

# IOIA BASIC COURSE FOR ORGANIC CROP INSPECTION

## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Fall 2007**

**Course Format:** 4 1/2 days (includes a one day field trip)

**Trainers:** TBA

**Pre-requisites for the course:** Please review the Acceptance Criteria and Client Responsibilities that appear at the end of this document.

**For further information contact:** *Executive Director - Margaret Scoles*

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### **Course Description:**

The course provides basic level training to develop skills required for inspecting and reporting on the management of an organic crop production unit according to a specified set of standards. For courses conducted in the United States, the standard is usually the USDA, National Organic Program (NOP). However, this basic organic crop inspection course may also be presented using other standards as required (please contact the IOIA office).

In addition, participants will be introduced to topics such as global organic certification, biodiversity, soil fertility management, and inspecting as a career. These and other topics are meant to provide historical background, more in-depth knowledge and awareness of current trends in the industry.

### **Aim:**

To enable participants to use appropriate skills and knowledge gained from this course to enhance their personal or professional activities in the organic sector.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1	Recognize the principles of organic agriculture.
2	Discuss and locate <u>global certification activity</u> .
3	Recognize the role of the inspector in the certification process and distinguish it from other roles, such as consulting.
4	Use guidelines to make ethical & professional decisions relating to the inspector role.
5	Recognize and assess good natural resource management.
6	Review the structure and function of the <b>Independent Organic Inspectors' Association (IOIA)</b> .
7	Appreciate & appraise biodiversity as part of a well-functioning organic operation.
8	Recognize a variety of soil management techniques for organic fertility, and use supplied resources for further reference.
9	Demonstrate a working knowledge of the organization and content of the <b>(applicable standards: – in this case the)</b>  <b>United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP)</b> standards by accessing and applying correctly the standards relating to organic crop production.
10	Analyze an <b>organic system plan (OSP)</b> for its potential to meet NOP standards.
11	Distinguish areas of concern regarding organic integrity in an <b>OSP</b> and develop a plan to review these areas during an inspection.
12	Recognize and assess, <b>in class</b> and <b>on site</b> , risks for a crop production unit.
13	Evaluate <b>organic control points (OCP's)</b> for their level of risk regarding organic integrity.
14	Recognize the components of an audit trail. Use audit trail processes to conduct an audit trail check which includes crop yield estimating and an in-out balance
15	Review and evaluate <b>in class</b> and <b>on site</b> , farm records and procedures for a crop production unit.
16	Assess whether an organic crop production unit is being managed as outlined in its OSP and as required by the NOP while conducting an <b>on-site inspection</b> as part of a group.
17	Report verbally and in a variety of written formats, findings regarding crop production operations.
18	Develop sufficient questioning techniques and recording methods to collect valid information. Use these skills in <b>class settings</b> and while observing and communicating with clients <b>on-site</b> .
19	Develop an exit interview report and/or cite appropriate parts of the standard, as necessary, to indicate where/how the management of a production unit may not be meeting the standard.
20	Complete an inspection report as required by a given <b>Certifying Body (CB) or Agency (CA)</b> .

**Learning Sequence: (The Agenda)**

Day	Topics, Learning Activity <i>SDL indicates Self-Directed Learning</i>	Learning Outcomes	Assessment
<b>Day 1</b>			
a.m.	An introduction to IOIA	6	
	A Global Overview of Organic Activity	2	
	Certification Process & Role of Inspector	3	
	<b>Precourse:</b> Ethics and Conduct Review	3,4	2.5% submit at registration
Break			
	Ecological Principles	1,5,8	
	<b>Precourse:</b> Soils	5,7,8	2.5% submit at registration
	Biodiversity and the USDA - NOP	5,7	
	L U N C H		
p.m.	<b>Precourse:</b> NOP Standards for Crops	9	2.5% submit at registration
	Working with the NOP - Crop Standards Navigating the Standards	9	
Break			
	Preparing for an Inspection <b>Reading assignment</b> – Creating an inspection plan for a sample Organic System Plan (OSP)	10 10,11,12	<b>(SDL)</b>
	<i>(Optional session: "How to operate an Inspection Business")</i> After regular class sessions		
<b>Day 2</b>			
a.m.	Working with the Standards – brief review Reporting on Issues Communications for Inspectors	9 17 18	2.5% - in class Part of 5% communication assignment
Break TBA	Working with the Sample OSP: <i>The Inspection Plan – (review of SDL)</i> <i>Debriefing the Findings</i> Opening Interviews - & the sample OSP Questioning/Interviewing & Note-taking Skills	10,11,13 15 17,18	2.5% - in class Part of 5% communication assignment
p.m.	Audit Trail Concept & Components	14	
	Conducting an Audit Trail – sample OSP	14,15	
	Conducting an Audit Balance	14	
	Assessing Crop yields for audit trail check	14	Crop yields 5% in-class submission
Break			
	Input Materials - Crops	15	
	Input Materials - <b>Assignment (SDL)</b>		<b>Due before class – Day 3</b> 10% - <b>SDL</b>

<b>Day 3</b>			
a.m.	Risk Assessment – Understanding organic control points (OCP's)  <b>Risk Assessment – Precourse:</b> Herbicides  Risk Assessment – Water Quality  Risk Assessment – OCP Scenarios	12,13    13	2.5% submit at registration
Break			
a.m.	Input Materials Assignment - Review	9,15	Photocopy of submitted assignment will be provided to client for this session
	L U N C H		
p.m.	Conducting Organic Crop Inspections  Interviewing & Note-taking Skills	3,18  18	5% Communications
	Virtual Inspection of sample OSP - Note-taking practice	18	
Break			
	Debriefing the virtual inspection  Exit Interviews and Report Writing Inspection Report Format – Samples for OSP  Individual Inspection Report on the virtual OSP inspection – <b>Assignment –exit interview</b>	9,19  20  9,19,20	*   5% due by the end of class to group leader
	Field Trip Preparation with Group Leader	10,11,12,13	*
<b>Day 4</b>			
a.m. <b>TBA</b>	Pre-field Trip Meeting with Group Leader	10,11,12,13	*
	Travel to site		
	Group inspection with Group Leader	12,13,14,15,16,18	*
	Return Travel		
	Debriefing with Group Leaders - sharing information, preparing to write the inspection report.	17,19,20	* Participation Mark 5% - in process
	Preparing the Inspection Report ( <b>SDL</b> )	19,20	30% See assessment plan for detail <b>Due 9:00 A.M. Day 5</b>
<b>Day 5</b>			
a.m.	Exam	Learning outcomes 1-20	30% See assessment plan for detail <b>Due at noon Day 5</b>

**Assessment Plan: DRAFT**

ITEM	VALUE %	DUE DATE/TIME
Pre-course material – completion	10 (4X2.5)	At registration
Crop Inputs – Materials Quiz	10	Day 3 - BY 9:00 A.M.
Crop yield – Calculations	5	In class
Writing/Communication Exercises	10 (2x5)	In class
Field trip – Preparation & Contribution	5	In Process – Days 3 & 4
<b>Must pass each above assignment with 50%</b>	<b>/40</b>	<b>Sub-total</b>
Inspection Reporting – <b>must obtain a minimum of 22.5 points out of 30</b>	30	Day 5 - BY 9:00 A.M.
Final Exam – <b>must obtain a minimum of 22.5 points out of 30</b>	30	Day 5 - BY NOON
<b>Must pass each of the above two assignments with 75%</b>	<b>/60</b>	<b>Sub-total</b>
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/100</b>	

**Pre-course Assignments:** There are four (4) pre-course assignments (evaluated for 10%) that must be completed before the beginning of the course and submitted at the time of your registration.

**Learning Resources:**

**These items are sent as part of the acceptance package. Please consider these copies to be your course reference material. There will be no other copies provided.**

1. USDA National Organic Program (NOP) Final Rule (7 CFR 205) in two documents
2. IFOAM/IOIA International Organic Inspection Manual
3. Soil Biology Primer
4. Biodiversity Conservation: An Organic Certifier's Guide
5. Resource List: *International, National, And Regional Educational And Outreach Resources*
6. Risk Assessment – Herbicide- Reading: 2 p.
7. Soils and Soil Management Reference List

**Web Sites:** for other resources and information

[www.ioia.net](http://www.ioia.net)

[www.ifoam.org](http://www.ifoam.org)

[www.ota.com](http://www.ota.com)

[www.ams.usda.gov/NOP](http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP)

[www.attra.ncat.org](http://www.attra.ncat.org)

[www.ioia.net/images/docs/IOIA-Soils-Assessment](http://www.ioia.net/images/docs/IOIA-Soils-Assessment) Oct 07.pdf

## Acceptance Criteria

Inspector applicants to these IOIA trainings must meet the following acceptance criteria.

### All Courses:

- \* Submission of complete application, resume and fees.
- \* Fluency of the language in which the course is given.
- \* Demonstration of good communication skills (written, verbal and listening).
- \* Understanding of and commitment to enforcement of organic certification principles.
- \* Demonstration of continuing education.
- \* Appropriate physical and mental health.

### Additional Course Acceptance Criteria

#### ↳ Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training

A minimum of 1 year training and/or 1 year experience in organic agriculture and having knowledge of conventional agricultural practices.

## Client Responsibilities:

### Pre-course:

Submission of

- completed Course Application including letter, resume and references.
- signed IOIA Confidentiality/Liability Waiver
- completed Pre-Course Assignments **upon registration**

Payment of fees. No certificate will be issued if payment in full is not received.

### During course:

- Attendance at all sessions
- Participation in all class/learning activities