdenum, and vanadium is declined.

Ion NH_4 is accumulated best by plants at a neutral pH value, but ion NO_3 at an acidic pH value. The concentration of hydrogen ions is very important for phosphate absorption by plants. If soil gradually becomes alkaline, the content predominate phosphate forms change from monovalence form (H_3PO_4) to divalence form (HPO_4) and finally to three (thriptovalence) form PO_4 . The reduction of growth occurs because of the decrease in available phosphorus at specific pH levels.

Ions of calcium replace ions of hydrogen when lime is applied. Calcium itself stops the accumulation of hydrogen by plants. This explains why hydrogen ions form an acidic soil reaction. While the soil reaction gradually changed from neutral to acidic, the availability of the following elements was also changed in this special order:

- Mn (manganese)
- Co (cobalt)
- Zn (zinc)
- Cu (copper)
- P (phosphorus)
- Fe (iron)
- Bo (boron)
- Mg (magnesium)
- K (potassium)
- N (nitrogen)
- Mo (molybdenum)

From the Editor

Lots of exciting things are happening in the organic certification arena today, but not all of them are happening in North America!

Lest we appear (or become) too "America-centric", I invite and urge our members from outside the US to enter our dialogue and share their thoughts and experiences, along with local news on organic- and inspector-related events.

Email is the most timely and least expensive way to get your articles to me. Deadlines are listed on page 2.

Please help make your newsletter the worldwide conduit for inspector information by contributing today!

Corrections Page

In this issue you'll find a corrections page for the 1996 Membership Directory. Please note the changes in your directory as soon as possible.

Ann Arbor, from page 13

As a new inspector, I found the training rigorous and thorough. I learned how much I need to learn, so it worked! Insight should always lead to more study. The industry is growing (by 25% last year), so good continuing education is essential. Inspectors need to be tenacious -- in their training, in their inspections and in their commitment.

PANNA

...is the Pesticide Action Network North America, 116 New Montgomery, #810, San Francisco, CA 94105 USA
Phone: (415) 541-9140
Fax: (415) 541-9253

Email: panna@panna.org

<http://www.panna.org/panna/>

To subscribe to PANUPS send email to MAJORDOMO@igc.apc.org with the following text on one line: subscribe panups. To unsubscribe send the following: unsubscribe panups. *For basic information about PANNA, send an email message to panna-info@igc.apc.org

Ag-related Computer Resources

• A Guide to Agriculture on the Internet
by Dr. Mark Campidonica, UC Davis Instructional Technology Services, \$10, payable to UC Regents
Internet primer including information search and retrieval tips, quick-reference dictionary of ag services and databases
and practice exercises.

• Sustainable Agriculture in Print: Current Periodicals, USDA National Ag Library, Beltsville, MD 20705
A comprehensive listing of printed periodicals worldwide, also has email listings when available.

• Sustainable Agriculture Net (SANET) - mailing group - This tells how to get on and off of SANET. Good luck!
Almanac is the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service's information server. It handles all mailing groups. Almanac
commands *should not* be sent to the mailing group. Doing so sends the command to everyone who is subscribed to
the mailing group.

Sanet-mg is a "forum" mailing group; to submit an article, simply send your message to sanet-mg@ces.ncsu.edu.
If you wish to subscribe a colleague to sanet-mg, send the following commands to almanac@ces.ncsu.edu:
set address colleagues_full_email_address

subscribe sanet-mg
To unsubscribe from sanet-mg, send the following command to almanac@ces.ncsu.edu: unsubscribe sanet-mg
Almanac also keeps an archive of the articles that have been posted to sanet-mg. To receive a catalog of archived
articles, send the following command to almanac@ces.ncsu.edu:
send sanet-mg catalog

If you have general questions about the mailing groups or Almanac, mail to almanac-help@ces.ncsu.edu.

INDEPENDENT ORGANIC INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION

I am interested in the following:

IOIA Membership Application (Membership includes quarterly newsletter and membership directory)
Please Specify Category - All Funds Payable in US \$\$

Individual - Annual Dues - \$50.00

Organization - Annual Dues - \$250.00

The Inspectors' Report - 1 Year Subscription \$10.00 (4 issues)

1995-1996 IOIA Membership Directory - \$15.00

IOIA Organic Inspector Manual:

\$25.00 members \$35.00 non-members

IOIA Inspector Caps - \$15.00, in English and Spanish. **All caps are made from organic cotton**

English, color choices: natural navy blue plum

Spanish, color choices: natural olive green plum

(Spanish caps also available from Gabi Soto-Munoz in Costa Rica, +506-224-3712)

Please type or print clearly. Mail to IOIA, Rt. 3, Box 162-C, Winona, MN 55987 USA

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Business Name _____ Phone _____

Amount Enclosed _____ FAX _____

Calendar of Events

June 3-21. Training workshop on Sustainable Agroecosystems and Environmental Issues. West Texas A & M University. 806.656.2299. FAX 806.656.2838

June 20-22. Cultivating Community Success - Strategic Lessons from Community Assessment. Heartland Center for Leadership Development, Lincoln, Nebraska. 800.927.1115. FAX 402.474.7872

July 5-20. Permaculture Design Course. Beaktole Community, Beaktole, Maryland. Contact Linda J. Feith. 410.343.0881. email lfeith@beaktole.com

July 8-11. First Australian New Crops Conference - New Crops, New Products, New Opportunities. University of

Queensland, Gatton College. Contact Sally Brown, New Crops Conference Secretariat. 48177 3385 8380. FAX 48177 3385 7099. email sally@ceun.qz.au

July 21-25. Rocky Mountain Conference Symposium on Composting and Sustainable Agriculture. Denver, Colorado. Contact Bill Wernshaw, Mail stop 408, Federal Center, Denver, CO 80225. email billwernshaw@unco.gov

August 9-11. Northwest Organic Farming Association 22nd Annual Summer Conference. Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. Contact Julie Hanson. 508.335.7833

August 11-13. 11th Scientific Conference, International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements

(IFOAM), Copenhagen, Denmark. Contact IFOAM, Blegdammvej 4, DK-2200 Copenhagen, Denmark, ph: (+45) 35 37 20 95. FAX: +45 35 37 40 95.

Sept 28-October 7. 6th International Permaculture Conference, Designing for a Sustainable Future. Perth, Western Australia. Contact Conference Secretariat, Box 388, Kalamunda, W. Australia 6076. ph: 61 8 291 9305. FAX: 61 8 291 9978. email converg@epo.com.au

October 2-5. Community Food Systems: Sustaining Farms and People in the Emerging Economy. UC Davis, California. Contact Dave Campbell. 916.752.7341. email dave.campbell@ucdavis.edu OR Gail Peensstra. 916.752.8408. email gwise@ucdavis.edu



INDEPENDENT ORGANIC INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION
ROUTE 3, BOX 102
WINDY, MN 55987 USA
507.454.8300



Margaret Justice
Box 33
Route 1, Montrose, CO 81401 USA