

IOIA Annual Report -2010

Prepared February 4, 2011 by
Bob Durst, IOIA Board Chair, and **Margaret Scoles**, IOIA Executive Director

IOIA Mission

- To address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors
- To provide quality inspector training and
- To promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process

Key Activities and Alliances:

- ▶ Successfully launched the IOIA web-based training format. The training schedule included four webinars on the new NOP pasture rule and one webinar produced in collaboration with the Non-GMO Project and FoodChain Global Advisors. Preparatory pre-course webinars on food processing were developed by Joe Montecalvo, PhD and provided to participants of the Basic Processing courses. A webinar on Input Materials was developed and delivered to two Basic Crop courses. The preparatory webinars are now a part of the standard curriculum.
- ▶ Initiated regular Certifier-Inspector Dialogue conference calls and a Certifier Survey in response to member concerns. IOIA had a positive impact on certifier requirements such as insurance. The ongoing dialogue is proving invaluable to certifiers and inspectors alike.
- ▶ Outlined and presented the IOIA Training Institute to certifiers and government. The BOD, with certifier input, prioritized intermediate level ("200 level") training topics for development and web-based delivery. These were identified as topics not covered comprehensively in the basic courses but essential skills for all inspectors. Courses will all be delivered or in development during 2011.
- ▶ The ED and Board Chair traveled to Korea and Japan, engaged in training with inspectors' associations in both countries (JOIA and KOIA), and met with government officials. With IOIA's support, KOIA was recognized as a training body for processing inspection in 2010.
- ▶ IOIA's first training on the continent of Africa, bringing IOIA's training program to a record total of five continents in one year.
- ▶ Continued to participate on the Canadian General Standards Board's Organic Technical Committee. Kelly Monaghan, the IOIA representative, serves as Chair of the Committee.

Yoko Mizuno, Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, and Yutaka Maruyama, IOIA Trainers, with ED and BOD Chair at the JOIA office.



- ▶ Participated in All Things Organic™, Natural Products Expo East and Expo West in the U.S., and Guelph Organic Conference in Canada.
- ▶ Continued support of OTA, IFOAM, OMRI, COG, Green America, and MT Nonprofit Association through memberships and subscriptions.
- ▶ Quarterly newsletter, annual Membership Directory, IOIA Forums (English language, Spanish language, and Canadian members), member discounts. The newsletter and the IOIA Forum – an internet list-serve providing an essential communication tool for current issues are frequently cited as most valuable member services. The Mini Membership Directory was included with Issue #1 of the newsletter each year.
- ▶ The Organic Standard – electronic international newsletter from GroLink AB for a nominal fee (based on IOIA as the primary subscriber).

Training

IOIA training continues to increase in value and global recognition. IOIA again expanded both global reach and the diversity of types of training and languages. A downturn in trainings in 2009 had resulted from the global economic slump, but cosponsor-managed trainings rebounded stronger than ever in 2010. And the webinar format greatly increased access to IOIA training. Compared to last year (499 people trained in 30 events), IOIA trained more people on more continents and in more languages than ever before (607 in 35 events). The increase was largely due to webinars, more live advanced trainings, and a major increase in Crop/Farm Inspection Trainings. Crop/Farm training, the course in greatest demand globally, was up from six events to 16! Languages included English, Spanish, French, Japanese, and Korean.

IOIA's webinar training program serves as the vehicle for implementing the IOIA Training Institute. The Training Institute includes two programs where IOIA has a long history -- in-person basic inspection training and advanced or specialty topics both in-person and webinar format. These were dubbed "100 level" and "300 level" respectively. Additionally, now included is a critical new area of training, those topics not covered comprehensively in the basic courses but still essential skills for all inspectors. An important first step toward a meaningful accreditation program and the Institute was identifying those key areas where all inspectors need continuing education after beginning inspection work. In March 2010, the Board identified several topics for these "200 level" inspection courses. A timely and urgent topic was identified as training to the new USDA National Program Final Pasture Rule. The next step was to design and deliver a high quality webinar product. Sarah Flack and Garry Lean, IOIA inspector members and trainers, worked together to create and deliver the pasture webinars. IOIA's first webinar with paid registration



was delivered June 2. The pasture webinars included a substantial pre-course reading assignment with associated resources, pre-course assignment, in-course

exercise, and post-assessment exam. As six webinar events were delivered over the next months, IOIA gained confidence and competence in the webinar format. Simultaneously, IOIA sought certifier and regulator input to identify the essential '200 level' courses. Topics selected for these upcoming webinars are:

- ▶ **Farm:** Audit Trail, Natural Resource Conservation, and Crop Input Materials.
- ▶ **Livestock:** Audit Trail, DMI and Feed Audits, and Livestock Input Materials.
- ▶ **Processing:** Audit Trail, Multi-ingredient, Sanitation/Pest Control, and Processing Input Materials.
- ▶ **Inspector Professionalism** is relevant to all three categories.

The topics are equally important for certification staff other than inspectors, although exact content of the webinars will likely differ. IOIA will create the inspector webinars, and then adapt them for a certifier audience. Webinar delivery makes training globally accessible, consistent, reproducible, green, and cost-effective. The first step to implement the webinar format was a resounding success. IOIA is in the process of forging agreements with partners to create additional courses.

IOIA sponsors an average of two or three trainings each month, usually following one of two models. **IOIA-managed trainings** are limited in number (about 4 or 5 annually) and are managed out of the head office with limited support from regional cosponsors. Most of these occur in the US. **Cosponsor-Managed trainings** depend much more heavily on cosponsors, which handle most of the administrative and logistical workload. **IOIA-managed trainings continue to be the primary revenue source for IOIA.** In-house trainings in the US following the cosponsor-managed training format are usually delivered for certification agencies. They also contribute significantly. Revenue from international cosponsor-managed trainings is much lower, but they are an important component in IOIA's efforts to achieve our overall mission.

IOIA's First Training in Africa



IOIA Trainer Lisa Pierce of British Columbia led trainings in Taiwan and South Africa, including three workshops for growers in South Africa. (one workshop pictured left)

IOIA Trainings in 2010

Type of Course	Number of Events	Number of participants
Basic Crop	16	262
Livestock	2	33
Basic Processing	4	55
Advanced	6	124
Pasture Webinars	4	80
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>53</u>
Total	35	607

Countries: Peru, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Japan, Australia, South Africa, Korea, Taiwan, USA (Arizona, Kentucky, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Montana, Guam); and Canada (Manitoba, Québec)

Membership:

A lively discussion at the Annual Meeting sparked an initiative for better communications with certifiers and a stronger collective voice for inspectors regarding working conditions. This was the impetus for regular Certifier-Inspector Dialogue Conference calls, which are open to IOIA supporting members and non-members. The Board researched inspector liability insurance options on behalf of the members. IOIA posted an insurance document and short list of providers on IOIA's website. Although communications lines have been established and strengthened, inspector working conditions remains a serious issue for most inspectors, especially independent contractors.

In recognition of the move to more web-based continuing education, IOIA increased live social networking for inspectors. Events included a member gathering in Boston in conjunction with Expo East; Wine & Cheese in Guelph, Ontario; a dinner reception at the home of the Board Chair in Oregon; and a dinner party in Pennsylvania. Two of these inspector events were sponsored by certifiers. Oregon Tilth Certified Organic (OTCO) contributed to the Oregon event and Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) sponsored the Pennsylvania event.



IOIA Members in Chinatown, Boston, October 13

Finances

Details of the 2010 financial reports will be presented by the Treasurer at the AGM. Key aspects:

- ▶ IOIA ended the year with a positive financial position. This was accomplished while reducing the number of basic crop trainings in the US, typically the most profitable training course, by one event. The BOD's decision to meet only once at the AGM and not for a retreat later in the year contributed to a positive bottom line.
- ▶ The 2010 budget was proactive with substantial funding for Training Institute.
- ▶ Improvements were made in the accuracy of budgeting income and expense for individual trainings. This facilitated BOD monitoring of the revenue and expense line items through the year.
- ▶ Dues were increased for all supporting categories.
- ▶ Treasurer Guidelines were developed and adopted.
- ▶ A full audit of the IOIA finances is scheduled for 2011.
- ▶ The 2011 budget signals a significant change, with a commitment to fund a second senior staff position. A temporary deficit budget is expected to accompany the addition.

Board of Directors in 2010:

Retiring Board members: Gene Prochaska (4 years) and Stephen Bird (2 years). New Board members: Michelle Sandy, Jennifer Clifford, and Bob Howe (alternate). Special thanks are due Gene, who served as Treasurer for most of his tenure.

The BOD met in person at the AGM and 10 times via conference calls. The key topic for the meetings in Arizona was visioning the Training Institute concept. A special meeting was held to address IOIA's international activities and potential structures. The BOD Chair represented IOIA in Korea and Japan. The BOD Chair and Vice-Chair have participated in the Certifier-Inspector Dialogue conference calls. BOD members help staff the IOIA booth at trade shows and major events. BOD minutes highlights are published in each newsletter. Full minutes are available on the Inspectors Only section of the website.

Committees

BOD liaisons work with all IOIA committees. A BOD liaison is a Board member who communicates between the Committee and the BOD, supports the committee's work, and carries concerns and initiatives both ways.

The Board extends a sincere thanks to all of the IOIA members who have volunteered to be part of IOIA committee activity and for their accomplishments over the past year. A brief summary of highlights from some of the committees is listed below (full reports for all committees available at the AGM).

□ **Membership** – Kelly Monaghan, Chair.

The committee reviews all requests for exceptions to the IOIA Inspector member criteria. The Nominations Committee and Membership Committee members are the same. However, in 2010 a decision was made to chair the two separately. This allowed the Membership Committee to better focus on membership issues.

□ **Nominations Committee** – Christopher Kidwell, Chair.

A full slate of candidates has been prepared for this year's election.

□ **Scholarship** – Margaret Weigelt, Chair

Awarded the Andrew Rutherford Scholarship and the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship (OCIS) in 2010. Recipients were Rachel Roditti, Hawaii, and Basu Suvedi, Nepal.

□ **Bylaws** – Garry Lean, Chair

One Bylaws Amendment was proposed and passed by mail ballot. The 2010 AGM proposed to eliminate Alternates on the Board of Directors. Membership discussion at that meeting favored increasing the size of the Board to seven and changing bylaws to remove the alternates. The number of directors specified in the Bylaws is no less than five (5) and no more than twelve (12). The exact number of Directors is set for the following year by the AGM. A ballot was submitted by the Bylaws Committee to eliminate alternates. The 2011 AGM will determine the size of the Board. **Thank you**, Arthur Harvey, for filling this position 1999-2010.

□ **Accreditation and Accreditation Review Panel (ARP)** – The chair position for these combined committees remains open. Thank you, Monique Scholz and Linda Kaner, for serving as Interim Chairs in 2010.

Five (5) Renewals in 2010

□ **Canadian Committee** – Bill Barkley, Chair. Special thanks to Kelly Monaghan for writing the Canadian page in the IOIA newsletter.

□ **Communications and Marketing** – This committee was disbanded, on the recommendation of Bob Howe, Chair.

□ **Ethics – Joyce Ford, Chair.** No complaints filed.

Staff:

Margaret Scoles continues as Executive Director. IOIA benefits from a staff of dedicated, part-time individuals. IOIA took a positive step toward providing staff a health benefit in 2010, with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement.

- ▶ Kathy Bowers, Office Manager (thank you to Rita Wenzel, who left in 2010)
- ▶ Diane Cooner, Newsletter Editor, Website Manager, and moderator of the IOIA Forums
- ▶ Sacha Draine, International Training Services
- ▶ Teri Lindberg, U.S. Training Services (thanks and farewell)
- ▶ Renee Higgins, Financial Officer
- ▶ Lynell Denson, Administrative Assistant
- ▶ Gordon Mulkey, Office Assistant

IOIA Board of Directors envisioned the concept and created the structure for the IOIA Training Institute in Rio Rico, Arizona.



Your help as volunteers and committee members is necessary and greatly appreciated!