

Wilsonville Oregon Organic Livestock Training

By Harriet Behar

Nineteen experienced and novice inspectors and interested certification personnel attended a livestock training in Wilsonville OR from November 16-17, 2003. This course focused on dairy, beef, swine and poultry and did not discuss apiculture or aquaculture issues. We were privileged to have two excellent outside speakers, Dr. Joe Snyder, a veterinarian and President of the Board of Directors of Oregon Tilth and Harry Markos, a dairy nutritionist who works with many organic dairy herds in the Pacific Northwest. Both of these speakers brought real-life scenarios to our course and helped the attendees understand both feed ration balancing as well as how to evaluate animal health issues and health promoting activities. The group split into two and visited two different organic dairy farms. Although it got dark early, and the weather was rainy, we were able to review most of the pertinent aspects of the dairy farm, as well as get close to the animals and understand the farmers' organic management systems. Each group completed a field trip worksheet, which was scored as part of their final course grade. Harriet Behar led the course, and used a wide variety of photos to illustrate the various points in the NOP standards, as well as interactive exercises to encourage the attendees to think through the issues. Meg Kuhn won the outrageous statement award with her statement: "Oh, the vulva....so that's at the back end of the animal, not at the front."



She said that, eh? Meg Kuhn, OSA winner, getting her cool chick puppet from Harriet



Oregon livestock attendees, along with a couple of the usual suspects

Wilsonville OR Advanced Training

By Harriet Behar

Advanced IOIA training participants enjoyed some beautiful sunny late fall weather in the Portland OR region, but only during their breaks, as we spent quite a bit of time expanding our knowledge during a wide variety of sessions. Overall attendee evaluations gave this course an "awesome" rating. Bob Durst shared a few complicated processing audit trail exercises with us and the group shared the various ways these could be inspected as well as dealing with the challenges at complex processing facilities. Miles McEvoy and Jorli Baker took us through the requirements of other types of organic certification other than the NOP, including EU, CAQ and JAS. Miles then continued with a presentation on the NOP and the items currently being discussed and developed. John Foster entertained us with his presentation on "What are certifier's looking for", with examples of clear and quite muddy statements from inspection reports and exit interviews. **It always pays to reread what we have written and make sure it makes sense to someone who wasn't present on the inspection.** Sticking to the facts is a good policy. This was reinforced by Seth Winterton, who discussed how to write a report that can hold up to legal scrutiny. He reminded us that Murphy's law applies here too, and probably the worst report you have ever written would be the one that



Torturing themselves for a long time - Advanced Inspectors in Oregon



He may be on to something - Two-time OSA winner Miles McEvoy gives advice on dealing with USDA

someone would chose to challenge. In the evening, we had a fun, wide ranging and stimulating inspector exchange in a relaxed atmosphere. Many attendees cited this interchange as the most valuable session. Our work is solitary and we gain a lot by sharing and learning from our peers.

The second day, Tony Fleming lead us through a quick hydro-geology overview and how knowledge of this can aid us in review of both farm and processing operations. The interactive exercises were appreciated by the group. Harriet Behar gave a short, but graphically detailed, presentation on how to inspect retail stores who have requested organic certification. This is a growing area of organic certification and the handout will help the attendees remember the unique organic control points found in retail stores. Bob Durst presented on organic personal care products with discussion on the various areas of controversy or should I say "non-consensus". This helped us all see why organic personal care products continue to challenge both organic manufacturers and certification agencies. Joe Montecalvo lead us through discussion of water issues at processing facilities as well as discussion on organic control points in some specific processing venues, such as fruit juice production.

Miles McEvoy won the outrageous statement award, but in keeping with the holiday spirit it was decided to edit his comment from this publication at the last minute!

Wilsonville, Oregon Basic Farm Training

By Janine Gibson

Twenty one students including 4 from Korea and 17 from across the United States attended the IOIA Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training held in Wilsonville, Oregon November 12th –15th, 2003. John Burns and I were the Training Coordinators working with new curriculum suggestions developed by John. Guest presenters included Brian Baker of the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI-Permitted Materials) and Margaret Scoles, IOIA Training Manager, (Assessing Soil Fertility.) The exam was administered by past board member Drew Stuckey so that John and I could participate in a Curriculum and Program Committee (CAPS) planning meeting.

Students and trainers all enjoyed the beautiful learning environment of Spring Hill Farm, where we toured the 18 acres of hoop houses, greenhouse and row vegetable crop production hosted by owner Jamie Kitzrow. The Outrageous Statement Award was presented to Shanti Leinow, who during a discussion on objectivity declared, "Just leave your heart in the truck!"

Course evaluations were positive with appreciation expressed for the delicious food and beautiful grounds of the Namasté Retreat Centre. Students noted the difference in styles between John and myself, commenting we are a balance for each other.

Quick CAPS

Following the training, John and I, both members of the IOIA CAPS, met with other committee members and guest Joe Montecalvo to discuss future training options and curriculum design for IOIA trainings. Seven members of the CAPS Committee met in Oregon for a working committee meeting. There weren't enough members at any one time for most of the meeting to really make decisions. Chair Lisa Pierce will be reviewing minutes of that meeting and will be organizing another meeting in the near future.

Regional Training News

By Lisa Pierce

As the Regional Training Manager I am thankful and appreciative of the opportunities I have had this year to meet with many of you – Brian, Ann, Gary, Jack, Dag, John, and Luis of IOIA Board, Margaret and Phoebe, training coordinators, volunteers, members and members in waiting. I am struck with the diversity of our group and the overriding sense of being 'connected' – of serving this larger entity called IOIA. It is an exciting time of many challenges and decisions to be made together. And part of what is so exciting is that I keep hearing very similar ideas expressed again and again from many different people. Somehow there is this communal sense of change and direction. That is the spirit that keeps me thinking and going. The expression of that spirit, however, is a little more mundane – a little more administrative. Currently there is a multitude of administrative changes in process and in search of time and funding. These include procedures to be included in revised Training Coordinator and Co-sponsor manuals, revised training checklists and Training Coordinator directory.



Left: Training Manager Lisa Pierce joins Ann Baier, Brian Magaro and John Foster in the Famous "Until the Knot" exercise. The idea is that the group forms a circle and crosses arms to hold hands with the person next to them. Everyone then works to 'untie the knot' created by all those crossed arms. We pulled it off at the LaVeta retreat, but it sounds (and looks) like they were overcome with laughter this time. Not surprising, looking at the usual suspects in this photo! That's Margaret's innocent face on the right...

Right: Your Board, hard at play. It's okay, they deserved it. These retreats do have some playtime scheduled, but mainly it's 3 days of non-stop discussion, strategizing, and planning the future of IOIA. Everything from policy to procedure, communications to membership and training gets covered. So while everyone LOOKS like they're goofing off, it's probably more like nervous exhaustion. And don't let Jack's 'poker face' fool you. He's a cut-to-the-chase guy, but he's likely the one that got the laughs out of Brian, Ann and John!



Inspecting Hydrosol Production (and a bit on Essential Oils)

By Gay Timmons

Okay – let’s make this as easy as possible . . .

What is “hydrosol”?

Hydrosol is a colloidal solution that results from steam distillation of plant material. Hydrosol may be a co-product of essential oil production (in which case the oil is separated from the hydrosol) or it may be the only product of the distillation process. A “colloidal solution” (for those of you that don’t have a few chemistry classes under your belts) means that there are little particles floating around in a liquid base that do not settle out of solution. An English scientist, who worked on rubber, created the word “hydrosol” in the 1800s. He sought a term or label to describe rubber that is, chemically speaking, a colloidal solution.

How is hydrosol made?

Water is heated into steam and is put through a sealed container of plant material (usually freshly harvested) under some level of pressure. This production process is called steam distillation. If you really think about it - the steam has to pick up molecules that will move in steam – small stuff. When the distillation is all done, there is a mass of spent plant material that remains in the container. The other resulting product of the distillation process may be filtered to remove bacteria, yeast, and mold. The final product may be hydrosol and/or essential oil.

What do inspectors need to know?

The question the organic industry needs to answer for compliance is: how much of the final hydrosol product is actually from the plant and how much is from steam (vaporized water)? This is a simple production question **that should be audited by all inspectors** on this type of inspection – calculating the starting plant material minus spent plant material as it equates to the finished products of hydrosol and/or essential oil. A similar inspection of juice production would cause us to think that the result of this process should be somewhat less than the gross weight of the plant material.

There are a few details to keep in mind: if you run steam through an

herbaceous plant (like mint) you will have a higher hydrosol yield than if you run steam through branches of Douglas fir – the amount of moisture and oil in the plant will have a large influence on the yield of the final hydrosol product. This is also true for essential oils: certain plants have much higher oil content than others – catnip has a very low oil content while oranges have a relatively high oil content, so if you inspect a production facility for catnip, you would look for an extremely low yield (less than a quarter of one percent) of essential oil compared to the starting plant material. The steam extraction of rosemary essential oil would give you a significantly higher yield (I don’t know this number off the top of my head).

As inspectors, you may see essential oil production and you should be informed that there are references that list the acceptable range of oil production for virtually every essential oil that is produced. These ranges are specific to the species of the plant – there may well be 300 Sages (Genus: *Salvia*) and each species may have a slightly different expected oil and/or hydrosol yield. This is an industry that is at least thousands of years old so rest assured that the info is available – it just may take some digging because it is not a big industry in this country. (Mints, however, are common to the Pacific Northwest – most of the peppermint and spearmint oils come from this region – it is a good example of essential oil production methods and experience.)

What is it used for?

Hydrosol has been made and used for hundreds of years (if not more) and has been recognized for its medicinal qualities along with its aromas. As an example, witch hazel is a hydrosol. Some other products (not as the direct result of a steam distillation process) are simply essential oil and water blended and these may be called “floral water” - but they are **not** hydrosol. Currently there are a number of cosmetic companies using hydrosol as an ingredient in order to meet the 70% requirement of the State of California for use of an organic or “made with” label claim. There is currently a study being done at the University of Mississippi looking into the plant material content of hydrosol (I would expect this to be different for every genus and perhaps for every species). The results of this study may be

a tool that inspectors can use. However, the basic point and production relationship to be identified during an inspection is the harvest yield and the resulting product yield after processing. Chemistry is not a part of the organic production we are asked to verify as inspectors.

In Conclusion:

As an inspector you need to understand the idiosyncrasies of every crop and production facility you inspect. If you don’t know what they are, the Internet and other inspectors are your best resources. When it comes to hydrosol, all I have explained is what it is and an introduction on how to inspect it. How it is used in a personal care or cosmetic product is an entirely different discussion. As you have probably learned, there are **no** standards for cosmetics. Work is in progress to define the standards, but we are not “there” yet. Just remember that, as organic inspectors, we are charged with verifying a “production system” – don’t get side tracked by other issues.

Gay Timmons consulting firm is Oh, Oh Organic

Hotel Key Card Alert

Southern California law enforcement professionals assigned to detect new threats to personal security issues recently discovered what type of information is embedded in the credit card type hotel room keys used throughout the industry.

Although room keys differ from hotel to hotel, a sample key that was being used for a regional Identity Theft Presentation was found to contain the following information:

- Customers (your) name
- Customers partial home address
- Hotel room number
- Check in date and check out date
- Customers (your) credit card number and expiration date

When you turn keycards in to the front desk, your personal information is there for any employee to access by simply scanning the card in the hotel scanner.

Remember the last time you checked out...you simply left the card in your room for the maid or took it out of your pocket while waiting for your flight at the airport and left it there without giving it a second thought.

Simply put, hotels do not erase these cards until an employee issues the card to the next hotel guest. It is usually kept in a drawer at the front desk with **YOUR INFORMATION ON IT!!!!**

The bottom line is, keep the cards or destroy them. NEVER leave them behind and NEVER turn them in to the front desk when you check out of a room. They will not charge you for the card. *Pasadena Police Department*

Highlights from BoD Meeting and Board Retreat, October 18-20, 2003, Broadus, Montana

(Note. Actual minutes will be finalized and approved on Dec. 17 and posted on the IOIA website.)

Present Board Members: Dag Falck, John Foster, Ann Baier, Jack Reams, Brian Magaro, Luis Brenes, Garry Lean

Present Staff Members: Margaret Scoles (Executive Director) and Lisa Pierce (Regional Training Manager).

TC Pool Agreement - Discussion: Lisa described the changes she proposes for a new 2004 TC Pool Agreement (TCPA) form, and asked about IOIA policy regarding such agreements. The Board emphasized that IOIA procedures should allow for contracting only TCs who have a current TCPA with all relevant attachments on file at the time of their application. The Board charged Lisa with making needed changes to create the 2004 TCPA. The Board also requested that Margaret and Lisa revise the TC manual, develop a TC evaluation process and a flow chart of procedures. They should send these to the Training Committee for input, and finally bring them for approval by the Board. Procedures must control for potential conflicts of interest. For example, selection of future members of the RTOC might seek to balance the composition of the RTOC with TCs and non-TCs. The Board also acknowledged that it is important that the Regional Training Manager be closely involved with trainings, either as a TC or an observer, in order to have a clear sense of the work.

Action Points: Lisa will develop and maintain documented procedures, including a flow chart, to facilitate efficiency and consistency in the work of the RTOC Committee and the training process. Ann will draft a message to the RTOC and Training Coordinator to express the Board's concerns about the appearance of potential conflict of interest presented by having a majority of RTOC members being TCs, and request that they address this concern.

Curriculum and Program Subcommittee (CAPS) Discussion: Develop IOIA core curriculum modules for each training course. The TCs will then customize the delivery of these modules for different audiences by providing examples appropriate to the context. This subcommittee will meet during three days to develop the core curriculum, beginning with desired learner outcomes and designing goals, then designing core elements and modules to achieve these. Lisa is the current chair of CAPS. Margaret is the recorder. John Foster, Ann Baier, Stanley Edwards, John Burns, Janine Gibson and Harriet Behar are members. Desired products for the work of CAPS: A Curriculum Guide (mandatory) that outlines learning objectives and core elements; Binder of resources including participatory exercises, quizzes, tests, etc.; and a TC training manual. **Motion:** Allocate \$1500 to the training budget to facilitate the development of CAPS and their work in developing an improved Training Curriculum, to be tracked in the "Training: Other" budget category.

b) Accreditation 1. Accreditation Committee Chair Motions: Accept Jake Lewin as a member of the Accreditation Committee and appoint him to be chair of that committee. Accept John McKeon of CCOF as the certifier representative of the ARP.

Action Point: John will communicate that the Board has approved Jake's appointment to chair of the Accreditation Committee, and John's appointment to be Certifier Rep of the ARP. The Board expressed their thanks to John for his work. The Board recommends that the chair of the Accreditation Committee (Jake) facilitate organization of the ARP to fulfill its functions in a timely manner.

Certifier Script Discussion: This project began before full implementation of the NOP and accreditation of certifiers. Recognizing the changed landscape these changes represent, the Board believes it is necessary to update this project as a service to our membership. In this way, IOIA can help address the issue of consistency in the certification process by facilitating good communication between inspectors and certifiers. **Action Point:** Brian will work with Chip to rework the previous Certifier Script project into a new Certifier Survey project, and bring a proposed plan back to the Board for approval.

Certifier Involvement Policy Discussion: The goal of this discussion is to decide whether to maintain the policy on Certifier Involvement, remove it or modify it. The current policy on certifier involvement reads "*Certifier Involvement Policy: Due to potential conflict of interest, IOIA Board members should not hold Board of Directors positions or in-house staff or management positions with organic certification agencies.*" The Board has sought input from the membership regarding this policy. Based on the many comments received, the concern over conflicts of interest lies primarily with respect to those people who hold positions with certifiers in which they make decisions related to selecting, hiring, reviewing and rehiring inspectors. The members who responded indicated little or no concern about in-house or employee inspectors who do not make decisions about inspector employment. The policy would be made clearer by deleting the words "in-house staff". Management staff are welcome to be supporting members of IOIA, not inspector members. Note: We understand by "management staff" the position with a certifier of one who manages inspectors, such as certification director or inspector coordinator. Following an in-depth discussion on the nature of IOIA as an organization, the BOD reached consensus that IOIA is an organic inspector's association. Moved: Luis Second: Jack

Motion: Change the policy on Certifier Involvement by removing the words "*or in-house staff*".

Motion: Board requests that the Bylaws committee write a proposed Bylaw amendment that would raise the revised policy on Certifier Involvement to the level of a Bylaw. Endorse: All

Discussion: IOIA seeks to maintain better relations with certifiers who are listed as supporting or certifier members of IOIA. IOIA inspector members who also have certifier roles are expected to participate only as inspectors until their membership status reflects certifier member status.

Motion: Create a certifiers' advisory council to the BOD that is made up of all supporting IOIA certifier members in good standing. Endorse: All

Agenda Item #9: Confirmed time and dates of 2004 AGM and BOD meeting.

Agenda Item #10 Reformatted Policy Manual Discussion: Margaret described how she reformatted the policy manual and proposed some changes. The Board reviewed the policy manual and identified several portions that should be part of procedures manuals for training, etc. It was also noted that the RTOC oversees all trainings, not just Regional trainings, and should therefore be named the TOC.

Decision: The Board directed Margaret to move highlighted verbiage to appropriate procedures manuals, and to write clear written definitions of "policy" and "procedure". The Board understands that procedures don't need to go into the policy manual, nor go through the document control procedures. They should, however, be available for review and input by the Board.

Action Point: The Training Manager (Margaret) and Regional Training Manager (Lisa) will create appropriate Procedures Manuals for Training, Training Coordinators, and Personnel (including job descriptions for all relevant staff positions, such as Training Manager, Regional Training Manager and office staff positions). Once these Manuals are established, staff will include any future changes in their reports to the Board.

Review of the Mission Statement and Goals Discussion: It is the responsibility of the Board to keep the organization relevant and responsive to the changing environment in which we work. The mission statement is expressed and implemented through the organization's goals. We believe the Mission Statement is strong and reflects our current work in the world. We will make changes as needed to the Goals, in the spirit of tuning up an engine, so that they evolve to remain relevant and guide our activities.

Motion: Add to Goal #2: "and continuing education." and "Continue developing high quality training relevant to the organic certification process." Endorse: All

Review of Strategic Initiatives Margaret handed out the La Veta Strategic initiatives paper and a single page of IOIA Interview Highlights. The Board chose to focus on Training as the highest current priority. The Board reviewed these documents, noting that several items have been

accomplished; several are in progress (with the work of CAPS being an important element); others need attention in the future (e.g. accreditation); and a few require reassessment to determine whether they should remain as strategies to accomplish IOIA goals (for example, ISO accreditation).

Dues Increase Discussion: The Board reviewed the budget, focusing on income and expenses according to their classification as training or membership services. Presently, IOIA is depending heavily on training to subsidize the organization's membership services-in the amount of \$20,000 last year. **Motion:** Raise 2004 Inspector Member dues. Request donations from members and suggest several options for closing the deficit. If the difference is not raised, the dues will be increased next year to a level that covers the costs of current membership services at that time. Move: Luis Second: Jack

Committee on Committees Follow-up Objective: Decide whether the proposals of the Committee on Committees (CoC) will become part of the policy manual after reviewing these point by point. Each point will be either in, out or in with modification.

Motion: Accept the work done by the CoC as amended by the Board, and implant these policies, as amended, into the policy manual. Endorse: All **Action:** Garry will work with Margaret to merge the new language from the CoC as amended by the BOD into the policy manual.

Role of Alternates on the IOIA Board Action: Brian will contact Bob Howe as chair of the Communications Committee and get input from the membership regarding the following: The Board is proposing a phase out of the Alternate to the Board of Directors position, because it appears that we are not fully utilizing their capacities. The Board believes that the position of alternate is not the best use of human resources, and would like to promote active participation and tap our member resources in a more appropriate and productive manner. Subject to findings of the above, direct the Bylaws Committee to draft a proposed amendment to phase out the position of Alternate to the Board.

Agenda Item R8: Open training policy Discussion: We are moving forward toward a proposed removal of IOIA's open training policy that is based on input from members, some of which is documented in the Food for Thought paper that Luis prepared for the June 5 Board meeting. The change is intended and expected to improve both the cash flow and relevance of IOIA. It will also address inspector concerns about training competition. The change helps us fulfill our mission. The whole BOD reaffirms the discussion and values expressed in the Executive Committee meeting minutes from June 5, 2003:

"After seeking disagreement or reservations, the EC agreed that we are ready to begin moving from an open training policy to one that considers in-house or customized training opportunities. The EC recognizes the BOD's role in assessing current directions of the organic landscape, and developing policies that keep IOIA relevant and responsive to the current state of that environment. Updating the training policy is consistent with IOIA's mission to provide quality training, and to promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process. A policy change should be drafted with appropriate detail for consideration by the entire Board. We still recognize the value of open trainings, and will draft the new policy to provide appropriate incentives for open trainings over in-house or customized trainings."

Motion: Remove the following sentence from the policy manual: "Trainings must be open to all qualified applicants; IOIA does not provide in-house, closed trainings. Endorse: All

Business Plan Discussion: The Board discussed the elements of a business plan for IOIA. Our assumption is that this business plan is for internal use by the BOD and membership of IOIA, and that it will guide our work in the development and marketing of products and services. We discussed and brainstormed around:

1. Description of the business.
2. Organizational Plan (description of what is in place)
 - Organizational chart
 - Strategic Initiatives
 - List of products and services
3. Marketing Plan (things we plan on doing)
 - Demonstrate and communicate the value of this organization to the world.
 - Financial sustainability through income generation and reinvestment
 - Increased visibility
 - Recognition of the importance of proper training and the role of inspectors in the industry; the value of IOIA-trained and member inspectors
 - Improve training: basic (pre-requisite?) training curriculum in general principles and standards of organic production, processing and certification; basis for further steps toward advanced training.
 - Consumer (learner)-centered focus: Training programs meet the needs of several distinct audiences: inspectors and potential inspectors, inspected parties (producers and processors), industry people, retailers, regulatory bodies, government agencies, certifier staff, collaborating organizations, consumer groups, etc.

Motion: Enhance the scope of the Communications Committee to include marketing as reflected in the IOIA business plan that is being developed. Endorse: All

Action: Brian, as Board liaison to the Communications Committee communicated to Bob Howe during the retreat to seek ideas on the Communications Committee's role in developing marketing work and to explore a possible change in the name and description of the committee. The current committee description clearly matches proposed marketing activities to a significant degree. The Committee is to be renamed the Communications and Marketing Committee. Communicate the changes we propose and ask him to rewrite the description of committee responsibilities so that these can be updated in the policy manual and bylaws.

Action Points: Brian will place review of the draft business plan on the December Board meeting agenda with the goal of developing a time frame and first steps. Jack will create a rough draft of a business plan. Each BOD member will send an email to the Committee Chairs for which they are liaisons to gather information about how they see the work of their committee serving the membership. List these as benefits of membership. The communication should 1) Ask each committee to answer the question asked by the membership, "what have you done for me this year?" This is also to access how we are doing in terms of functioning committees. Opportunity to strengthen ties by going to each of the committees. And 2) ask committee chairs to provide annual budget reports and proposed budgets for 2004 for their committees.

Fundraising We have a fundraising committee, with Diane Cooner as chair. Grantseeking is part of that committee's work. When we submit grants it is important to list matching and in-kind support. The Board acknowledged that it is important to keep records of the economic value of volunteer time, in-kind services, and other financial contributions (such as expenses for which reimbursement is not requested) that can help IOIA leverage additional funds in the future. Quantify and put a value to volunteer time and effort. Action Point: Margaret will distribute a volunteer log form (in-kind donations) to help people record their contributions to IOIA. [see **Retreat**, page 22]



Resources

Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place, (280 pgs), tools and methods for understanding human dimension of environmental protection; single copy is free from National Center for Environmental Publications & Information, US EPA Publication Clearinghouse, (513) 489-8190; ncepiwo@one.net.

Towards Sustainable Agriculture for Developing Countries: Options from Life Sciences & Biotechnologies (32 pgs), covering key issues from January 2003 conference in Brussels, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/conferences/2003/sadc/>; for print copy, contact marianne.parel@cec.edu.int.

Agribusiness Center website, a news and information center from Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, <http://www.agribusinesscenter.org>

World Resources 2002-2004 (328 pgs) is \$27 plus S/H from World Resources Institute, 1-800-537-5487, <http://www.wri.org/>; 36-pg summary is online at www.pdf.wri.org/wr2002_execsumm.pdf.

Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism, 2003 Marion Nestle. Investigates the responsibility of biotech in the food industry for the growing number and severity of food safety issues including food borne illnesses and bioterrorism. Three examples -- microbial contamination of meats, genetically modified ingredients, and newly emerging hazards -- demonstrate contemporary food safety issues. The political, corporate, and institutional framework surrounding food safety is examined and consumer, government, and food industry action are explored as ways to ensure a safe future for food. 349 pages. US \$27.50. Contact University of California Press, (800) 777-4726; fax (800) 999-1958; email orders@cpfs.pupress.princeton.edu; <http://www.ucpress.edu/>.

New Organic Search Engine
<http://www.accessorganic.com>

American Grassfed Association, new group promoting grassfed livestock industry, aga@americangrassfed.org. <http://www.americangrassfed.org>

Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin: 2003 Status Report (24 pgs), <http://www.wisc.edu/cias/>; or contact Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, University of Wisconsin, (608) 262-5200.

Swept Away: Chronic Hardship and Fresh Promise on the Rural Great Plains, 50-pg report updating economic conditions in agriculturally based communities in 6 states, <http://www.cfra.org/>; print copy is \$10 from Center for Rural Affairs, (402) 846-5420.

Essentials of Producing Organic, Certified Seed (30-minute video) is \$20; **Raising Organic Seed: A Handbook for Growers** (60-pg companion book) is \$10, both from Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, 9824 79th St. SE, Fullerton, ND 58441; (701) 883-4304; trhaigh@itctel.com.

International Society of Organic Agriculture Research (ISO FAR), a new interdisciplinary organization founded in June 2003, http://www.iol.uni-bonn.de/index2_e.htm; contact Ulrich Kopke, Institute for Organic Agriculture, University of Bonn, iol@uni-bonn.de; or Urs Niggli, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland; admin@fibl.ch.

Food Sovereignty: Constructing an Alternative to the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Agriculture, working draft (Sept. 7) of joint declaration from 30 farm, rural, labor, environmental, and consumer groups, <http://www.farmaid.org/>; or <http://www.iatptradeobservatory.org>, phone (612) 870-0453.

Rethinking U.S. Agricultural Policy: Changing Course to Secure Farmer Livelihoods Worldwide (59 pgs), <http://www.agpolicy.org/blueprint.html>; print copy is free from Agricultural Policy Center, University of Tennessee, (865) 974-7407; jgbrown@utk.edu.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: Reconciling Trade in Biotechnology with Environment and Development, 2002 Christoph Bail, Robert Falkner, and Helen Marquard (editors). Describes, in detail, the Cartagena Protocol, a framework of international rules to govern biotechnology in the age of globalization and free trade. Discusses the process involved in the creation of protocol and assesses implications for the environment, trade, and development. 578 pages. UK £24.95. Contact earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk; Web site <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/>. The Cartagena Protocol can be viewed in its entirety at the following website:
<http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/default.asp>

Seeds of Deception: Exposing Industry and Government Lies About the Genetically Engineered Foods You're Eating, 2003 Jeffrey M. Smith. Includes extensive and varied evidence to support claims that industry marketing and government pressure, rather than science, has resulted in the infiltration of genetically engineered (GE) foods into America's food system and influenced public acceptance. Outlines the history of U.S. policies towards GE foods and compares it with those of other countries. 289 pages. US \$17.95. Contact Yes! Books, (888) 717-7000; fax (888) 329-7000; email orders@seedsofdeception.com; <http://www.seedsofdeception.com/>

The African Consumer, Vol 3 N.1, 2003 Consumers International. Details highlights from the 2003 World Consumer Rights Day on corporate control of food and genetically engineered crops, and the 2002 African Leaders' Conference on Biotechnology and Food Security. 16 pages. Available at: <http://www.consumersinternational.org/roof>

IPM Online Homestudy Courses on variety of integrated pest management topics, including new offerings in pest identification, <http://www.hort.uconn.edu/IPM/homecourse/coursinfo.htm>, or contact Univ. of Connecticut IPM Program, ipm@canr.cag.uconn.edu.

Marketing Profiles for US The U.S. Department of Agriculture has launched a web site providing marketing profiles for all 50 U.S. states, including information on organic agriculture. The site is located at www.ams.usda.gov/statesummaries.

Oz Search Engine Australian Organics, www.bfa.com.au

Upper Midwest Organic Resource Directory, 4th edition. This is a user-friendly reference that provides quick access to resources about organic agriculture: certification agencies, suppliers, buyers, processors, consultants, resource groups, publications and events in the region. To order your copy contact MOSES, view online or print off the web at (<http://www.mosesorganic.org/directory.htm>)

Organic Fact Sheets from MOSES
MOSES has created a series of fact sheets designed to make some of the concepts and complexities of organic agriculture more understandable and accessible. Download for easy distribution: "What Is Organic Agriculture?," "Introduction to Crop Insurance," "Resource List for Organic Growers, Researchers & Educators," "Understanding Organic Certification" and "Marketing Organic Grains." www.mosesorganic.org/mosegeneral/edprof.htm

Opportunities in Agriculture: Transitioning to Organic Production, a new bulletin from the USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN,) provides a detailed overview of organic farming and ranching. The 32-page color bulletin lays out many promising strategies to convert successfully, including special sections on livestock production, and profiles of four diverse organic producers. The bulletin also covers typical organic farming production practices, innovative marketing ideas, new federal standards for certified organic crop production, and specific considerations for transition. Preview or download your copy at: www.sare.org/bulletin/organic/organic2003.pdf. Order free print copies by calling 301/504-5236 or e-mailing san_assoc@sare.org. Please provide your name, mailing address, and telephone number. Agriculture educators may place orders for print copies in quantity for upcoming winter conferences, workshops, or other events.

NCamp's Federal Ag Program Primer is now online at <http://www.sustainableagriculture.net/primer.php>

Organic Business to replace the Certification Bulletin of the BFA This new publication will be revamped to cover more industry and commercial issues as well as technical and regulatory issues facing organic producers and marketers in Australia. CEO of BFA Andrew Monk says that this publication will play a critical role in linking members of the industry not only to what is going on in industry, but in enabling them to play a role in setting the agenda for industry. The next edition, due out in December and being sent free to all members of the BFA, will cover the latest changes to standards, the organic seeds issue, market leads and an outline of the industry workshops to occur between February and April next year.

Growing New Farmers (GNF) Project

There is a place to turn for the information and encouragement you need. The GNF project has reenergized the Northeast US region's agricultural service network to answer questions, and provide programs and advice to anyone thinking about farming, developing a farm, or taking over a farm operation.

The easiest way for new farmers to find help is through GNF's website, www.northeastnewfarmer.org. There you'll find the Directory of Programs and Services, with information on over 300 organizations and programs all over the Northeastern U.S. that help new farmers. The Directory can be searched by geography, topic, organization, and program format. Another feature of the website is Farming Questions, Links and Publications which offers guidance and resources on the questions most often asked by new farmers. There's an "inbox" where new farmers' questions receive customized answers and referrals. The site also hosts on-line discussions and courses that link new farmers to each other and to a wide range of services.

Over 170 agencies and organizations in twelve Northeast states (Maine to West Virginia) are committed to serving and advocating for our next generation of agricultural producers. As GNF Consortium members, they are developing new programs and products, and proposing supportive state policies to remove the barriers new farmers face. More info: GNF Project (413-323-4531) or email gfnf@smallfarm.org.

Ontario Environmental Directory The Ontario Environment Network has announced the launch of a comprehensive guide to over 700 groups, organizations and websites across the province. Available on-line or in print, the new Ontario Environmental Directory is the starting point for anyone interested in research, communication and action on environmental issues.

"Whatever your interest -- from clean air to toxic waste, from wilderness to urban transport, from green living to green economics -- this directory will be of interest to you", says the Coordinator of the Ontario Environment Network, Phillip Penna. "It makes it easy to find groups and resources in your town, region or area of concern".

The directory is unique because it brings together the many different opinions and voices on environmental issues in one place, says Peter Blanchard, the directory's designer. "We want people to participate in Ontario's vibrant environmental community. Whether you're a parent or student, businessperson or politician, this directory is for you. It's for anyone and everyone interested in a greener, healthier world," he says.

Visit the Ontario Environmental Directory at www.oen.ca. A print edition is available for order on the web or by calling 705-840-2888.

INCLUDED WITH THE DIRECTORY:

* Environmental Search Guide -- topical guide to major sources of environmental information, organizations and resources in Ontario and Canada, arranged by theme. <http://www.oen.ca/dir/searchguide.html>

* Portal of Portals - annotated directory of environmental portals, directories & networks in Canada and beyond. <http://www.oen.ca/dir/portals.html>

* Predefined searches/subsets -- the results of any search can be bookmarked or linked to. Create a link to the whole directory, or just the portion that interests you. For examples see: <http://www.oen.ca/dir/searchguide.html>

New Listserve for Europe Organic Policy A new e-mail list has been established to promote open discussion on the development of organic farming policies in Europe, covering western, central and eastern Europe, and linking to the newly established research project EU-CEE-OFP 'Further Development of Organic Farming Policies in EU and CEE states.' You can find further information about the project at www.irs.aber.ac.uk/euceeofp

GMO NEWS

New Study on GM Wheat

A new study released by the Western Organization of Resource Councils paints a grim picture for the U.S. wheat industry if GM hard red spring wheat is introduced in the near future. The study, prepared by Dr. Robert Wisner a leading grain market economist at the University of Iowa predicts the commercial introduction of GM wheat in the next two to six years would result in a loss of 30 to 50% of U.S. export markets and a 1/3 drop in wheat prices.

At issue is a GM variety of hard red spring wheat produced by Monsanto. Forty percent of U.S. hard red spring wheat is exported, primarily to Asian buyers who have repeatedly indicated that they will not buy GM wheat.

Key findings of the study include:

- * U.S. average hard red spring wheat prices would be forced down to feed-wheat price levels, approximately one-third lower than the average of recent years.

- * Durum and white wheat exports and prices also would likely face substantial risk; other classes of wheat would face slightly lower risk.

Loss of wheat export markets would lead to loss of wheat acreage; loss of revenue to industries supplying inputs to wheat producers; losses for other rural farm-related and non-farm businesses, local and state government tax revenues, and institutions supported by tax revenues; and diminished economic health of rural communities and state governments in the spring wheat belt.

A large majority of foreign consumers and wheat buyers do not want GM wheat, said Dr. Wisner. Right or wrong, consumers are the driving force in countries where food labeling allows choice.

A copy of the full report, summary, and related information are available at www.worc.org.

New GM Info Online

A 57 page publication by Charles Benbrook, entitled *Economic and Environmental Impacts of First Generation Genetically Modified Crops*, is now available online. This report covers the impacts of GE crops on pesticide use over the first eight years of use. It is the first comprehensive analysis of the impacts of GE technology on pounds of pesticides applied and reaches a surprising finding. While GE crops reduced pesticide use about 25 million pounds in the first 3 years of commercialization (1996-1998), they increased use over 73 million pounds in 2001-2003, largely because of the slipping efficacy of RR technology. View the report at: <http://www.biotech-info.net/technicalpaper6.html>

Monsanto Pulls Out of Europe

Monsanto announced in mid-October that it was pulling out of its European cereal seed business. The move was widely seen as a sign that it has given up hopes of introducing GM cereals in Europe.

Anti-GM lobbyists said the withdrawal was a sign that Monsanto was "throwing in the towel" in Europe. They said that with Canadian farmers campaigning against the licensing of Monsanto's GM wheat, the company was also facing severe resistance in North America.

At the same time, Margot Wallstrom, the European Union's environment commissioner, accused American biotech firms of lying about the benefits of GM technology and "trying to force it on people".

Two weeks earlier, Bayer, a key GM crop developer, decided to halt their UK trials. The company blamed Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett for her insistence that the locations of all trial sites be made public, saying the position had forced its hand. GM crop test sites are regularly destroyed by protesters. *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 October 2003; *The Observer*, 28 September 2003

UK Research Not Good for GM

Devastating new research published by the UK Government shows that pollen from GM oilseed rape travels six times further than previously documented and if not controlled can contaminate non-GM crops for generations.

The UK Government has published the results of four different projects (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2003/031013b.htm>) which show that:

- * Bees can take oilseed rape pollen and pollinate with non-GM oilseed rape over a distance of 26 Km.

- * If wild GM oilseed rape is not "rigorously controlled" then contamination would not "would not fall below 1% for 16 years."

- * Modelling indicates that the effects of introducing GM sugar beet could be "extremely severe, with a rapid decline, and extinction of the skylark within 20 years."

The findings are likely to intensify the debate over proposals to allow GM contamination of conventional seed and the co-existence of GM, conventional and organic food production. Adrian Bebb of Friends of the Earth Europe said: "This research shows that allowing GM crops to be grown in Europe will be a recipe for disaster. Containing GM crops like oilseed rape is virtually impossible and will cause contamination for years to come. The co-existence between GM and conventional or organic farming is simply not possible. Furthermore the research shows that our wildlife is being put at an unnecessary risk with birds facing extinction. The public and the environment must come before the commercial interests of the biotech companies."

Another report on GM trials was recently released. The Farm Scale Evaluations (FSE) are online at www.defra.gov.uk/environment/gm/fse/index.htm. The main findings of this report include: * Ecologically significant differences between GM and non-GM crops may be missed because the experiment does not have sufficient statistical power.

- * Monitoring of important soil organisms was dropped because of money and time constraints. Similarly, rare arable plants were excluded because of time constraints.

- * Advice on the use of weed killer on the GM crops was given by the biotech companies who developed the technology, leading to concerns that the GM crops may have been managed to maximise biodiversity whilst ignoring the final yield.

- * Evidence that in the United States additional herbicides are used to achieve the required level of weed control in maize crops has been overlooked, meaning the maize results could be irrelevant.

According to the Guardian newspaper - which claims to have spoken to scientists involved - the research will show that GM oilseed rape and sugar beet damage the environment. The damage to biodiversity is so serious that the UK government is reportedly already considering a ban on GM oilseed rape and GM sugar beet.

StarLink Staying Power

Three years after a genetically engineered corn banned from human consumption turned up in taco shells and was pulled from the market, contaminated grain is still showing up in the nation's corn supply.

A federal testing program found traces of StarLink corn in more than 1% of samples submitted by growers and grain handlers in the past 12 months.

"The StarLink lesson is that contamination is to some extent irreversible," said Doreen Stabinsky, a scientific adviser to Greenpeace and a genetics specialist. "Years later, you could still see it turning up in the food supply and the grain supply." In the first year after the corn was withdrawn from the market, USDA reported 8.6% of samples tested were positive for the Starlink protein that acts like a pesticide. The contaminated proportion had dropped to 1.2% in the 12 months ending Sept. 30.

Dec 1, 2003, San Jose Mercury News

Time to Switch to Apples?

The Gates Foundation, founded by Microsoft owner Bill Gates and the largest philanthropic organisation in the world, was strongly criticised in mid-October when it gave \$25m to GM research to develop vitamin and protein-enriched seeds for the world's poor. Gates was bitten hard by international charities, farmers' groups and academics in Europe, India and elsewhere, who argued that the money would not go to addressing poverty, the root cause of worldwide hunger, but would promote an agriculture that was of little use to the very poor.

Gates has chosen for his latest venture to partner with the USDA and USAID, Washington's overseas aid organisation - two of the most active pro-GM organizations in the world. Also helping with

money or research are several US government groups and universities who have benefited from government biotech grants. The other major financial partner is the World Bank.

With hundreds of millions of small farmers around the world already in crisis because they cannot compete with US or EU subsidies which mainly go to corporate farmers, the Gates donation is seen to be supporting something irrelevant to most farmers - another kick in the teeth for those in poverty and an endorsement of a widely questioned technology dominated by vested big science interests.

The research will be done mainly by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture and the International Food Policy Research Institute. Both are part of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (Cgiar). This family of 16 global public institutes forms the world's largest public plant-breeding effort for poor farmers and has immense say on the direction of world agriculture.

Cgiar is the custodian of more than 600,000 seeds, something that has been called the "collective wealth of nature and the food security of the world". Almost every crop that has ever been grown is held in trust, and the unpatented genetic bank is of immense potential wealth to life science companies, not just for food but medicine. *The Guardian, October 16, 2003*

New GM Institute at ISU

Iowa State University will be hosting a new institution created to address critical issues surrounding GM agricultural products.

The Biosafety Institute for Genetically Modified Agricultural Products (BIGMAP), according to their press release, will provide independent, science-based and third-party evaluations of the risks and benefits of genetically modified agricultural products (GMAPs) to consumers and the environment, according to Manjit Misra, director of BIGMAP.

Misra compared the new institute to the Underwriters Laboratories Inc., which was established to restore public confidence in the safety of electricity when that source of energy was in its infancy. BIGMAP would take the idea of UL Laboratory to a new level by including the social, economic and environmental issues of GMAPs. "BIGMAP will serve as a dynamic example of the land-grant mission in the 21st century," said Ben Allen, provost at Iowa State. "It will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers and spur economic development in Iowa. Most important, it will provide a unique educational opportunity to teach students on the safe use of a new revolutionizing technology in addressing human needs."

"We believe maintaining public confidence in the quality and safety of the food supply is of paramount importance to Iowa," said Catherine Woteki, dean of Iowa State's College of Agriculture. "We are committed to developing the scientific safeguards and the educational response needed to form the basis for that public confidence while working to introduce genetically engineered crops."

USDA Reports Biotech Infractions

U.S. biotech companies and research universities have violated strict federal regulations on planting experimental genetically modified crops more than a hundred times in the last decade, the USDA reported in October. The USDA said none of the 115 infractions since 1990 resulted in any harm to U.S. agriculture, the food supply or the environment.

The department published for the first time the number of violations the biotech industry has committed when planting GM corn, soybeans, wheat and other crops not yet ready for commercialization.

USDA said the infractions represent less than 2% of the 7,400 field tests authorized since 1990. The USDA considered most of infractions as minor violations like dirty farm equipment and not enough isolation between. Environmental groups and consumer advocates said they believed many infractions have gone unreported due to the lack of USDA resources and personnel. "I think there is reason to believe there are many, many infractions that go unreported," said Richard Caplan of the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. The USDA also announced it has established a new compliance and enforcement office within the USDA's Biotechnology Regulatory Services. The office, with a staff of four people, will seek to boost inspections, auditing and training.

Brazil Gives In to GMO's

Brazil, the last big country to resist GM crops, has given in to pressure from the US and its own big farmers to allow them to be grown for at least a year.

Opponents of GM foods were disappointed by the apparent U-turn by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose Workers Party (PT) resisted GM crops when it was in opposition. Greenpeace Brazil, the Brazilian Green party and non-governmental groups announced that they would seek to get the decision overturned in the courts.

It was presented as a one-year emergency measure because farmers in Rio Grande do Sul state have for several years smuggled large quantities of GM soya seed across the Argentine border. Monsanto now stands to gain up to \$100m (\$62m) a year from farmers who have been growing its seed illegally.

US producers have long complained that Brazil has had an unfair advantage because many of its farmers do not pay royalties for black-market GM soya.

"Instead of enforcing the law, the authorities have allowed big farming interests to dictate their own terms," said Karin Silverwood-Cope, a coordinator for the NGP Campaign for a GM Free Brazil. Bob Callanan, head of the American Soybean Association, which is fervently pro-GM, said: "We have long been frustrated by Brazil growing illegal GM seeds. This would be a step towards allowing Monsanto to collect the fees due to it and help to end the paper shuffle where EU countries bought Brazilian foods and pretended that it was not GM."

UK Insurers Fearful of GM Crops

A survey of the principle insurance underwriters in the UK, carried out by the new campaigning group FARM, found that neither farmers considering growing GM crops or non-GM farmers seeking to protect their businesses from contamination by GM crops would be able to find anyone willing to give them insurance.

The survey revealed a level of opposition from companies taking on the risks of insuring GM crops comparable to the public's hostility to purchasing and eating them.

All the companies surveyed felt that too little was known about the long term effects of growing these crops on human health and the environment to be able to offer any form of cover.

"50 years ago insurers were writing policies for asbestos without a care in the world - now they are facing claims of hundreds of millions of pounds. The insurance industry has learned to be wary of new things, and there is a real feeling that GM could come back and bite you in 5 years time", said one company spokesperson.

National Coordinator, Robin Maynard said, "When insurers quantify GM crops in the same category as thalidomide, asbestos and terrorism, no thinking farmer should risk their business and public reputation by taking on this unproven, unwanted and unnecessary technology.

"If Government and their friends in the Biotech companies dispute the judgment of the professional insurers, perhaps they will offer unlimited cover to the few farmers willing to risk growing GM crops? In addition, for both farmers and consumers, they need to guarantee, what the insurers clearly believe isn't possible, that GM-crops can be grown without contaminating the crops of the majority of farmers who want to remain GM-free." *FARM press release, 7/10/03*

UK Co-op goes GM-free

The Co-op has announced that it is banning GM food and ingredients throughout its entire business. The Co-op is Britain's biggest farmer and sells £5bn worth of food annually.

Animals on its 85,000 acres of farms will not be given GM feed, the firm says. And it is banning GM from its entire business after four-fifths of Co-op customers surveyed said they would not knowingly buy food containing GM ingredients. The Co-op will also refuse to grow GM crops even if the government insists it is safe.

The groups move is likely to put pressure on other supermarket groups to eliminate GM ingredients from their food produce. [see **Co-op**, page 22]

Co-op, from page 21

Martin Beaumont, chief executive of the Co-operative Group, said: "On the strength of current scientific knowledge and the overwhelming opposition of our members, the Co-op is saying no to commercial growing of GM crops in the UK.

"And we would urge other consumer-led businesses to follow this precautionary approach. Too little is still understood about this technology and how it would impact on our environment in future generations. "Let the science and research continue, but unless or until the case is convincingly made, the government has a responsibility to keep the lid on commercial growing."

BBC News, 21 October 2003

Suit Filed Over GM Crops

Pesticide Action Network North America and several other public interest organizations filed a lawsuit on Nov. 12 seeking to force USDA to safely regulate crops that have been genetically engineered to produce pharmaceutical and industrial chemicals. Info at www.panna.org

Glofish NoGo in California

California recently became the only state in the U.S. to ban the sale of genetically engineered pets. Although new glow-in-the-dark zebrafish (engineered with genes from jellyfish and sea anemones) have been released onto the market throughout the rest of the nation, the CA Game Commission said their decision is based on simple ethics. "I just don't think it's right to produce a new organism just to be a pet. To me, this seems like an abuse of the power we have over life, and I'm not prepared to go there today," said Sam Schuchat of the CA Game Commission. Full story is at:

http://www.organicconsumers.org/ge/ge_fish.cfm

Retreat, from page 17

Agenda Item R10: Personnel Policies (Employee Handbook)

Discussion: The Board shared comments based on their review of the draft employee handbook. They noted some sections that are not relevant to IOIA and other changes to be made. **Action point:** All BOD review and provide suggestions for revision to

Ann and John. They will then prepare a new draft to be reviewed at the December meeting.

Human Resources Discussion: In order to use our human resources well and maintain mutual satisfaction, it is important to configure jobs to take into account employees skills and desires. The Board reviewed an inventory of current staff and contractors of IOIA. They currently include:

- Margaret Scoles, Executive Director and Training Manager, full time employee
- Lisa Pierce: Regional Training Coordinator, part time contractor, maintains own home office
- Phoebe Amsden, Support Staff for Training and Office Management, part-time employee
- Dicee Harrison, Office Assistant, part time employee, minimal hours as needed for filing.
- Diane Cooner, Webmaster and Newsletter Editor, contractor
- Dave Gardners, CPA, contractor to prepare IRS returns

Summary In this retreat we have assessed the current environment in the world related to organics, reviewed that work done at La Veta, linked current work to that. We reviewed the mission statement, and reviewed and updated goals. We developed a framework for a business plan, with some ideas for marketing and training. We examined IOIA's resources, policies and structures, including our financial status, human resources, Policy Manual and Procedures Manual. We have addresses every item on the list of agenda items given to us by the previous Board. We made a plan to create a vehicle for expanding relationships, addressed the Committee on Committees proposal, Certifier involvement on BOD and established the basic idea framework for a Certifier's Advisory Council to IOIA. We addressed the role of alternates to the Board, generated ideas for fundraising, made a decision about IOIA dues, addressed a key international membership concern, and developed a certifier involvement policy. We planned the AGM based on a membership decision to hold the 2004 meeting in Costa Rica, recognizing that 40% of our membership is outside the US. And of course, we covered the routine items of approving minutes,

receiving and reviewing the financial report, ED and TM report, RTM reports.

We addressed and responded to all the membership concerns and issues that were brought to the attention of the Board by the membership up to one day before the meeting. Thank you to all members for your time and thoughtfulness in providing input prior to the Board retreat. We discussed matters in great depth, taking into account the interests and concerns of the membership. We are honored to be working together in the service of the membership of this organization. Adjourn: Brian adjourned the meeting at 8:15AM on October 21, 2003.

NOP, from page 7

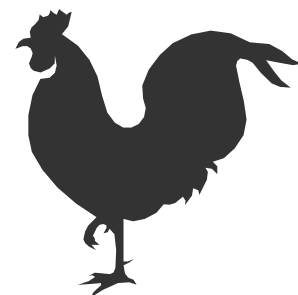
final ruling on such matters. That is correct both in terms of the law (OFPA) and the NOP rule. It is also vital that there be single, central authority over such standards if we are to have consistent national standards for organic production and handling.

Cooler heads argue that before we go overboard assailing this decision, the organic community should give USDA a chance to build a bit more history and gain more experience in administration of the NOP. This is, after all, still a new program and organic is a new field for the USDA. Perhaps a mistake was made, and surely others will be made as well. In another couple of years, after a record of decisions is established, then it may be appropriate to look critically at their record.

Even though MICI no longer certifies The Country Hen, their attorney, Jill Krueger of Farmers Legal Action Group, will continue to pursue the issue by taking this case to the next level, before a USDA Judicial Officer, to ask that the ruling that they have no case be set aside. This would clear the way for a formal hearing and allow MICI to present their side of the case, which they allege they have not had the opportunity to do.

The loopholes in the regulations and uneven enforcement highlight the inequities of the NOP system, and demonstrate the need for a clear process to be followed. What is not right is to have vague parts of the law that are now interpreted by one person. There needs to be some respect accorded to the certifiers that are accredited by the NOP, just as there needs to be a healthy working relationship between the NOP and the certifiers.

Given time, more will be revealed. ♪



On The Road – Report from Oz Land

By Joe Montecalvo

On my recent trip to Australia I visited Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Townsville and the surrounding agricultural communities and over 20 companies doing fresh fruit and vegetable packing operations at the request of Bioteq Limited, a company I have been working with in developing a new sanitizer for direct food contact that meets 7CFR-NOP criteria for organic foods (i.e., leaves no residue). My trip lasted three weeks. The major message I picked up from the trip was that like Europe, the growers and consumers in Australia are anti-GMO and have embraced organic and sustainable agriculture. Most of the packing operations are small compared to what we have in California. However, their wash operations really need to be optimized as many use too much chlorine. Most companies there are not familiar with chlorine issues such as worker exposure and disinfection byproducts like trihalomethanes, which are carcinogenic.

Much of my time was spent giving two hour workshops on organic sanitation requirements and how to use less chlorine in flume wash waters for fruits and vegetables as well as other approaches that reduce chlorine levels but maintain food safety.

I also had the opportunity to visit the major agricultural research facility of the university at Hawksburg. It is interesting to note that no GMO research is being conducted there, unlike many US universities.

Overall, the trip was terrific as we made new friends and enjoyed a country which has a tremendous amount of agricultural and cultural diversity. Laura, my wife, and Joe III, my son, were able to do lots of sight seeing. We enjoyed the country and food there. It was so uplifting to travel there with only 20 million people in the size of a country almost the same size as the US with 270 million. No traffic or should I say no traffic like we have in LA or San Jose/San Francisco.

NEW PUBLICATION

Labor Management in Agriculture: Cultivating Personnel Productivity, second edition. This book focuses on management techniques rather than on legal requirements. Available in English and Spanish. View online at www.cnr.berkeley.edu/ucce50/ag-labor. Price is \$12.50US + tax and shipping. Contact UCCE at 209-525-6800 or erexendez@ucdavis.edu



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- Food Plant Sanitation and Safety, by Dr. Joe Montecalvo, 184 pp, \$50.00
- Introductory Food Science, Dr. Joe Montecalvo, 187 pp, \$50.00
- Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 2nd Edition, published by Sust. Ag Network, \$18.00
- Organic Dairy Farming, published by Kickapoo Organic Resource Network, 87 pp, \$8.00
- Organic Livestock Handbook, published by Canadian Organic Growers. Edited by Anne Macey, 179 pp, spiral bound, \$25.00
- Organic Tree Fruit Management, published by COABC, 240 pages, \$30.00
- Steel in the Field, published by Sustainable Ag Network, 128 pages, \$16.00
- Introduction to Certified Organic Farming. Published by REAP CANADA, 200 pg. \$25.00
- OCC/IOIA Forms Templates \$35 members \$50 non-members Comes with disk (Word 7.0)

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2004 Calendar

Jan 9-10 Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference, in Des Moines, IA; contact Sandra Trca-Black, PFI, (515) 232-5661 ext. 101; Sandra@practicalfarmers.org
<http://www.practicalfarmers.org>.

Jan 09-11 IOIA will co-sponsor Japanese language Basic Farm Inspector Training with the Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA) to be held in Tokyo, JAPAN, Contact info: JOIA at mutsumi.sakuyoshi@nifty.com or +81-422-56-6651 or +81-422-56-6651 (fax).

Jan 15 - 22 IOIA and the Florida Organic Growers (FOG) will co-sponsor Basic Organic Process Inspector training from January 15-18, 2004 and Basic Organic Farm Inspector training from January 19-22. The IOIA/FOG trainings will be followed by the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group conference. Paramount Resort and Conference Center located in Gainesville, Florida. For more info and registration details please contact Carolyn at the Florida Organic Growers office at 352-377-0133 or 352-377-6345 or fogoffice@aol.com

Jan 20-22 "Planned Energy/Agricultural Industry Conference on Greenhouse Gas Mitigation via Agriculture and Its Soils," a national forum being planned, in College Station, TX; more info: Consortium for Agricultural Soil Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases <http://www.casmgs.colostate.edu> or http://agecon.tamu.edu/faculty/tbutt/casm/casmgs_conference.htm

Jan 22-25 "Practical Tools and Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms," 13th Annual Southern SAWG Conference, in Gainesville, FL; Contact SSAWG at (479) 587-0888; or Jean Mills, jeanmills@aol.com; <http://www.sawg.org/conf2004/confindex.html>.

Jan 21-24 24th Annual Ecological Farming Conference at Asilomar Conference Ctr, Pacific Grove, CA. www.eco-farm.org

Jan 24 NOFA-Massachusetts Chapter's Annual Winter Conference, in Barre, MA; contact Northeast Organic Farming Assn. /MA, (978)

355-2853; nofa@nofamass.org; <http://www.nofamass.org/conferences/index.php>

Jan 31 Annual Winter Conference of Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey, in New Brunswick, NJ; <http://www.nofanj.org>.

February 1-3 "The IPM Matrix," Association of Applied IPM Ecologists 2004 Conference, in Napa, CA; contact AAIE, phone/fax (707) 265-9349; director@aaie.net; http://aaie.net/expend_control.cfm.

Feb 2-8 "A Bounty of Golden Ideas," a collaboration of the 19th annual North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference and Trade Show and the California Small Farm Conference, including pre- and post-conference bus tours, in Sacramento, CA; contact Marcia Touchette, NAFDMA, (413) 529-0386; Marcia@WhiteLoafRidge.com; <http://www.nafdma.com/Conference/Sacramento/>

Feb 13-14 "30 Years Growing," California Certified Organic Farmers' 30th Anniversary Party and Annual Meeting, in Monterey, CA; Info: (831)423-2263; ccof@ccof.org; <http://www.ccof.org>

Feb 20-22 "The Western Sustainable Agriculture Movement: Building Relationships and Wielding Power," 10th Annual Meeting of Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, in Logan, UT; contact Western SAWG, (406) 494-8636; wsawg@ncat.org.

February 26th-28 The 15th annual Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference will be held at the La Crosse Center. For info: <http://www.mosesorganic.org/umofc/umofc.htm>

Feb 24 - March 2 Certified Organic Association of British Columbia (COABC) and IOIA will co-sponsor Basic Farm Inspector Training (February 24-27) and Advanced Training (March 1-2). Trainings will be held in conjunction with the COABC conference held February 28 and 29. For info contact Kristen Kane at COABC, office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca (250) 260-4429.

Feb 28 - March 1 IOIA will co-sponsor Japanese language Basic Process Inspector Training with the Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA) to be held in Tokyo, JAPAN, For more info, contact JOIA at mutsumi.sakuyoshi@nifty.com or +81-422-56-6651 or +81-422-56-6651 (fax).

Feb 29-March 2 National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture Annual Meeting, in or near Washington, DC; contact NCSA, (845) 744-8448; <http://www.SustainableAgriculture.net>. Campaign@sustainableagriculture.net;

March 5-8 National Farmers Union 102nd Anniversary Convention, in Billings, MT; contact NFU, 11900 E. Cornell Ave., Aurora, CO 80014-3194; <http://www.nfu.org>.

March 13 EcoLOGICA invites IOIA to Costa Rica for our 2004 Annual General Membership Meeting. IOIA accepts! The event will include Advanced training in both Spanish and English. See cover story for details.

March 20-21 Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Annual Conference, in Johnstown, OH; contact Gwen Uetrecht, OEFFA, (614) 421-2022; oeffa@oeffa.com; <http://www.oeffa.com>.

March 29-31 FIRST WORLD CONGRESS ON ORGANIC FOOD: Meeting the Challenges of Safety and Quality for Fruits, Vegetables, and Grains, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA.

The First World Congress on Organic Food will compare possible risks of fruits, vegetables and grains produced by organic versus conventional methods. The Congress is co-sponsored by the National Food Safety & Toxicology Center, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the International Association for Food Protection. For more information about the Congress, including how to register, submit an abstract for a technical presentation, and help sponsor the Congress, go to: <http://www.foodsafe.msu.edu/Organics/>.

Contact: mitzelf3@cvm.msu.edu

Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!



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