Notes from The Chair
By Brian Magaro

The season is upon us and the lonely trails are being laid out for another year. The season in PA is starting off as a cold wet spring, setting the stage for a late hay-making season. So what does that do to the schedule? Well, for me it means sharpening my art in flexibility for the time(s) I receive a call the evening before an inspection and like says “that it will not suit to have the inspection tomorrow and can we reschedule?” Okay, I say, and get out the whiteout, and try to figure how I’m going to get one more in later in the month. So I grunt and grumble a little (or maybe a lot) and then I take a moment and look at what I do and ask….. Independent Inspector….that means I work for myself…right? Wrong. I work for every one of the producers who need my services so that they can continue to offer the consumer healthy food that has had a positive impact on this planet in its production and I help make that happen. Somehow now the inconvenience doesn’t look like quite as big of a deal.

Hopefully this year will show signs that the new boots everyone got last October (Implementation of the NOP) have broken themselves in somewhat and the many blisters have healed without too many scars. For some, the quoting of the 205s are like it was firing off a few rounds from the six gun for Wyatt Earp; and for others it is still a struggle to figure out just what is consulting. I encourage everyone, when in doubt, to call the certifier you are working for. They may not know either but this way you can get everyone on the same page and gain a clear picture of what is expected of you. Actually it took me a while (years) to feel comfortable doing this because I thought that I had to have all the answers and the certifier would think I was a “bad” inspector calling with questions. Such is not the case.

This leads to another topic and that is the IOIA Inspectors Forum. Let’s take a minute, before we knee-jerk too much here for those that have Forum experience, and read the IOIA mission statement. The mission of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association is to address issues and concerns relevant to (see Chair, p 4)
In Brief

Lobbying Effort Restores Organic Feed Standard Though Seafood Amendment Dismays Organic Proponents

Following an intense lobbying effort by mainstream farming organizations, organic farm groups, consumers, and environmentalists to preserve the integrity of the national organic standards, Congress approved a bill in March to repeal legislation passed in January (as the FY 2003 omnibus spending bill) that allowed livestock producers to use the ‘USDA Organic’ label even if the animals were not fed 100 percent organic feed. Supplemental legislation that repealed the offending language was signed by President Bush on April 16. Also included in the supplemental bill, however, is a rider sponsored by Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) that requires USDA to devise a plan for certifying wild fish and shellfish as organic. Attaching the organic label to wild seafood, a goal long-sought by Stevens and California’s fishing industry for its marketing value, was opposed previously by the NOSB.
Arguing against the seafood label, Katherine DiMatteo of the Organic Trade Association said that the term ‘organic’ on a food product "describes a complete system of production that begins on a farm" and the standards "do not translate readily to a water-based system". She urges instead the use of existing labeling programs for wild fisheries that operate in an environmentally sustainable way.

Those Pesky Surveys

Nearly 92% of Americans surveyed want labels on genetically modified foods. Only 1% do not. The other 7% are undecided on labeling of genetically modified food ingredients. Only 25% believe GM plants are safe and only 17% thinks foods from GM animals are safe. 77% of those polled agreed that government policies should favor family, owner-operated farms as opposed to those run by corporations. 53% prefer to buy food they know has been grown on small rather than large farms.


2003 Directory Updates

Please make the following changes to your 2003 Membership Directory. Any changes are italicized. Other parts of the addresses remain the same unless noted. Any additions or corrections to information categories other than addresses and contact numbers will be listed in the 2004 Membership Directory.

Address Changes:
Ann Baier
Phone: (831) 475-5551
Fax: (831) 475-2857
Patti Bursten Deutsch
Email: pburst@mwt.net
Susan Colwell
Email: sgcolwell@Comcast.net
Paola Legarre
2512 N. Arthur Ave
Fresno, CA 93705 USA
Phone: (559) 229-3526
Work Phone: (559) 229-3525
Osvaldo Mendoza
Email: omendoza@letis.com.ar
Marvin Miura
8980 Kula HWY
Kula, HI 96790-9471
Laura Rankin
Phone: (410) 756-9672
Email: rankin@carr.org
Charles Richtmyer
PO Box 125
Montour Falls, NY 14865
Phone: (607) 535-7830

Welcome New Members:
INSPECTORS:
Robert Dixon (British Columbia, CANADA)
Wayne Jones (Manitoba, CANADA)
Robert McCoubrey (BC, CANADA)
APPRENTICE INSPECTORS:
Dorienne Rowan-Campbell (Kingston, JAMAICA)
SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:
Duncan Cox (West Roxbury, MA)
Octavia Scharenborg (Cape Girardeau, MO)
Don Yoest (Tipton, MO)

Costa Rica a Go for 2004

IOIA AGMM

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. Dates have not been set yet, but the ‘window’ is mid-February to mid-March. Start polishing up your Spanish skills! Our 1995 AGM was in sunny and hospitable Costa Rica, so this is a welcome return visit for IOIA.

Really Read This Now

The Party’s Over – Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies by Richard Heinberg. The most important book you’ll ever read. Fascinating read on the history of energy in the past 150 years. The world is about to shift – be ready for it!
Currently #5 on the BC Bestseller List (behind 4 Harry Potter books!) Available from New Society Publishers, Box 189, Gabriola Island, BC V0R 1X0 Canada, 1-800-567-6772 US$17.95, CAN$26.95, +$4.50 shipping. Worth every cent!

IOIA Board of Directors
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John Foster……………………..Vice Chair
Jack Reams……………………..Treasurer
Ann Baier……………………..Secretary
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Doug Crabtree……………….Alternate
Garth Kahl…………………..Alternate

THE INSPECTORS’ REPORT is the newsletter of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization, whose mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training and to promote integrity and consistency in the organic certification process. Editorial Staff: Diane Cooner, Box 1259, Guerneville, CA 95446 USA. Phone/fax 707-869-3017, amani@sonic.net

Deadlines are Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 & Nov 1. Relevant articles are welcomed. We strive for accuracy, but the Editor and IOIA cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Published quarterly on recycled paper.
Upcoming Trainings

Winthrop, Maine
IOIA sponsored Basic Organic Farm and Livestock trainings June 12-17 at United Methodist Camp Mechuwana. Green Tree International, LLC of Milford, Connecticut and IOIA planned to cosponsor a delegation from China Quality Certification Centre for Basic Farm Training but this special training was cancelled due to SARS and difficulty of obtaining visas to/from China at this time. The Chinese delegation has expressed an interest in postponing this training in the United States rather than investigate possibility of conducting a future training in China. TC’s for Basic Farm Training were Jim Riddle and Stan Edwards. Jim Riddle was also the TC for the Organic Livestock Inspector training. Registration deadline was May 02, 2003.

Laramie, Wyoming
IOIA and the Wyoming Business Council (WBC) Agribusiness Division will co-sponsor Basic Organic Farm and Livestock Inspector trainings September 15-20, 2003 at the Vee Bar Guest Ranch in Laramie, Wyoming. The 3-day basic farm training from 8:00 a.m. September 15 to 5:00 p.m. September 17 will include field trips to local organic farms. The livestock course will be held from 8:00 a.m. September 18 and conclude by 2:00 p.m. September 20. The 2½ day organic livestock training will include most aspects of livestock inspection with a primary focus on meat animals. A special session on apiary production may be included if there is sufficient interest. For further information please contact Reneé King of Wyoming Business Council (WBC) at (307) 777-6319 (phone); (307) 777-6593 (fax) or via e-mail at rgking@state.wy.us. Each course will be limited to 15 persons. The deadline for applications is August 4, 2003. For information or application forms, contact the IOIA office or the IOIA website at www.ioia.net.

Wilsonville, Oregon
IOIA will sponsor Basic Farm, Livestock, and Process trainings on November 12-20, as well as Advanced Training on November 13-14 at the Namasté Retreat and Conference Center, in Wilsonville, Oregon. Trainings will be held in conjunction with the Oregon Tilth Certified Organic (OTCO) Annual Meeting on November 15 at the same location. The 3½ day Farm Inspector Training is scheduled November 13 through Nov. 15 AM and the 3½ Process inspector training from Nov. 18 through Nov. 21 AM. The 2-day Livestock training on Nov. 16-17 will include most aspects of livestock inspection with a primary focus on dairy. Certification agencies will have the opportunity to present their programs on November 15. For information or application forms, contact the IOIA office or the IOIA website at www.ioia.net. For more information about the location, visit www.lecworld.org but please do not contact Namasté directly for reservations.

Future Trainings: Watch upcoming IOIA newsletters and the website for details as other trainings develop.

IOIA Scholarships Available for Organic Inspector Training
IOIA accepts applications for the annual Andrew Rutherford Scholarship Award, which provides full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored organic inspector training course during the following year.

Both prospective and experienced inspectors are eligible to apply for the Rutherford Scholarship. It is awarded to an individual on the basis of need and potential as judged by the IOIA Scholarship Committee. Applicants can choose to attend any IOIA-sponsored training. The Scholarship pays for tuition, room and board but does not cover transportation or other expenses. The late Andrew Rutherford was a farmer, organic inspector, and organic agriculture researcher from southern Saskatchewan. He served on IOIA’s initial steering committee and then several years as a Founding Board Member.

IOIA also offers the annual Organic Community Initiative Scholarship in 2003, which provides full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored basic organic inspector training during the following year. It is awarded to an individual on the basis of need and their potential to have a positive impact on their regional organic community. The Organic Community Initiative Scholarship is only open to applicants from outside of the US or Canada. Applicants can choose to attend any basic IOIA-sponsored training. The Scholarship pays for tuition, room and board but does not cover transportation or other expenses.

For application materials and information on IOIA training programs, contact Margaret Scoles, IOIA Executive Director/Training Manager, IOIA, P.O. Box 6, Broadus, MT 59317-0006, Email ioia@ioia.net, or visit www.ioia.net to download application forms. The deadline for returning Scholarship applications is November 1. Scholarship recipients are notified by December 15.
a strange man with a thing that looked to him like a metal cross and a plastic pail doing some strange dance in the soaking wet grass. The neighbor responded by saying "whats' ya doin'?" The inspector bashfully said "takin' soil samples". At this the neighbor started to laugh and said "I see".

Still excited about his discovery, the inspector said to the neighbor "come on over you have got to see this". Wearingly, the neighboring farmer came over to where the inspector was standing. The inspector tried to explain what he had discovered but the neighbor just looked at him with a "I thought you were a little crazy" look. The inspector then told the farmer to follow his lead and he began his tiptoe routine and a jump. After doing this two or three more time the neighbor too was surprised about the noise but not real excited, like the inspector.

The inspector then began to explain the inner workings of a well-managed organic farm and the impact it had on the soil as well as the health of the farm. The neighbor semi-thanked the inspector for the consultation and bid his goodbye. The inspector noticed that the neighboring farmer, who was conventional, as he was walking back through his field, would walk softly then jump a little bit and just shake his head. He was not hearing any clicking sound. About two weeks later the neighboring farmer, after getting the inspectors number from the organic farmer, called the inspector and asked "can you tell me more about this organic stuff". The neighbor completed his transition last year and is now added to the list of believers in the organic process.

Have a great season, be safe and as Mr. Keeeler would say, "do good work and keep in touch".

Challenge, from page 1

and a small number of Inspector Members who have done only a handful of inspections. Definition of this category was tightened up at the JOIA Annual Meeting in 2002. It was clarified that inspector training was also a requirement to become an apprentice member. This was handled administratively. New members who joined with a training were put in a supporting, but pending, category until they took a training. Then they automatically became apprentice inspector members. The more recent change to JOIA Bylaws at the 2003 AGM was a much stronger change. Brought to the ballot by petition of a group of experienced JOIA members headed by Maarten Samsom, the issue failed to win a majority after much discussion in Vermont but passed anyway, due to the majority of affirmative mail ballots.

The new revision includes the definition of Inspector Members, the requirements of training, etc. and

Proof of a minimum of 10 ordinary inspections or 3 full days of grower group inspections, on location supervised by an IOIA Inspector Member. Proof of the submission to the JOIA Inspector member of the Reports for 5 of the ordinary inspections (1 ½ grower group inspection days reports). A statement by the supervising IOIA Inspector member is considered enough proof. Only in the event that the applicant lives more than 400 miles from a willing and able Inspector Member, supervision may be limited to Inspection Report review by an Inspector Member of 5 (Ordinary) Inspection reports (or 1 ½ grower group inspection days reports). Applies to new applicants for JOIA Membership after February 22, 2003. It also applies to those members who became IOIA member before February 22, 2003 and who voluntarily elect to meet the conditions as described in this article.

Administrative changes have been made in the JOIA office to accommodate the new bylaw. We revised the JOIA inspector membership application, deleted the apprentice membership category (except for those grandfathered in by being members prior to Feb. 22, 2003), and created a form to use in documenting supervised inspections.

So what's the problem? The primary problem is that when the bylaws proposal passed, no exception was made for experienced inspectors who wished to join JOIA. In fact, many of the current members of JOIA (including myself) could not drop out of JOIA and reapply. How many of us experienced inspectors actually did 10 supervised inspections? Not many... Experienced inspectors are exactly the type of members we want most to recruit. Not only that, is it really appropriate to require that their supervising inspector be an IOIA Inspector Member? This severely discriminates against many of our widely scattered international members. We apparently made a mistake in not getting this last bylaw change quite right before we passed it.

There are other problems, too, although not demanding such urgent attention. IOIA unintentionally but immediately became more exclusive and non-welcoming to new members who wish to join and become members. No longer can new members join with a training and have access to the Forum or the passworded member section of the website, or be included among the Inspector section of the Membership Directory. These were key benefits to helping them find mentors and work. The number of members who join with training is already dropping. Some new members have even expressed to the office that they feel that more experienced inspectors are trying to make it more difficult for them to become inspectors. While that may not be true, finding "a willing and able Inspector Member" to serve as a mentor is truly difficult. The fact that a new member needs one does not mean that one exists. On the other hand, this new hurdle is in some ways easier to overcome than that previously. In the past, inspectors who did 200 inspections in their first 2 years remained apprentice inspectors for the whole period. Now, a motivated new inspector can become an IOIA Inspector Member in a matter of months. And hopefully, those new...
Most Russian nature parks are vast areas without people. This park incorporates the local residents into the park and educates land use that is sustainable for people AND the environment. A primary outcome of the park is the doubling of the population of several species of endangered species. (Our camp mascots for our classes are endangered species of stork, heron, and crane).

I'm excited about going almost around the world to end up at a place that promises to be much like my native Montana. The scenery and wildflowers and crops are actually quite similar. Summers are very hot and winters very cold, just like MT. All electricity is from solar power, which is conserved for more important uses than lightbulbs in the evening. Plumbing is by outhouse. Cooling is in the permafrost. As Emily says, 'this will be a lot like going to grandma's'....

### Inspector Liability Insurance

**We all know the problem, but what is the solution?**

By Margaret Scoles, ED

IOIA received the following message a few weeks ago (the message has been made anonymous out of respect to the member, but the message has global relevance for all inspectors). It was sent in a response to a routine reminder mailing to all members with outstanding dues.

"Sorry - I will renew this week. I have been reconsidering my situation as an organic inspector. As you are probably aware, insurance premium rates have been escalating in recent years. When I went to renew my professional indemnity insurance early this year, the rates quoted were an increase of over six times the previous year. And this was a package deal through the XXXX Institute of AgXXXX. Accordingly I contacted the certifiers for whom I inspect, and told them I would need to increase my rates to cover the additional insurance costs. They all informed me that they would not pay any increase in fees. Since I do not propose to work for a loss I have ceased inspecting. Nevertheless I have maintained my interest in organics, still operating my small market garden, and still holding the position of XXX of the Organic XXX. Obviously I have given you my word that I will renew, and will arrange a money order soon. But I guess it is unlikely I will renew at the end of this year."

The issue of insurance frequently comes up. US inspectors especially have a strong interest in insurance as a membership benefit; the US is notoriously more litigious than many countries. Ideas have included IOIA joining another group such as the Canadian food inspectors where we might be able to participate in insurance plans or getting insured through the USDA (not likely). It is not possible to provide liability insurance to members as a membership association, especially with our non-profit status. IOIA is not a professional trade association or guild, which would make group liability insurance a viable option. The best chance we have is for insurance through certifiers, as additional insureds under their policies. This is much less expensive in total dollars than for each inspector to carry individual policies. In early 1999, IOIA approached the OTA Organic Certifiers Council (OCC) to discuss liability insurance for inspectors. Later that year, we presented a written document and a short presentation at the OCC meeting at the fall Expo in Baltimore. The paper explained that there were two options for inspectors' insurance: (1) for inspectors to insure ourselves as individuals; and (2) for certification agencies to add us to their policies at either their expense or ours. No response. We asked again for a response in early 2000 at the Expo West and the OCC responded that they needed information farther ahead on the agenda. (??) From that point on, we've not pursued it further with the OCC. However, some certifiers actually did take action to add at least some of their independent contract inspectors to their policies. On that basis, our attempts may have gained some ground. In the early years, we were led to believe that certification agencies could only insure employee inspectors. That is most clearly not the case, established in long discussions with three different insurance companies. In early 2001, the Board agreed that we should gather information from certifiers and publish the outcomes for our members. Not much has been done to accomplish this. Over the past few years, I've spent some time on the phone about inspector liability insurance with Gales Creek Insurance of Oregon, who insures several organic certifiers. Gales is at least familiar with inspector's work and language and have been quite helpful. We discussed how we might provide insurance as a membership benefit. All discussion has been informal at this point. They leaned (see Insurance, p 22)
Committee Reports

Accreditation: Interim Chair: Chip Kraynyk, 719-742-5445, krayorganyk@webcoast2coast.net
Liaison John Foster 503-474-2824, john@onlinemac.com Members: Linda Kaner, John Foster, Alex Hanley, Margaret Scoles.
The Accreditation Review Panel (ARP) is currently without a Certifier Representative nor does the panel have an alternate for this position. In regards to filling these positions, no effort is underway at this time. Certificates and cards were mailed to applicants for the 2002 Fall Round. This mailing did not include Letters of Explanation. ARP Chair Linda Kaner has said she will try to get these letters done by June 5, 2003. Not getting Letters of Explanation to applicants in a timely manner has been an ongoing problem with the ARP. Otherwise, the ARP and Linda appear to be very conscientious about their work. It should also be noted that, aside from the BOD, the ARP may be the most active group in IOIA.
Currently there are 3 applications for accreditation under review, all of which are renewals.
At this time, I would like to announce my desire for my role as Chair of the Accreditation Committee not to continue beyond June 30, 2003. The BOD is reminded per Bylaw 5.1 that the BOD chooses the Accreditation Committee Chair.

Business Plan: Ad Hoc, Chair: Jack Reams, marlene_reams@telus.net 604-858-9815. Liaison Brian Magaro, 717-732-7940, magarob@aol.com
The Board is currently planning a retreat in Broadus in October to develop a business plan.

Bylaws: Chair, Arthur Harvey, 207-388-2860, arthurharvey@yahoo.com Liaison Garry Lean, 705-885-5230 garylean@sympatico.ca Members are: Lance Christie, Wendy Lee Clark, Al Johnson and Mischa Popoff. This committee continues its work of proposing changes whenever current wording creates a problem such as unintended consequences or confusing wording; and reviewing members’ proposals for clarity and suitability.

Canadian Committee: Co-chairs Jim Hudson, jhudson@sk.sympatico.ca 306-543-0662, Rochelle Eisen, 250-494-7980, rare@vip.net Liaison Dag Falck dfalck@junction.net, 250-379-2614.
This committee saw the successful completion of an advanced training in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, at the end of April. This advanced training included an Aquaculture training and an OCIA Workshop as attached activities. The responses were very positive.
A copy of the proposed Canadian Standards was presented by Janine Gibson. The Canadian Standards have not been accepted by the various parties involved, for a variety of reasons. One of these reasons presented by Janine was that the Standards were voluntary rather than compulsory. Janine continues to seek IOIA support for her involvement in establishing the Standards.
Special thanks to the inspectors that worked to achieve this advanced training and the opportunity for networking plus updating ourselves.

Communications: Chair Bob Howe, earthorganic@aol.com 845-657-9592.
Liaison Brian Magaro (see Business Plan). No report submitted at this time.

Compensation/Working Conditions: Chair: Eric Feutz, 573-256-7643, brandt_01@email.msn.com Liaison Doug Crabtree dcrabtree@state.mt.us 406-444-9421 No report submitted.

Editorial Review: Chair Joe Montecalvo, montecalvo@aol.com 805-772-3574, Liaison Dag Falck (see Canadian Committee). Ongoing.

Ethics: Chair Joyce Ford, jford@hbci.com Liaison: Brian Magaro (see Business Plan). No report submitted.

Finance: Chair/Liaison: Jack Reams, see Business Plan. No report submitted.

Funding: Chair Diane Cooner, 707-869-3017, amani@sonic.net Liaison Jack Reams, see Finance. No report submitted.

Latin American: Chair Lidia Gaivironsky, 54114 503-3106, gaivi@sion.com Liaison Luis Brenes, lbrenes@racsa.co.cr +506-226-1681.
Chair Lidia continues to answer messages from Latinamerican people, to translate press releases, to send resources for the website. Working to increase IOIA exposure in LA and to increase membership, organize advanced courses in Spanish, and to have a Spanish language page in the newsletter on a regular basis.

Membership: Chair Chris Kidwell 530-628-4560, ckidwell@tcoek12.org, Liaison Brian Magaro (see Finance) The Membership & Nominations Committees were combined into one committee. The nominations committee members were invited to join the membership committee and an additional three new members joined the membership committee at the AGM in Vermont. Our goals for the year have been identified and the committee has begun discussion on membership issues.
The requirements of becoming a full member of IOIA were changed at the AGM in February. This committee will explore the consequences of this change. Six new inspector members and one new supporting individual (apprentice) member have been approved for membership so far in 2003. One new supporting individual member and one new supporting business have joined. In addition, 26 others have paid membership dues and are in the supporting member status pending completion of paperwork or supervised inspections.

Current Membership of IOIA:
Inspectors: 179 (32 Accredited, 147 others)
Apprentice Inspectors: 95
Supporting Individuals: 26 plus the 26 mentioned above
Supporting Business/Organizations: 21
Supporting Certification Agencies: 13
Total Members: 360
Members are David Dahmen, Sarah Cushing, and Billy Hunter, Kelle Kersten, Carmen Pape and Charles Richtmyer. Nominations committee members joining in 2003 are John Danforth, Sandra Conway and Kathy Turner.

Regional Training Oversight: Chair Harriet Behar, harrieta@mwtnet Liaison Ann Baier, ahbaier@aol.com 831-426-2052. Ongoing, approving trainings and TC’s. Actively soliciting for new members. No report submitted.

Scholarship: Chair Rochelle Eisen, 250-494-7980, rare@vip.net Liaison Ann Baier, see RTOC. Revisions of both the 2003 Rutherford and the Community Initiative Scholarship application and evaluation packages have just been completed. Committee members include Aaron Brin, Bob Howe, Margaret Weigelt, Nancy Ludwig, and chair Rochelle Eisen. Rochelle plans to step down from this committee following the 2003 selection process.
Elaine Ferry of West Virginia attended the Vermont Basic Process training with this year’s Rutherford Scholarship. Diana Alejo of Argentina plans to attend the Oregon Livestock training with this year’s CIS scholarship (the first to be awarded).

Training: Chair Janine Gibson, 204-434-6018, Janine@mb.sympatico.ca Liaison Ann Baier, see RTOC. No report submitted.
Federal Register Update
By Margaret Scoles
The Federal Register published Proposed Rules to the NOP on April 16, 2003 (Vol. 68, No. 73). Public comment period closed April 28. While this time frame sounds cruelly short, most of the proposed changes were expected, all were based on NOSB recommendations, and few were controversial. In fact, the proposed changes fell short of the expectations of the NOSB. OMRI was outspoken in their disappointment with the conservative number of materials proposed. The NOP has countered by announcing that further proposed rule changes will be posted shortly. A summary of the published changes (exact text is abbreviated) follows. The Federal Register noted that it was the intent of the NOP to put all comments on the NOP website. As of this date (June 7), comments are not yet available on the website and it is unknown when decisions will be final.

Proposed Adding 10 substances to National List:

205.601.a. (Disinfectants, algicide, sanitizers)
Add copper sulfate, for use as an algicide, with some specific restrictions.
Add ozone gas as an irrigation system cleaner only.
Add peracetic acid for disinfecting equipment, seed, and asexually propagated planting material.

205.601.e. (insecticides, acaricides)
Add copper sulfate, for use in shrimp production, with some specific restrictions.

205.601.i. (disease control)
Add peracetic acid for fire blight control with some specific restrictions.

205.601.k. (plant growth regulators)
Change wording to, “Ethylene gas, for regulation of pineapple flowering”

205.601.m. (plant growth regulators)
Add Calcium chloride, except as a brine sourced foliar spray to treat physiological disorders associated with calcium uptake.

205.603 (Prohibited Naturals for Crop Production)

Revised annotations for 2 materials:

205.602 (Prohibited Naturals)
Amends sodium nitrate annotation by adding “use in spirulina production is unrestricted until October 21, 2005.”

205.605 (Allowed Synthetic, Nonagricultural, Ingredients in Organic Processed Foods)
Amends annotation for ethylene to read “Ethylene, allowed for postharvest ripening of tropical fruit and degreening of citrus.”

Makes 8 technical corrections.

Opportunity for public comment on specific uses for ethylene in crop production. Due to a technicality, opportunity for public comment was missed as part of the usual approval process. The NOSB recommended that ethylene be added to the List. The NOP included it without receiving public comment.

Summary of NOSB Decisions on Materials at May 13 Meeting
Tetrahydrofurfuryl Alcohol – benign solvent (stated by the petitioner) used in crop production. APPROVED WITH 2006 SUNSET
Potassium Silicate - DEFERRED
Phosphoric Acid-crops - DEFERRED
Glycerine Oleate/Glycerine Monooleate - Antifoaming agent for micro sulfur crop foliar feed sprays-APPROVED WITH A 2006 SUNSET

Livestock materials
Proteinated Chelates DEFFERED
Calcium Propriionate - Mold inhibitor in dried herbal remedies, Not including aloe vera - APPROVED ONLY AS MOLD INHIBITOR IN DRIED HERBAL REMEDIES
Furosemide - Udder edema APPROVED (double withdrawal the FDA requirements time on the label)

Mineral Oil - Dust suppressant in the formulation in feed supplements/vitamins-known carcinogen to humans (droplets in feed) - NOT APPROVED
Atropine - Pinkeye, plant poisoning APPROVED
Moxidectin - Topically applied broad spectrum parasicide-Transdermal, penetrates into the animal. Residues remain in fats and lipids, remains active 24 days with 26% excreted into feaces. DEFFERED

Processing Materials
Egg White Lysozyme - NATURAL, APPROVED
Nitrous Oxide - DEFFERED
Malic Acid - ONLY NON-SYNTHETIC FORM, APPROVED
Sodium Acid Pyrophosphate - Slows rising of bread doughs as well as processed cheese foods - APPROVED ONLY FOR USE AS A LEAVENING AGENT
Microorganisms - APPROVED
I attended the NOSB meeting in Austin Texas on May 13 & 14, and this summary details the areas I felt were of interest to organic inspectors. Jim Riva, who oversees the accreditation of NOP accredited certifying agents, gave a 45 minute presentation to the NOSB, describing the program as well as the activities done by the on-site auditors. Before going out on their audit, an accreditation review committee performs a desk audit and gives the on-site auditor specific areas that need special review.

Jim stated that whenever an auditor checks a yes or no on the checklist during the audit, there is also a reference attached stating where the information was found or not found concerning the compliance to that specific issue. Such as “…. page …of the quality manual has the policy for this specific issue…” This is similar to what many certifiers request of their inspectors when using checklist inspection reports. Random files are pulled as part of the on-site audit, with each file reviewed that all policies are being followed including within the client and certifier communications as well as complete inspection reports. During the accreditation audit attributes in a positive way are also noted, as well as noncompliances. Continuous improvement points, corrective action requests, hold points (out of compliance) were all listed with the NOP notified of hold points. Immediate corrective action can be mandated by NOP.

Jim had very high praise for organic inspectors, and asked those inspectors in the audience to raise their hands in order to receive special recognition for a job well done. He stated his auditors consistently found the inspectors to be well-informed, professional and passionate in their work. There was some amusement at his enthusiastic approval of inspectors, and so as a way to tone things down, he stated that we were somewhat eccentric folks, but in a good way. Since our work as organic inspectors and their work as auditors is very similar, this praise by our “peers” in this public organic forum was very gratifying and we should all be proud of our good work.

AMS auditors are trained in ISO as well as a wide variety of production and processes, such as fruit and vegetable, poultry, dairy etc.. At this time there are 19 domestic certifiers pending on their accreditation applications and 30 foreign pending accreditation. There are currently a total of 87 accredited certifiers. Contact info for Jim Riva, AMS, ARC (Audit Review and Compliance)...Livestock and Seed program, is 202-720-1124.

Public comment was given to the NOSB. The organic labeling of body care products in a way that is in many cases in direct contradiction to the organic labeling rule is pervasive in the marketplace, and this topic was repeated by many consumer representatives. Opinions on inert, food contact surface materials, livestock access to the outdoors, synthetic in production and processing, short time frame from TAP review release to the public to the meeting (12 days), dairy herd conversion and specific pros and cons for the materials to be considered were presented.

Barbara Robinson stated the livestock feed cost survey is done, but cannot release it until it goes through the farm bill implementation procedures and is approved. The NOP has not done any work on standards or rule writing on the wild fish organic label recently added to their list of items to be done by Congress.

Richard Matthews gave an update on the peer review panel. ANSI will be managing the peer review panel with two ANSI personnel (ISO auditors 61 and 19011) and one “organic industry representative” on this panel. NOP is looking for public input (names) for the one organic technical advisory member.

An incomplete federal register docket listing additions to the National List for crops was released a few weeks ago and Richard stated that another federal register docket will be sent out next week for processing materials, as well as another docket for livestock materials in a month or so…Delay came from waiting on approval from FDA on livestock and processing before going out to public comment.

NOP distributed an outline describing a rule change (new 205.630) that would describe the future NOP policy decision making procedure. I believe this will posted on the NOP website. It describes what is a guidance document, who has to follow the specific document, public comment, NOP adherence to the guidance document etc. Richard stated that the food contact surfaces policy statement released last fall will be the first guidance document to go through this procedure. It was not clarified if this means that the food contact substance policy is not then going to be enforced (although it seems this is the case) or when this rule change dealing with NOP guidance documents might go into effect so the food contact substances guidance could then be formally approved after going through the stated process.

Kim Burton gave a presentation on materials review and an updated process within the NOSB and she stated only three new items have been petitioned.

- Benyladine - crop plant growth regulator
- Potassium Carbonate - aquatic plant extract
- Hydrogen Chloride - crop delining cotton seed

Jim Riddle presented a recommendation from the accreditation subcommittee of the NOSB clarifying description and process for minor and major noncompliances. This will be on the NOP/NOSB website for public comment, and they are open to having more possible scenarios (especially livestock and processing) added to the current list in the format provided. Public comment will be at least 30 days. Jim Riddle encouraged everyone to give their feedback on this topic. NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) is working with IFOAM to accredit IFOAM as an accreditation body (using IFOAM standards and ISO 61, not NOP).

The following recommendation was approved by the NOSB and given to the NOP on the subject of chlorine.

A. Change the annotation of 205.601 a 2 to read: Chlorine materials-Except, that residual chlorine levels in the water in direct or food contact and in flush water from cleaning irrigation systems that is applied to crops or fields shall not exceed the maximum residual disinfectant limit under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

B. Change the annotation of 205.603 a 3 to read: Chlorine materials-disinfecting and sanitizing facilities and equipment. Residual chlorine levels in the water in direct crop or food contact shall not exceed the maximum residual disinfectant limit under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
C. Change the annotation of 205.605 b 9 to read: Chlorine materials – disinfecting and sanitizing food contact surfaces. Except that, residual chlorine levels in the water in direct crop or food contact shall not exceed the maximum residual disinfectant limit under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

D. Change the Q and A on the NOP website:

Q. As a certified operator at what point in the crop should I monitor the residual disinfectant limit?
A. Certified operators must monitor the chlorine level upstream of the wash operation or rinse operation, where the water last contacts the organic product. The level of chlorine in the water which last contacts the organic food products must meet the 4 mg/l limit as set forth by the Safe Drinking Water Act. A description of the operation’s monitoring procedure is to be contained in the operation’s Organic System Plan. Documents which demonstrate compliance are to be reviewed and verified during the operation’s annual inspection.

NOSB also approved two livestock recommendations to the NOP. According to the NOSB, the first recommendation clarifies that once the mother animal comes into organic production, she cannot leave and then return to organic production. Once she gives one organic calf, she must be under continuous management in order to continue to give birth to organic slaughter stock. For example, no parasiticides could be used after she has passed the last third of gestation of her first organic calf. The second recommendation dealt with improving the format of the dairy herd replacement: to make the dairy herd replacement to organic by whatever means, the whole herd has to be under organic management for last third of gestation of her first organic calf.

The afternoon of the first day dealt with extensive discussion on the materials to be voted on the second day. See page 10 for a summary of the materials, their use and the vote or decision on each. There will be full minutes of the entire meeting sometime in the future on the NOP website, for those of you who enjoy that sort of thing.

**October 22, 2003 is the next NOSB meeting in Washington D.C.**

**Harriet’s Comments to the NOSB – May 14, 2003**

“Hello, my name is Harriet Behar and I, like Jim Riddle, have the privilege of being a past chair of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association. I am not here representing any organization, but would like to share my opinions about materials and processes approved for organic production. I have been an organic inspector since 1991 visiting more than 1300 organic farms and processors around the world. I have been an organic vegetable farmer for over 30 years and a conscious organic consumer for longer than that. It is this experience that is the basis of my comments to you. “As an inspector, I encourage you consider the challenges inherent in verifying annotations to materials on the National List. Those annotations based on product composition are easy and fairly straightforward to verify. Those annotations based on production use, or statements such as “…emergency use only…” are more difficult. Speaking to your upcoming decision on Furosemide, I have seen other annotated items that producers have found ways to justify routine use beyond the intention of the NOSB. Verifying double the withdrawal time is difficult. In addition, I question why a synthetic should be added to the approved national list when there are so many natural alternatives.

“In my experience, most long time organic farmers prefer simplicity in the materials that are allowed and it is the newcomers still struggling with their organic system, that rely on synthetic materials to overcome their management deficiencies. **THE ORGANIC LABEL SHOULD BE APPLIED ONLY TO PRODUCTS PRODUCED IN A FUNCTIONAL ORGANIC SYSTEM.** Speaking to SAP, we do not need to have an organic counterpart for every processed food found in the American marketplace, and therefore there may be some foods that may never be able carry the 100% or organic label. The made with organic label could be assigned for this product or the conventional market exists for products that do not meet the organic standards. I ask you to review products for their true necessity in the organic system. Limit the use of synthetics in an organic product.

“Speaking to Moxidectin, just because one product (Ivermectin) is on the approved synthetic list, it doesn’t mean that every other item is that may be more benign should be allowed as well.

“I understand the commitment those who have put forward petitions have made, and the need to listen closely to their concerns. I also ask you to listen to the voices of those organic consumers who are not present here, who purchase organic products with significant monetary premiums because they are looking to lessen their personal intake of synthetic compounds, as well as the reduced use of synthetic items in our environment.

“I am not a hardhearted individual, I have sympathized with both farmers and processors listening to their perceived need for certain materials to aid them in their production challenges. However, I have also returned to these same operations a few years later for a subsequent inspection and these producers have found management solutions. They are proud of the deeper understanding they learned by exploring the solutions in a system-based process rather than with synthetic materials.

“I applaud your recommendation on dairy animal replacements in a converted organic herd and your recommendation on measuring chlorinated water that is in contact with organic foods. I urge the NOP to quickly adopt these recommendations with no changes. I am also gratified to see the list of synthetics being petitioned for inclusion to the National List contains many fewer materials than in the past, and hope that this represents the organic community moving towards a whole system approach to organic production. I also thank the progress that the NOP has made on the peer review panel and process to develop guidance documents that includes public comment. It is important that the third organic community member of the peer review panel be someone well respected and deeply intimate with the organic rule, ISO and accreditation systems. Public input on this third member is essential. The organic marketplace has experienced rapid growth due to the integrity and transparency it offers. Open dialogue and adherence to the OFPA strengthens trust in the organic label."
ATO Conference Report
By Margaret Sceles

IOIA staffed a booth for the 2nd time in Austin at the ‘All Things Organic’ conference and trade show on May 16-17.

On May 14, I attended the 2nd day of NOSB meeting and the evening OTA AGM. I testified to the NOSB and spoke a bit to Richard Mathews. Harriet Behar presented a full 5-minute statement, which I followed with a shorter statement and a ‘ditto’ on Harriet’s (see page 8 & end of this article).

Highlights of the NOSB meeting were the addition of several new materials and the announcement of the 3-person NOP Accreditation Review team soon to be named. Policy Statements and Q & A’s on the NOP website will be replaced by “Good Guidance Practices”. Other highlights were an abrupt closed-door executive session of the NOSB, called by Richard Mathews, and Marty Mesh’s questioning of the make-up of the NOSB board. The next NOSB meeting dates are October 22-24. To add something to the agenda, at least 60 days advance notice is required.

At the OTA AGM on May 14, new BOD members elected to OTA were Nancy Hirschberg, Lynn Clarkson, Phil Margolis (who will serve as President), and Debra Boyle. OTA unveiled their newly refurbished website (including a new “members only” section) with a digital presentation.

May 15: I attended OTA Conference Day, QAC Livestock Subcommittee Meeting and OCC Meetings. Marty Mesh chaired the OCC meeting. The OCC is electing a new chair as well as a new Steering Committee. The near-final Standards Consensus Project, coordinated by Pat Kane, was a primary discussion topic. The Steering committee also reported on their Strategic Plan. The OCC has virtually no funding and does not plan to go farther with more issues. The project is concluded. Inspectors were well represented at both meetings. The organic OTA BBQ at the end of day was a highlight, complete with a detour through the Texas Dept. of Ag’s Organic Certification Coordinator’s office (credit to hospitality of Leslie McKinney, head of the TDA program). TDA uses all staff regulatory inspectors for organic inspections and so far, has done all of their own inspector training. The evening included self-guided tours of the Barr mansion, music, dancing, and a chance to catch up with many friends including Joe Smillie, founding IOIA BOD member.

May 16: Attended conference sessions in the morning, including a NOP update (Robinson, Mathews, and Jones), an IFOAM session (well attended), and a powerful speech by keynote speaker Robert Kennedy, Jr. A highlight of the Trade Show was an Organic Fashion Show, narrated by Sandra Marquardt. Although not required to be such high percentage organic, all garments shown were 90% or more organic fiber. Several IOIA inspectors attended the IFOAM member meeting from 5-6 pm (very light attendance) and their reception afterwards. Suzanne Vaupe1’s husband attended the meeting and the group was profoundly moved by a moment of silence in her memory. IFOAM representatives were Thomas Cierpka, IFOAM Managing Director; Diane Bowen, IFOAM staff person located in the US; Gerald Hermann, Germany, IFOAM VP; Pipo Lernoud, Argentina, BOD member; and Sheldon Weinberg, USA, BOD Member. IFOAM has a new Mission Statement and is actively seeking more North American participation. We learned more about I-GO, which funds grants for work in 3rd world countries. IOIA members assembled for dinner, including John Foster, Jim Riddle, Reneé King, Harriet Behar, Maarten Samson, Doriene-Rowan Campbell (recently joined apprentice inspector member from Jamaica), and myself. Other IOIA members we networked with informally and/or met separately with were Jake Lewin, George Kuepper, Bob Durst, Vanessa Bogenholm, and Erica Walz. IOIA members seemed to appreciate having a “home” at the show and our booth was active. A few of us managed to get to Barton Springs (great natural swimming hole, thanks again, Maarten!) for a swim before closing hours. The 2nd most popular ‘tourist activity’ was watching the bats at dusk. Austin is famous for the many 100,000’s of bats which live on the underside of the expansion bridges.

May 17: I attended the ‘unveiling’ presentation for OTA’s new Center for Organic Education and Promotion, (a 501.c.3) and then worked the Trade Show until I left to return home on Saturday afternoon. News Briefs from the Conference: IOIA and AIB discussed collaborating on customized training for the industry. The Wyoming training moved forward; key details were finalized with Reneé King. QCS proposed plans for a regional training in FL later this year; some pre-planning was done with Jon Austin, QCS Certification Director. John Foster, IOIA Vice-Chair, helped out with business meetings including one with Thomas Cierpka about IFOAM manual issues and potential new funding for projects through I-GO. We gained a new supporting member (Organic Certifiers, CA) and collected some past dues. I visited with Pete Gonzalez, OTCO ED, about the upcoming Oregon trainings. Supporting business member ARGENCERT reps stopped by. I met some good contacts from India, Nicaragua, and Mexico and sold a few IOIA resources. We distributed brochures, newsletters, training schedules, book price lists, scholarship applications, Maine training info and applications, all of which were more significant than the resource sales. I also went on the floor to be sure to meet as many people as possible, making personal contact with about 20% of the 250 exhibitors. I recruited free materials for our trainings, got NewFarm.org info (great new website), etc. I failed to connect with the GSC Mobile Solutions people, but Harriet, John, and others spent time there.

Cost to IOIA: $750. The booth was free from OTA. We are over-budget in Promotion (our budget was $500). This is the 2nd year to have a line item for Promotion. This was my first year to attend ATO. Before I went to Austin, I had some reservations about whether IOIA should attend such events if money is tight. Looking back, I have no reservations. The experience convinced me that it is a worthwhile $5 investment and very beneficial to IOIA to participate. I was very impressed with the respect given inspectors in Austin, at the NOSB meetings, the OTA meetings, and the Trade Show. OTA plans to have more of their meetings at the ATO, so IOIA’s participation will probably shift correspondingly a bit from Expos and toward ATO. IOIA has historically attempted to participate annually in the Expo East, varying from full Executive Committee to none each year over the past several years.

Special thanks to John Foster (who represented the BOD and assisted in his new
role as IOIA Vice-Chair), and Jim Riddle, Drew Stuckey, Maarten Samsom for their help with the booth and logistics. IOIA made many contacts and staffed the booth most hours. Next year, the All Things Organic show will move to Chicago. Somehow, I'm just a bit sad to say goodbye to Austin so quickly, but I look forward to a much bigger show in a bigger city.

ATO - From Austin to Chicago

The Organic Trade Association will co-locate its 2004 All Things Organic Conference and Trade Show with the Food Marketing Institute's FMI Show, the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade's (NASFT) Fancy Food Show, and the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association's (UFFVA) United 2004 Produce Expo & Conference during May 2-4, 2004 at McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois.

"Holding All Things Organic in a more central location, while providing exhibitors access to more buyers, is a win-win for the organic industry," according to Katherine DiMatteo, OTA's executive director.

Margaret’s Comments to the NOSB – May 14

“Good Morning. I am Margaret Scoles, organic inspector and Executive Director of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association. Thank you for your work and the opportunity to speak.

“We realize that one of your primary roles is to review and make recommendations on materials. However, we urge you to protect the spirit of OFPA and the NOP rule by exercising extreme caution and reluctance to add materials to the list. Please don’t let the onslaught of materials issues derail other important NOSB work. We don’t want ‘organic’ to be defined by a list of materials. Please resist all efforts toward adding any synthetic substances for processed foods or more synthetic materials for crops and livestock. Every substance added makes it more difficult to keep the next one off. We were pleased to see that the proposed NOP rule amendments released last month were very modest in respect to adding materials to the list.

“Please keep the focus of our organic program on organic process and management based systems - not a product list. Speaking from 15 years of experience and over 1000 inspections, most certified operations use no or few added inputs. They are happy to treat if necessary and segregate as non-organic. They and the consumers of their products are not served by a longer list. Keep it simple. Also, on behalf of IOIA, I say 'ditto' to what Harriet Behar just read.”

Interesting Veterinary Facts

From notes taken at the Saskatchewan Advanced Training presentation by Ted Dupmeier, DVM, Swift Current, SK

L Milking machine problems are the most common cause of mastitis.

L Scours is very commonly mistreated with antibiotics. Antibiotics are almost never effective for scours. Only 1 type of calf scours actually responds to antibiotics. Bio-security is the key to viral scours. Key management practices for scours prevention are: colostrum, appropriate calving season and clean area, biosecurity, and diagnose/cull.

L Timing of colostrum intake is key to calf health. Colostrum protection is absorbed for only the 1st 4 hours of a calf's life. For the 1st 24 hours, it makes a protective coating in the calf's stomach. After 24 hours, it has no colostrum effect. It acts the same as milk. Calves can be tested later in life for colostrum intake levels. Frozen colostrum retains its quality for years. Colostrum is manufactured by the cow until she is milked. After that she produces milk. Some microbes are the same between species (cow, sheep, etc.) so cross-species colostrum can have value.

L Vinegar makes a good foot disinfectant for inspectors.

L Management practices to avoid feedlot pneumonia are: proper nutrition, increased B vitamins, reduce stress, and treat with electrolytes.

L Shrink is about the same no matter how long the haul is for the calf, contrary to popular belief.

L Ringworm is a fungus and can live in wood, so it is very contagious.

L Diatomaceous Earth is useful for calves that are eating dirt. No study shows efficacy of DE for internal and external parasites. Dr. Dupmeier expressed some concerns that routine DE use could kill off the 'easy bugs' and leave the more difficult ones.

L Stress causes cortisteroids to go up and that suppresses the immune system.
TRAINING NEWS

Two Practicums Compliment IOIA/Assiniboine Community College Distance Delivery

By Janine Gibson

After two and a half months of distance learning of the IOIA /ACC Basic Farm Inspection curriculum, 19 students met from across Canada (plus one from California!) April 30- May 1 and May 2 –4th, 2003 in Fraserwood and Basswood, Manitoba, Canada.

Janine Gibson was the Training Coordinator ably assisted by Sandra Conway. 17 Certificates of Completion were awarded. The diverse, closed loop Murry/Proven farm that has been the field trip for this course in the past, had requested no more than 15 participants as a quality improvement. So two Practicums were organized by Assiniboine Community College, the co-sponsor of this training. In addition to the feed, beef, hogs and chickens of the Organic Producers Assoc of Manitoba (OPAM) certified Murry/Proven Farm, 5 students visited Jim and Sheila Martin and their OPAM certified organic feed and turkey farm near Fraserwood in Manitoba’s Interlake region. Students, hosts and trainers all enjoyed the better learning environment fostered by smaller group sizes. The On-Farm Processing components of both farms involved a range of equipment for making feed and livestock bedding, and complimented the primary focus of forage and grain production for certified feed. Students rated the course and the bed and breakfast lodging and organic meals as excellent, a real taste of the prairies! ACC is developing a Distance Livestock Training program in conjunction with IOIA for 2004. Also under discussion is a Processing Inspection Course for distance delivery.

Saskatchewan

Fifteen inspectors, all IOIA members, attended the Advanced Training in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, on April 27-28. Janine Gibson served as Training Coordinator, with assistance from Margaret Scoles and Lisa Pierce.

Bob Kitlar and Paul Routledge of Enviro-Test Labs in Winnipeg provided most of the Day 1 training, addressing Sampling Training for Residue Analysis (water, soil, and plant tissue). The group enjoyed hands-on sampling exercises, which included a walk to a nearby park for well assessment. Organic Standards and Livestock Inspection topics were the focus of Day 2. Dr. Ted Dupmeier, DVM, from Swift Current, gave an excellent presentation of organic livestock topics and animal health. Ted won the Outrageous Statement by acclamation. There were many, many great statements. The winning statement was “Confinement livestock put my kids through university!” Janine Gibson brought the group up to date on the recently released Draft Canadian CGSB Organic Standards, which is a voluntary standard not yet widely adopted in Canada. Margaret Scoles presented the NOP Rule, including difficult issues and the new proposed rule changes. Organic Control Points in Grain Handling Facilities (a virtual group tour of a grain plant via PowerPoint) and an Investigative Skills/Inspection Issues discussion ended the training.

Inspectors held an informal meeting on the evening of April 27. Amy Griner held an OCIA Inspector Workshop with 10 participants on April 28 following the training. The extended length of the training, with most attendees arriving early for the Aquaculture training and staying on for the OCIA workshop allowed for lots of collegial sharing, an aspect often sorely missed at IOIA Advanced Training with larger group sizes and more compressed time frames.

Wood Acres was comfortable and relatively convenient. Canadian inspectors expressed appreciation for the effort to accommodate their needs with a SK Advanced Training, as had been requested last year at the Saskatchewan and IFOAM inspectors’ meetings. It was a beautiful site with good accommodations at a reasonable cost. Thank you to Sandra Conway and Jill Forrester for locating the facility, assisting with logistics, and coordinating organic food.

Hopefully this training will be a prototype for the future – a customized training to meet the need of regional inspectors. When inspectors in western Canada asked what it would take to get a training in SK, they were told ‘15 people’. We communicated by Email until we knew we had 15 people. Arrangements were made entirely by Email with startling efficiency, considerable input into the agenda from the attendees, and a sizable amount of local volunteerism from the IOIA inspectors in western Canada.