

Celebrating
20 Years!

The Inspectors' Report

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USDA Bows Deeply to Biotech – OK's GE Alfalfa and GE Sugar Beets

Dealing a double blow to organic agriculture in just 8 days, US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has given the green light to planting of genetically engineered (GE) alfalfa and has partially deregulated planting of GE sugar beets. The decisions have been met with universal outrage and condemnation by the organic agriculture sector and consumers groups, along with a promise from the Center for Food Safety to immediately challenge both decisions in court.

On January 27, USDA announced plans to allow commercial planting of Forage Genetics International's (FGI) Glyphosate-Tolerant Alfalfa genetically engineered to tolerate St. Louis-based Monsanto's Roundup herbicide without any federal requirements to prevent contamination of the rest of alfalfa seed and plantings. This was followed by a February 4 announcement that USDA will allow the planting of Monsanto's "Roundup Ready" GE sugar beets even though the agency has yet to finalize conducting an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS").

The expected impact of these decisions is far reaching, particularly to organic farmers. Alfalfa, an insect pollinated perennial, is the fourth-largest U.S. field crop grown annually on about 23 million acres in the U.S. and is the primary forage crop for dairy production.

According to Don Huber Ph.D., emeritus professor at Purdue University, the commercialization of GE alfalfa could result in the contamination of organic and conventional alfalfa within five years. Such contamination threatens organic markets and diminishes non-contaminated, non-GE seed options for organic producers. GE sugar beets can cross-pollinate with non-GE sugar beets and related Swiss chard and table beets. And both crops bring with them an increased rise in superweeds caused by excessive spraying of the toxic herbicide Roundup.

"This creates a perplexing situation when the market calls for a supply of crops free of genetic engineering. The organic standards prohibit the use of genetic engineering, and consumers will not tolerate the accidental presence of GE materials in organic products yet GE crops continue to proliferate unchecked," said Christine Bushway, Executive Director and CEO of the Organic Trade Association (OTA). She added, "Preserving market and farmer choice and agricultural diversity are central to USDA's mission and the future of rural American livelihoods. This failure to do so will make it increasingly difficult to meet the growing demand for U.S. organic crops."

The organic sector is a profitable part of a diverse U.S. agricultural economy—a 26.6-billion-dollar-a-year industry that employs tens of thousands around the country, and helps keep at least 14,540 family farms operating in our rural countryside. Except for 2009, the organic industry has experienced double digit growth—often over 20 percent—annually for over a decade. (See **GE**, page 4)

Notes from the Chair by Bob Durst

This will be my last 'Notes from the Chair', as my term as a BOD member is coming to a close. It's been a quick and exciting 4 years. I encourage all of you to consider participating in your board, as one learns a lot about the ins and outs of the organic industry that are not the same as you see as just an inspector. I'm honored to have been able to work so closely with all of the great folks on IOIA's staff and in particular with Margaret. It's been great fun.

One particular item that I want to bring to your attention is a new initiative that you will certainly be hearing more about at the AGM and in coming months. It is the search for another senior staff person for IOIA. IOIA has grown over the years and current staff, in particular Margaret, has valiantly stepped up to the plate to keep things moving forward, but it's just too much for any single person to do. A [see **Notes**, page 4]

VOTE!

A Reminder to
Inspector
Members:
If you can't attend
the AGM, don't
forget to send your
proxy and your
ballot.

Be sure to vote by
March 24

Accreditation News

A reminder that March 1 is the Accreditation Application Deadline.

Accreditation renewals are:

Monique Scholz-C, L & P
Mary Wilson-C, L & P
Jack Reams-C, L & P
Janine Gibson-C, L & P
David Dahmen - P

NOP seeks comments on "made with" percentage claim guidance

NOP has published [draft guidance](#) on percentage statements and the "made with" claim. Comments are due on or before March 14. In the draft guidance, NOP clarifies that 1) non-organic ingredients in the remaining 30 percent must be on the National List, and 2) a "made with" statement must include specified organic ingredients or food groups, not simply a total percentage; and an organic percentage statement without the "made with" label claim is not allowable. Under 1), the guidance also says synthetic substances used to manufacture 605 items must be on the National List if they are present in the final product.

Interesting factoids about food, farming and the environment

\$60 billion – global market for organic food and beverages in 2010

Source: *Organic Monitor*

29% -- Honey bee colony loss in 2009

34% -- Honey bee colony loss in 2010

Source: *CCD Steering Committee, "Colony Collapse Disorder Progress Report," USDA-ARS, June 2010*

\$22.98 – average price of seed corn per acre in 1995, the year before the first GE corn was introduced

\$104.00 – price of Genuity SmartStax corn seed per acre in 2010 (Monsanto and Dow corn varieties containing eight GE traits)

Source: 1995 data -- Charles Benbrook, *"The Magnitude and Impacts of the Biotech and Organic Seed Price Premium", Organic Center Critical Issue Report, December 2009*

2010 data -- Melody Voith, *"Seed Defenders," Chemical and Engineering News, November 8, 2010*

IOIA 20th AGM March 27

Come to Tampa, Florida and celebrate IOIA's 20th Anniversary with us!

The Annual Meeting will follow two days of advanced organic inspector training on March 25-26. Topics include Advanced Processing Topics, COR-NOP Equivalency, Global Organic Textiles, Residue Sampling, GAP, an afternoon with Miles McEvoy (NOP) and more. Harriet Behar, past IOIA Chair (2001-2003), is on the speaker roster.

After the training, IOIA will move to the nearby Sweetwater Organic Community Farm www.sweetwater-organic.org, where Rick Martinez, past IOIA chair (1995-1999) will co-host the start of the anniversary celebration. Martinez serves as Executive Director of the certified organic farm, with several sites in the Tampa area. The evening will include a bonfire, refreshments, live music, FUNdraising auction with ace auctioneer Brian Magaro, past IOIA Chair (2003-2006) and many surprises. If you have an item to donate, let us know!

The annual meeting begins at noon on Sunday, March 27 with organic lunch (free to inspector members) at the Mainsail Suites Hotel & Conference Center in Tampa. Fred Kirschenmann, certified organic farmer, author, Fellow for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and President of Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture will deliver the keynote, "The Farm, Food, Certification Connection: It's All About Relationships". Kirschenmann was the keynote speaker for IOIA's first AGM in 1993. The AGM will follow. This meeting signals a significant change in IOIA governance. If supported by the Annual Meeting, the size of the Board of Directors will increase from five to seven directors, and five of those will be elected during the meeting. Membership focus discussion topics will be selected during the meeting. If you can't attend - inspector members - don't forget to send your proxy and your ballot.

A day of field trips and training in the issues of inspecting organic urban agriculture will follow on March 28, co-hosted by Sweetwater Farm and Julia Govis - urban ag specialist, author, and IOIA member.

Important Deadlines: to register for the training (Feb. 23); to reserve a room at the Mainsail (Feb. 24); to register for the AGM (Feb. 28); to vote (Mar. 24).

For complete AGM and training info, please see the IOIA home page 2011 AGM info link.

2011 IOIA Membership Directory Now Available!

Price is \$15 for IOIA members, \$25 for non-members. Copies of the directory are provided by IOIA to all supporting certification agency members as a membership service. Other categories of membership must pre-order and pay for their copies. A few extra copies are available first-come, first served.

See the inserted Mini-Directory or the on-line IOIA Member Directory for current contact information for members.

Welcome Returning Inspector Members:

Eugene Gergen (Minnesota, USA)
Rosalind Hobart (Ontario, CANADA)
Judith Siddiqui (MEXICO)

Welcome New Inspector Members:

Delia Barkley (Ontario, CANADA)
Eric Germann (Montana, USA)
Dan Scheele (Ontario, CANADA)
Harry Schexnayder (Louisiana, USA)

Welcome New Supporting Individual Members:

Robert Bales (Montana, USA)
Colleen Ross (Ontario, CANADA)
Thomas Page (California, USA)

Welcome New Supporting Certification Agency Members:

Washington Dept of Agriculture
Colorado Dept of Agriculture

IOIA Board of Directors

Bob DurstChair
Michelle SandyVice Chair
Eric Feutz Treasurer
Jennifer CliffordSecretary
David Konrad.....Director at Large
Julio Perez.....First Alternate
Bob Howe.....Second Alternate
The Inspectors' Report is the newsletter of the International Organic Inspectors Association. 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. Editor: Diane Cooner, Box 1259, Guerneville, CA 95446 USA. 707-869-3017, fax 707-869-1478.

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Deadlines

are Feb 1, May 1,
Aug 1 & Nov 1.

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Upcoming Trainings

Tampa, Florida – March 25-26, 2011 IOIA will sponsor Advanced Inspection Training March 25-26, in conjunction with the Annual Membership Meeting on March 27. All events will be held at the Mainsail Suites Hotel & Conference Center, near the Tampa Airport. For more information, contact the IOIA office or visit the 2011 AGM webpage www.ioia.net. Application forms and more details are also posted there.

Tampa, Florida – April 11-15, 2011 IOIA will sponsor Basic Organic Crop and Processing Inspector Training April 11-15. Trainings will be held at the Bethany Center in Lutz, Florida near Tampa. Crop and Processing courses will run concurrently. Each basic course includes 4 days of instruction including a field trip to a certified organic operation, plus ½ day for testing. For more information, contact the IOIA office. Application forms and more details are posted at www.ioia.net.

Brandon, Manitoba – Crop May 2-6 and Livestock May 9-13, 2011 IOIA and Assiniboine Community College (ACC) will cosponsor a Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training (May 2-6), followed by Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Training (May 9-13), using the Canadian Organic Standards as a reference. The courses each include 4 days of instruction, including a field trip to a certified organic crop, respectively livestock operation, plus ½ day for testing. For more information about these trainings, please contact Mary Petersen at Ph: 204-725-8700 Ext 6683 Fax: 204-725-8740; e-mail: PeterseM@Assiniboine.net Assiniboine Community College is located at 1430 Victoria Avenue East in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada R7A 2A9.

Vermont – Livestock, June, 2011 Basic Livestock Inspection Training is under development in Vermont in June. For more information, contact the IOIA office.

2011 IOIA Scholarship Winners Announced

Congratulations to **Basu Dev Suvedi**, winner of the IOIA Organic Community Initiative Scholarship for 2011.

About Basu

I am 46 years old, reside in Kathmandu, Nepal. I did my Bachelors in Agriculture and also attended one year Master course on Public Administration from Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.

By profession, I am a Senior Vegetable Development Officer working with government of Nepal since 1991. My responsibilities mainly are concerned with program planning and budget allocation for national vegetable development programs; and monitoring, evaluation and reporting of implemented vegetable development programs.

Along with the government job, I am also associated with some private organizations and organic farmers' communities for Farmers group formation and their mobilization; Field visits and training to low-income farmers groups; Production of horticultural saplings and seeds; and Jam, Juice and jelly production techniques.



Congratulations to Rachael Roditti, winner of the IOIA Rutherford Scholarship for 2011.

About Rachael

Rachael received a BA from Humboldt State University in 1993. Afterwards she worked on a diverse organic farm. 1995 as a Peace Corps Community Forestry Volunteer in Thailand she worked with farmers, and attained a grant for a press teaching local farmers how to prepare the local plant Neem as a natural pesticide. She volunteered with Americorps Watershed Restoration Project, monitoring salmon habitat, performing classroom environmental education, and assisting scientists. Afterwards she returned to Humboldt State and received a minor in botany. Continuing her passion with plants she obtained work mapping out sensitive plants with the Mendocino National Forest. She continued her interest in plant conservation spending two years with Redwood and Zion National Parks monitoring the effects of fire on plants.

Rachael has resided in the rain forest on the Big Island of Hawaii for seven years. Tropical botany led her to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park where she worked with resource management in the plant nursery and monitored native plants. Soon after she started a family and began propagating native plants along with coffee and cacao from seed. Since then she has established a small farm of cacao, coffee, and a diverse array of edible plants, nourishing them using organic methods. She completed the Master Gardeners of Hawaii course given by the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. Her future plans are to encourage organic farming ideals, become an organic crop and processing inspector and to continue her organic family farm.



About IOIA Scholarships

IOIA accepts applications for the annual Andrew Rutherford Award and the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship. Both provide full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored basic organic inspector training during the following year. See www.ioia.net for details.

Chair, from page 1

search committee has been formed and will be defining the position and initiating the search in the coming months. While I am leaving the board, I am chairing this search committee, which includes former BOD chairs and continuing BOD members who will see it through until we have hired this new person. One of the consequences of this search is that we (the BOD) are proposing a deficit budget for this year. We have had some very good years recently, so we have the reserves to do this without jeopardizing the financial stability of IOIA, but it is also a long term commitment that we expect to help IOIA in the long run to become a more important and influential player in the growing organic industry. We anticipate that this new person will come on board later this year and will assist with getting the Training Institute going at full steam. I expect that this news will lead to lively discussions at the upcoming AGM.

I have just returned from the NOP-certifiers training followed by the ACA/NASOP training. There were a number of issues raised that are important for us as inspectors and also for IOIA as an organization. I will touch on the more important of them.

A continuing issue raised by both NOP and the ACA's was that of **inadequate system plans**. There was some discussion of getting a more standardized form, but the counter discussion ranged around how each operation is unique and can't always be accommodated by a common form. There was no consensus of where to go with this, but it was acknowledged as an issue. Related to this and more easily addressed was **CGG plans** and maps. These will be looked at more closely in the future and their accuracy will be crucial for continuing certification.

An inspection issue/suggestion was that **more narrative information** regarding items like border areas, buffer zones, storage areas would be helpful to fully assess compliance. Look for certifiers to be asking additional questions or for more information along these lines.

ACA's noted that an ongoing issue with inspectors is them **not fully addressing specific questions** raised by the certifiers. I certainly hope that IOIA-trained inspectors are remembering to fully address specific areas of concern that the certifiers note in their inspection packets and instructions to inspectors.

A change coming from NOP is that **certificates will soon all have expiration dates** on them. This will require rule making on NOP's part, but they have learned that they need expiration dates for legal reasons should there be a problem with an operation.

One of the biggest new changes being forced on the ACA's by the NOP will be a significant increase in the **number of samples taken and amount of testing** done. Test results from a pilot NOP program over the last year or so and confirmed by a number of the certifiers present was that the presence of herbicide/pesticide residues on organic samples is very low. NOP still wants to use random sampling and testing to insure the integrity of the program. In addition to random sampling, it appears that more targeted sampling (sometimes called risk based sampling) is also in the works. This would be focused on either high risk situations or suspected contamination instances. **Here is where the trained eye of the inspector is crucial.** If you see where it appears that buffer zones have been violated or appear to be inadequate, it is important to report that to the certifier, or even to take a sample and send it in for analysis. In order to insure that samples are taken and handled properly, I will be suggesting that IOIA develop a 'Sample procurement and handling' training course to insure that samples are taken and handled appropriately. The results from a sample that has been improperly handled may not be considered valid, so it is imperative that we all learn how to obtain and handle a sample properly.

Another item of note is that NOP stated that all of the Q&A's that had formerly been on the website (some are still there apparently) are not to be taken as the way things are. The current and only reference-able information is what is being published in the handbook as guidance documents. The latest version of the handbook is on the NOP website, and it is being periodically updated to reflect changes as they occur, but only in the handbook, not as individual letters or other notes or Q&A's on the website.

That's it for this note. I look forward to seeing folks at the trainings and AGM in Florida. If you can't make it, be sure to cast your ballot before the meeting and also designate someone to be your proxy at the meeting for any business that may come up there. Happy inspecting.

GE, from page 1

The USDA organic program is the only federal food label that prohibits the use of GE crops or materials. Under current USDA policy, the organic sector bears the burden created by unchecked release of GE crops.

Sustainable food systems advocate Michael Pollan, author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, commented, "It's hard to understand why the Obama Administration would put the organic industry at risk for the sake of an unnecessary and soon-to-be obsolete product like Round-up Ready alfalfa. This is a bad solution to a problem that doesn't exist, since 93 percent of alfalfa hay is grown without any herbicide at all."

Judge Jeffrey White of the federal district court for the Northern District of California found in earlier rulings that growing the GE sugar beets is likely to cause irreparable harm to the groups' members and the environment, and "may cross-pollinate with non-genetically engineered sugar beets and related Swiss chard and table beets," and ordered the federal government to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act before allowing the GE sugar beets to be grown. The USDA is continuing to work on the court-ordered EIS, but considers the February 4 documents sufficient to allow growers to continue growing the controversial crop illegally planted in defiance of the earlier court ruling.

NOC spokespersons went on to state that the American public has noted in poll after poll that they want the right to know how their food is produced, and demand that GE foods be labeled to preserve their choice.

The Center for Food Safety, Organic Seed Alliance, High Mowing Organic Seeds, and the Sierra Club, a coalition of farmers and conservation groups that has been legally challenging both of the agency's deregulation decisions, announced that they will go back to court to test the legitimacy of the agency's recent decisions. For the latest on CFS lawsuits, including links to donate to their legal fund for this fight, please see their website,

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

Notes from the ED

By Margaret Scoles

The 30th **Guelph Organic Conference** was the highlight of my January. It was interesting....I had more quality time with **Miles McEvoy** in Guelph, Ontario, CANADA than I could probably get in the US at any such major event. Miles, a first-timer at the conference, was by our IOIA booth several times. We visited about inspector accreditation, residue testing, his role in the upcoming Florida training, and even GAP. He attended our Wine & Cheese Social, along with **Michel Saumur**, National Manager of the COO, **Peggy Miars**, ED of OMRI and a delightful mix of about 30 inspectors, certifiers, and friends. Miles also attended the conference session where I served as moderator. I was a bit nervous about moderating this potentially controversial panel, even more so when I learned upon arrival that **Joe Smillie**, QAI, would not be there to speak on the NSF/ANSI 305: Personal Care Products Containing Organic Ingredients. His travel plans went awry with the severe northeastern blizzard. **Dave Konrad** of QAI and IOIA BOD member was filling in for Joe but warned me that he was no expert on the topic. **Simon Jacques** of Ecocert Canada and **Dave Lockman** of Pro-Cert filled out the panel with Dave. Fortunately for me, Miles was in the audience. When anyone asked an NOP question, we were able to check in with the lead expert. The panel went well and was well-attended by IOIA inspector members. The majority of the workshops are geared toward farmers, but this one was informative for inspectors. The Canadian organic regulations are intended to apply to food, not pet food, textiles, or personal care products. On Jan. 28, I attended a popular and well-attended workshop with McEvoy, Saumur, and **Gunta Vitins** on the topic of COR-NOP equivalency and trade issues. Two powerful events of the conference were the keynote address by three generations of the **Manley family of Homestead Organics** and the evening public forum looking at generational change in farming. As always, the most important meeting of the conference happens during the Sunday morning 'trader's breakfast', moderated by **Tomás Nimmo**. Tomás deserves a thank-you for contributing a meeting room at no charge for our advanced training on Jan 27. The best part of the event?....finding so many IOIA members

at the reserved IOIA banquet table that we couldn't all fit around it. Special thanks to **Margaret Dickson**, who arranged evening meals at local restaurants that participated in the organic dining passport and reserved our IOIA table. The organic scones and muffins at the Days Inn are a treat worth mentioning. Most people stay closer to the University Centre and the conference. I remain loyal to the Days Inn, the original hotel for the conference, mostly for that breakfast, but also because I am a creature of habit. As I trudge through the two blocks of slush, ice, and snow to get there, I always remember the grumblings of the Board of Directors who made that icy trek with me for our 2001 AGM at the university. IOIA has participated in the conference since then, and as an official sponsor since 2009.

Residue Sampling/Testing has been on my mind a lot in the last few months. This is a timely topic for inspectors and certifiers alike. The NOP posted three documents on January 31, NOP Target Pesticide List, INSTRUCTION Laboratory Selection Criteria for Pesticide Residue Testing, and INSTRUCTION Sampling Procedures for Residue Testing. All are available on the NOP website. Miles McEvoy will address these new instructions for sampling at the advanced training in Florida. In Guelph, he mentioned that a proposed rule would likely be coming out later this year regarding a requirement for residue testing by certifiers. Miles comes out of the WSDA program, where residue testing on a percentage of the certified tree fruit operations is a standard procedure. **Like it or not, inspectors will be hearing more on this topic.** Historically, IOIA has done little training on sampling for residue analysis. The first two trainings (one-day each) were done in Vermont and Saskatchewan in 2003. Primuslabs.com was our collaborator and technical trainer in VT and Envirotec Labs worked with us in SK. More recently, a few hours were devoted to the topic at advanced trainings in Oregon, working again with Al Quaglino of Primuslabs.com and in Pennsylvania, working with PSU but relying mostly on the experience and expertise of IOIA member Kate Newkirk. What is good about residue testing in organic certification? Random or on-suspicion sampling adds to consumer confidence and increases the rigor of the certification

process. With increased testing, it could be said that it is more likely that contaminated product will not reach the consumer. It is not unreasonable that a certifier and an inspector could competently develop a sampling plan. The first step is identifying the lab to be used and getting their sampling instructions. It is not especially difficult for a competent inspector to follow a specified procedure for a specific lab. What will be difficult is for certifiers to decide what to do in the case of a positive test or even a negative test. And so much of the validity of the results depends on the validity of the sample. Certifiers are coming to IOIA with requests for training on the topic and their need to demonstrate that their inspectors have been trained. Stay tuned....this topic is not going to go away.

I hope to see you in Florida!

IOIA Welcomes Fleming as Technical Editor

Tony Fleming of Albion, Indiana has taken on the role of Technical Editor for IOIA's newsletter. This contract position was created to increase both the number and quality of technical articles that inspectors could use as resources for their inspection work. Fleming will write some articles and solicit and edit others. His first submission "Fumbling Towards Complexity-Part I" appears in this issue. Watch for Part II in the next issue. The impetus for the current focus on natural resources comes partly from certifiers, who recently identified this as one area where inspectors would benefit from more training, and from Fleming himself, who has long considered biodiversity to be a problematic issue in the organic certification process.

Fleming is a professional hydrogeologist and naturalist who has presented on water-related topics at advanced inspector trainings. Some of his handouts are used as a standard resource in the basic IOIA training curricula. He is highly respected by his colleagues as an inspector of farms and processing operations. He received IOIA's first "Inspector of the Year" award at the 2002 Annual Meeting in Sonoma, California. Newly retired from inspection work in 2010, he welcomes an opportunity to continue his affiliation with IOIA with a different hat.

Jacobs Farm/Del Cabo Win Appeal and \$1 Million Damage Award Stands in Historic Pesticide Drift Case

California's Sixth Appellate District Court upheld the right of Jacobs Farm/Del Cabo to sue Western Farm Service for damages caused four years ago when organophosphate residues moved via fog from nearby conventional vegetable fields onto Jacobs Farm organic herbs destined for Whole Foods.

This precedent-setting decision has significant ramifications for all organic farmers, nearby conventional farmers, and both the seed and biotechnology industries. In short, the court upheld the right of an organic farmer to sue and win damages to cover economic losses even when a conventional production input (in this case, insecticides) is applied legally and in accord with all requirements.

In short, when an applicator applies a pesticide, the applicator henceforth owns responsibility for any adverse impacts associated with the application. In many similar cases involving pesticide drift or off-target movement, applicators and/or farmers have successfully used the defence that they followed the label, and hence should not be held accountable.

The agricultural industry hired top-notch attorneys and submitted amicus briefs before the appellate court in the hope of overturning the decision. They were unsuccessful, and must now decide whether to appeal the case to the California Supreme Court.

Source: Kurtis Alexander, "Appeals court: Organic farm can seek damages from pesticide company," Santa Cruz Sentinel, December 22, 2010

Organic Programs Targeted by Committee

The [Republican Study Committee](#), comprised of 175 Republican Members of the US House of Representatives, has introduced the Spending Reduction Act of 2011 to reduce the US federal deficit by eliminating over 100 government programs and reducing discretionary spending. The list of programs to be cut includes the Organic Cost-Share Program. In addition, there is a proposed reduction of all discretionary spending, which would threaten the progress in funding for the National Organic Program (NOP) and the Organic Data Initiative. More info at OTA's site, www.ota.com

Food Safety Bill Now Law

On Jan. 4, President Barack Obama signed into law the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act that will help tighten food safety oversight while including provisions to protect organic farmers and producers from costly duplicative requirements and without curbing the growing movement toward fresh, local and regional food. [The final bill](#), which cleared the House Dec. 21, maintains language that prevents regulations forcing certified organic operations to duplicate or conflict with requirements set by the Organic Food Production Act.

Taking the lead on this language were Representatives Marcy Kaptur of Ohio and Sam Farr of California in the House, and the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee in the Senate. Specifically, the legislation prevents any regulations that would force organic operations to use prohibited materials or practices, such as irradiation, as identified by the National Organic Program.

On November 18, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), the only organic farmer in Congress, reached an agreement with the authors of S. 510 to include a new, compromise version of the Tester-Hagan amendment in the Senate food safety bill. The amendment exempts small farmers and processors who sell directly to consumers and end users from FDA regulation due to their direct relationship with their customers that ensures quality, safety, transparency and accountability. For these small farmers and processors, the costs of complying with all the new federal requirements would be burdensome and add little to food safety. They still must meet all state and local food safety requirements.

The amendment includes the following requirements for exemption:

1. Producers must have annual gross sales less than \$500,000. This includes all subsidiaries and affiliates of a business, so it carefully prevents any larger businesses from using this as a loophole.
2. Producers must sell more than half their products directly to consumers (including at farmers markets) or to local restaurants and retailers that in turn sell directly to consumers. The definition of "qualified end user" ensures that the producer is not selling into national chains or into long supply chains. Regardless of the radius of

the distance, the test requires direct sales that enable consumers to hold producers accountable for any problems.

3. FDA has authority to withdraw an exemption from a farm or facility associated with a foodborne illness outbreak.

4. The distance from a facility or farm that is eligible to be a "qualified end-user" was reduced to 275 miles.

The legislation also includes resources and guidance for technical assistance to be provided through the states and local governments for operations that will be subject to the new law. In addition, it includes language offered by Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio to amend the traceability and record-keeping section of the bill to allow for food directly marketed from farmers to consumers or to grocery stores and food labeled with the identity of the farm which produced it. That amendment also prevents the U.S. Food and Drug Administration from requiring any farm to keep records beyond the first point of sale when the product leaves the farm, except when farms co-mingle product from multiple farms.

The House agreed to pass the Senate version of the bill after weeks of procedural entanglement brought the bill to a crippling standstill.

More information about the bill, including frequently asked questions about the bill and what it does and does not cover is available from the Center for Food Safety website.

New Management Structure for IOAS

The International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS) has announced that Ken Commins, Executive Director of the company since its founding in 1997, has chosen to step down from the role as of April 30th, 2011.

Ken will remain within the company as part-time Finance & Development Manager as well as taking on other specific responsibilities.

Incoming Executive Director (Operations), Jan Deane stated 'Clearly this is not a farewell to Ken as he will retain an important role within the IOAS. Nevertheless we would like to publicly recognise his massive contribution to organic integrity and conformity assessment on the international stage over 20 years'.



IOIA Advanced Training in Korea

IOIA will sponsor five days of advanced organic inspector training in Korea in conjunction with the **IFOAM Organic World Congress 2011**. Scheduled are one day with focus on the Korean organic regulations (English, with translation to Japanese); one day with focus on other important global standards to include NOP, JAS, and EU (English, with translation to Korean); one day on audit trail for inspectors (English, with translation to Korean) and two days with focus on inspecting grower groups (English, with translation to Korean). The venue is located a short drive from the venue for the OWC.

This landmark training event is a collaborative effort of IOIA, Korea Organic Inspectors Association (KOIA), and Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA). IOIA has also proposed a workshop for the OWC (acceptance pending) on October 1. This session would provide a forum for organic inspectors from around the world to gather, meet, and network. Further details and dates will be available on the IOIA website and in upcoming newsletters.

Complete IFOAM Organic World Conference information is available at: www.kowc2011.org

Early Bird Registration Starts 1st Jan, 2011!

The 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress, the first in Asia, will be held in the Republic of Korea in 2011. The theme, "Organic is Life", reiterates the philosophy of organic farmers with emphasis on the circulation of natural resources and the reverence for all living things, a concept that resonates throughout East Asian

Program

The Organic World Congress (OWC) is the space where the organic movement comes to meet, exchange experiences and form strategies for the development and growth of organic agriculture everywhere.

The OWC consists of a main conference with two tracks called a 'systems values' track and a research track and will be held in the Paldang Region, Gyeonggi Province, from 28th September to 1st October 2011.

The OWC also includes various thematic pre-conferences covering a range of topics held in different locations around the Republic of Korea from 26th to 28th September 2011, just prior to the main conference.

Topics of the pre-conferences

Jəju Island	Tea
Pocheon City	Ginseng
Yangpyeong County	Wine
Goesan County	Seed
Namyangju City	Urban Agriculture, Textiles, Cosmetics
Uljin County	Aquaculture

For more information, please contact

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Characteristics of the 17th Organic World Congress

- The first-ever IFOAM Organic World Congress to be held in Asia
- Showcasing a new model of governance and cooperation between NGOs and government authorities
- Learning about new models of cooperation between farmers and consumers

The IFOAM General Assembly (GA) will be held from 3rd to 5th October, 2011.



OCTOBER 3-5, 2011 | NAMYANGJU CITY, KOREA

The GA is the foundation of IFOAM where the World Board is elected for a three-year term.

The GA provides strategic guidance to the World Board, which appoints official committees, working groups and task forces based on the motions and recommendations of IFOAM's membership



IFOAM Partner



Canadian Update

By Kelly A. Monaghan

Standards and PSL Update

The 5th ballot of the CGSB's Organic Technical Committee is now in the hands of the CGSB and the Standards Council of Canada. We have been advised that the amended version of the standard incorporating all balloted and agreed changes is intended to be ready for publication before the end of March 2011. Work on reviewing the work list items and beginning the first five-year review is on hold until funding for this work can be secured.

Standards Interpretation Committee

As is the case with the Organic Technical Committee, the work of the Standards Interpretation Committee is on hold pending receipt of funding for these standards maintenance activities. In December of 2010 the Standards Interpretation Committee undertook an election for three members whose terms were ending. When the results are finalized they will be made public.

Canada Organic Office

June 30, 2011 will be here before we know it! The COO wants to remind everyone that the 'educational enforcement' program will end on that date and that regular enforcement on the Organic Products Regulations will begin. In preparation for the end of the Stream of Commerce policy, the Canada Organic Office has initiated a cross-country training program for CFIA inspectors and certification bodies. These cross-country

sessions began in January and will continue throughout the year.

We are advised that the COO website is being updated frequently and all interested parties are encouraged to visit often: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/orgbio/orgbioe.shtml>

Canadian International Negotiations

United States – A long-awaited response from the NOP regarding the use of sodium nitrate in processed product was made late in 2010, indicating that all products (processed or otherwise) need to be evaluated against the terms of the equivalency agreement.

The United States performed a peer review of Canada Organic Office in 2010 and their report was given to the COO in mid-January. The COO is finalizing their peer review to send to the USA as soon as possible.

European Union – The COO is still awaiting word back from the EU on the findings of the peer review undertaken in Ottawa last May.

The results of the COO's review of the EU system undertaken in Europe last June are ready and will soon be submitted via proper international negotiation protocols. Representatives of the Canada Organic Office intend to meet with the EU delegation in February during BioFach.

Updates and documents will be posted on the COO's website as available.

Clarity was provided that products certified to the terms of the US/Canada Equivalency Arrangement need to meet the labelling regulations of the country in which the product is being sold.

IOIA Regional Activities in Guelph

Sixteen IOIA members, potential members and other interested parties joined together before the conference



Margaret, Bill and Kelly at the IOIA reception.

began for a one-day IOIA Advanced Training session which covered updates on the COR, EU and JAS organic standards. An introduction to the Biodynamic certification was provided, as was a session on Unannounced Inspections. The exam crafted by Bill Barkley kept all participants on their toes during the day and all passed successfully. At the end of the day, more IOIA members joined the training group to discuss issues of common concern to Canadian inspectors including insurance, liability, pay rates and training.

On the final evening of the conference, Bill Barkley (Canadian Committee Chair) hosted a wine and cheese reception. Once again this event drew all levels of the organic industry in Canada – farmers and inspectors were in attendance as were representatives from various certification bodies and trade associations. Michel Saumur of the Canada Organic Office, Miles McEvoy of the NOP and Peggy Miars, the new Executive Director / CEO of OMRI were among those enjoying organic wines and local cheeses at this fun event.

Kelly Monaghan is Chair of the Canadian General Standards Board's Organic Technical Committee. She also acts as IOIA's Membership Chairperson.

www.ashstreetorganics.com.



Elizabeth Dacombe (booth volunteer extraordinaire) and John Warner assist a booth visitor. Not pictured is Tom Cassan, who also put in many volunteer hours.

Guelph Organic Conference

The 30th Guelph Organic Conference was well-attended with two levels of sold-out exhibitor space, 30 conference sessions over four days and many attendees from all corners of the organic world.

On Friday afternoon Michel Saumur of the Canada Organic Office and Miles McEvoy of the NOP spoke about the equivalency agreement and took questions.

Guelph Advanced Organic Training

By Margaret Scoles

The idea incubated for a few years after it was first brought up by Bill Barkley, now Canadian Committee Chair. He asked why IOIA didn't plan an inspector event whenever many inspectors will be present. The Guelph Organic Conference, a major organic event in Canada, for example. When IOIA launched its webinar training initiative in 2010, the time was right to nurture more regional, lower cost, IOIA membership gatherings. The current in-person live advanced trainings will largely be replaced by the more consistent, reproducible, accessible, greener, and cost-effective webinars. Since Maarten Samsom hosted the first such IOIA Social in Vermont in 2008, IOIA has successfully supported social events every year. Moving that one step further, one-day training events utilizing local speaker and coordinator resources could be low-cost and green. As inspectors step into the age when much of their training will occur by webinar, they will need opportunities for the networking and social interactions that are largely lost in that technological shift. Key to the success



will be local members willing to step in as Bill Barkley and Kelly Monaghan did in Guelph. In Canada, some obvious regional locations could be Guelph in January and the ACORN and COABC conferences in March. Organic Matters (MB) and Organic Connections (SK) could be other venues. And in the USA, possible events to coordinate training events with include the annual Expos, Asilomar, MOSES, PASA, OEFFA, and others.



Joel Aitken, Cheryl Laxton and Kelly Monaghan check out Uli's biodynamic preps.

The Guelph Advanced Organic Training on January 27 was a great prototype for this new training model. The participant list was 16 total, including the training team. Bill Barkley moderated the day and created a stiff 3-page test

which was graded in class as a learning exercise. Kelly Monaghan and Garry Lean presented the COR update. Margaret Scoles spoke on Unannounced Inspections and the discussion on that topic extended into a catered organic lunch. Simon Jacques of Ecocert Canada gave an update on EU and JAS regulations. Ulrich Hack, president of Demeter Canada, gave an excellent overview of biodynamic production.

The day ended with a lively hour long-plus inspector discussion, moderated by Barkley and Scoles. Discussion centered around pay rates, working conditions, insurance, and training. Barley and Monaghan will summarize the discussion for the IOIA Canadian members Forum. More social networking was provided by the Wine & Cheese on January 29!



Uli Hack, center, of Demeter Canada, Also pictured are Barry Glofcheskie, and Cathy McGregor-Smith.



Bill Barkley with Simon Jacques of Ecocert Canada

IOIA in Taiwan

By Lisa Pierce

This was the first IOIA organic inspection course to be held in Taiwan with a pan-Asia mandate; a total of 6 countries were represented at the training including representatives from India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, and Taiwan plus IOIA Trainers from both Canada and the United States. The IOIA Crop Inspector course was held at MingDao University in Taiwan from Nov 01-Nov 05, 2010. The training was co-sponsored by MingDao University and the Association of Taiwan Organic Agriculture Promotion and funded by the National Science Council and the Agriculture and Food Agency, Council of Agriculture, Executive Yuan. The Lead Trainer for the course was Lisa Pierce and the assistant Trainer was Sarah Costin. The International Curriculum, a modified version of the IOIA NOP standardized basic crop course, was developed by Lisa Pierce of Unlearning Unlimited. The International Curriculum was successfully delivered in South Africa and further refined in Taiwan. Participants from Taiwan consisted of inspectors and staff of certification agencies in Taiwan and participants invited from other countries were key persons from government agencies and universities that were active in the development of organics in their country.



The Taiwan training group on a field trip to tea research station and Sun Moon Lake (largest lake in Taiwan).

This training proved to be a critical juncture in the promotion and potential expansion of the role of IOIA in Asia. The role of trainers at international courses goes beyond the delivery of a specific training and this wider diplomatic mandate was particularly evident in Taiwan. Within an hour of arriving at MingDao University, Sarah and Lisa were part of an opening ceremony and media event that involved spontaneously delivering a welcoming speech on behalf of IOIA, handling questions from the press, and the ceremonial planting of cashew trees. The opening ceremony was the harbinger of further press conferences, ceremonies, tea with the president of MingDao University - Dr Chen, and many more informal meetings with conference speakers and participants.

A two day Biodynamic conference preceded the IOIA organic crop inspection course. Sarah Costin and Lisa Pierce attended the conference as guest speakers along with Mr. Brendan Hoare – Chair of Organic Federation of Aotearoa, New Zealand (former IFOAM board member) and Mr. Ong Kung Wai from Malaysia current board member of IFOAM, and several scientists from Taiwan.

After the completion of the IOIA course, the Association of Taiwan Organic Agriculture Promotion arranged a week long field trip for Lisa Pierce (Lead Trainer) hosted by ATOAP's volunteer Yi-Sung Chen to visit organic and conventional farms in Taiwan. Sarah Costin was able to join the field trip for the first day and visited Tai-San Organic Farm, a 10 ha certified organic fruit and vegetable farm and packing house. The commercial operation was contrasted later in the day with a visit to a farm where the owner was growing produce for his own family needs. Driving on the local roadways, Lisa and Sarah observed that the rice harvest was underway in central Taiwan and could not resist getting out of the vehicle and observing first hand, the rice harvester, the grain being augered into a waiting truck and a woman manually harvesting the rice stalks from the edges of the field.

Mr Chen's diversity of local connections, unwavering enthusiasm, sincerity and 30 years of agricultural experience working in several countries resulted in an intense and rewarding introduction to organic production in Taiwan. Lisa visited several farms and processing facilities in Changhua County and Hualien County, attended meetings and gave presentations at AVDRC World Vegetable Centre and COA Agricultural Research Station in Taiwan. The result of these meetings is the increased profile of IOIA in Taiwan and Asia, the forging of relationships for future trainings and the potential establishment of an inspector membership and training centre office in Asia.



Observing the rice harvest in process.

Summary of Taiwan Training

By Yi-sung Chen, Volunteer ATOAP and IOIA trainee

The first day consisted of the Organic and Biodynamic Agriculture Conference; the field trip to Yu-Chu Tea Research Station and Sun-moon-Lake took place the following day. Dr. Shih-Shiung Chen, the President of MingDao University, gave an opening remark. He welcomed participants from various countries and encouraged the importance of organic farming in relation to the four principles of IFOAM: environment; health; fairness and care. It is our responsibility to protect the environment and maintain good soil fertility and its productivity for generations to come.

The speakers for the Organic and Biodynamic Agriculture Conference included Mr. Brendan Hoare, Chair of the Organic Federation of Aotearoa New Zealand; Mr. Ong Kung Wai (IFOAM World Board Member Malaysia); Dr. Chia Pao Chang (Miaoli District Agriculture Research and Extension Station, Taiwan); Dr. Johannes Scheng-Ming Tschen (Chair Professor, MDU, Taiwan) and Dr. Shih-Shiung Chen (President, MDU, Taiwan). The organizer also invited the Ambassador Rong-Chuan Wu, NGO Affairs Committee,

NGO Affairs Committee, Taiwan; and Mr. Cheng-Shin-Wong, Director of Farm Chemicals and Machinery Division, The Agriculture and Food Agency Taiwan to be guest speakers.



The IOIA course curriculum consisted of 4 days of participatory sessions that included 3 ½ hours of graded exams plus ½ day mock inspection field trip and graded inspection report exercise. Topics included in the participatory sessions included organic definitions and concepts, organic control points, organic certification and the role of the inspector, how to conduct an organic inspection, the organic system plan (OSP), IOIA code of conduct and ethics, Internal Control Systems and grower group inspections, risk assessment, and report writing. The US National Organic Programs (NOP) was introduced and used as the standard to assess organic compliance and crop inputs during the field trip. In addition to the on-site sessions, the course participants were required to complete several pre-course assignments that were graded and subsequently reviewed in class (assignment topics included soils, GMO, NOP standards, herbicides, and farm biodiversity).

MingDao University augmented the intensive training with several special events. The trainers and the trainees each planted a cashew nut tree at the school campus to commemorate their participation in the International Organic Inspectors Training Course. A closing ceremony was conducted during which Dr. Shih-Shiung Chen, presented certificates to all trainees. Dr. Chen expressed his great satisfaction for the hard work and dedication exhibited by all trainees and encouraged them to spread the knowledge of organic inspection to their own countries and work towards the promotion of quality organic products. He welcomed all trainees to visit Taiwan anytime. As a result of this training, all participants can work together and assist one another in the development of organic production and marketing. Similarly, the two IOIA trainers, Lisa and Sarah, also expressed their appreciation for the work and collaboration of the trainees. They also appreciated the assistance and the hospitality of MingDao University and the Association of Taiwan Organic Agriculture Promotion. The trainers enjoyed their stay at the MDU. Several trainees also expressed their feelings about the training course. The trainees liked the training programs but noted that the course required a lot of focus and effort because the time was short for such an intensive course. Some of the trainees suggested the course be extended by one or two more days. In general all of trainees expressed their appreciation for the government of Taiwan ROC for the provision of all local cost including the facilities, accommodation, food as well as local transportation.

After the course, the two trainers, Ms. Lisa Pierce and Ms Sarah Costin, were accompanied by the ATOAP's volunteer Yi-Sung Chen, to visit organic and conventional farms in Taiwan. The first visit was to Tai-San Organic Farm; a ten hectare organic operation including greenhouses, packing house, coolers, storage warehouse, composting facilities, and own delivery system. Tai-San Organic Farm is currently certified organic as a producer and distributor. The owners have over 10 years of organic cultivation experience and have developed a good reputation in the region. Both IOIA Inspectors carefully observed the set up of the organic farm and were impressed with the management and the quality of the operation.

The trainers observed rice harvesting on the way to Puyen. As a comparison to commercial operation of Tai-San Organic Farm, a small organic farm was also observed. The owner came every 1-2 weeks from Taipei and was able to produce organic products for his family and friends. The farm utilized an automatic water control system for the greenhouse. Sarah was very interested in the small organic production unit as she would like to have one in the United States. In addition to observing agriculture in the region, the trainers were delighted to be given an opportunity to purchase souvenirs at the glass museum in the Changhua Coast Industrial zone and visit the more than three hundred year old temple in Lu-Kang.

Sarah Costin returned to the United States after one day but Lisa Pierce continued her traveling in Taiwan. Lisa visited Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) and the World Vegetable Center (AVRDC). Both Research Institutes gave her a warm welcome and exchanged ideas on the inspection of organic products. Lisa presented the Seminar "The Farm: Product of and producer of soil." at TARI and AVRDC respectively and received a good response from both institutions. TARI has a very good soil museum and Lisa was very excited about the soil information provided in Taiwan. She visited the garden and research plots at AVRDC and discussed integrated pest management (IPM) and organic farm management with soil, pest and diseases scientists as well as communication with economic specialists.

Lisa visited the Yun-Sun Sesame Oil factory in Tuku. She investigated all the facilities including machineries, processes of extraction, conveyer pipes, oil tank quality control, storage, etc. She said the factory could be adapted to produce both conventional and organic products as long as procedures were developed to avoid: 1) contamination from products prohibited in organic productions and 2) commingling or organic and non-organic products. She had a good time exchanging ideas on organic inputs and production.

The last area visited was the east coast of Taiwan including National Toroko Park and organic farms in the vicinity of Hualien. Lisa enjoyed the wonderful views in Toroko and Tien-Siang. She visited a large organic farm of 85 ha in total shared with 7-8 farmers with an organic operation history of 8 years. They had excellent production and marketing facilities. She also visited a small insectory



Advanced Training at The Penn Stater, State College, Pennsylvania Nov 13-14

The advanced training agenda was developed in collaboration with cosponsor PCO and with the assistance of Patti Bursten Deutsch. The ED served as on-site Trainer. The class was an interesting mix of inspectors, certifiers, and others. Half the class was certifiers, including two state departments of agriculture (CO, LA). Most of those individuals do review work rather than inspection, but there was overlap of duties that blurred the distinction between certifiers and inspectors. Some reviewers were planning to inspect; and some former inspectors now do mostly review work. Some do both.



Speakers included Bill Curran, PhD of nearby PSU as a contributor to the Residue Sampling/Analysis session organized by Kate Newkirk of Maine. Kate currently works part-time as Associate Director of Processing/Handling at MOFGA, has 20 years of experience as a soil scientist/research assistant, and among other jobs, worked as an analyst for an environmental testing lab. Dave Johnson did a 2-hr session on Dry Matter Intake calculations. Mike Sumner of Sustainable Business Services spoke on Detecting and Deterring Fraud, drawing from his experience as an investigator and trainer for Wells Fargo Bank. Amy Griner-Stafford of ICS provided an excellent presentation on Unannounced Inspections. Jim Pierce explained the intricacies of the international equivalency and recognition agreements for NOP with other international standards. Lisa Brines (NOP), Sabine Carey (PCO), Amy Griner-Stafford (ICS), and Jim Pierce (OTCO) sat on a panel to deal with tricky materials questions from the group. Mini-sessions included Patty Lovera of Food and Water Watch in Washington DC, who updated the group on progress of food safety legislation, and Jackie Sleeper, of Humane Farm Animal Care. Shannon Nally of the NOP office provided a succinct and substantial NOP update to conclude the intense two-day training.

One of the most valuable aspects of the training was the involvement throughout the training of several of the speakers as resources to the rest of the group. Pierce, Griner, Newkirk, and Zuck fell into that category. A highlight of the training was a dinner party on Nov 13, hosted by Penny Sandoval in her home, beautifully decorated for the holidays, and PCO, who purchased the refreshments and spotlighted local organic foods.

In 2007, a comment on an advanced course evaluation said, "The instructors were all grizzled veterans who approached information sharing as a collegial exercise. Given the audience, this was the correct approach." Margaret Scoles, ED, shared that comment with the PA group and said, "If you want to know what 'grizzled veterans' look like, here it is...." Pictured is the ED and Al Johnson, New Jersey. They co-presented Audit Trail Balance Tips



Basic Processing – Pennsylvania, Nov. 15-19

By Stanley Edwards

My voice is gone, we are only ½ way through day 2 and I'm half whispering, half talking with the husky voice of a heavy smoker or my teenage son! By day 3, I can barely talk and after I manage to get through yet another lecture, getting a sound out requires huge effort. Have I joined the ranks of the great IOIA trainers? (Margaret, Harriet, Luis, who almost predictively lost their voices at many of the trainings I've had the honor to assist at). Margaret took over at critical times especially for the virtual inspection, with her partner, Lucy Murton from England. For the first time, students got to hear this masterpiece in a British accent.

For the first time also, everything on the agenda, presentations, exercises, grading – DONE! This couldn't have happened without this group of star pupils, again a mish-mash from all over the continent and diverse backgrounds. The group included two new NOP staffers, from whom I begged for more guidance documents, my primary request, to clarify pest control materials allowed in handling facilities. It is clear that this fine group can now comfortably enter the organic industry in its Age of Enforcement. For my part, I'm brainstorming ideas on how to manage my voice better.



Livestock Training – State College, Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Certified Organic and IOIA cosponsored basic crop and livestock trainings, running concurrently, November 15-19 in State College. Garry Lean was assisted through the first two days by Margaret Scoles. Local inspectors Bob Vernon (PA) and Al Johnson (NJ) helped as group leaders for the dairy field trips on Day 3 and 4. The training broke a new record for IOIA livestock training. Not only did it fill up to the maximum of 25 (the first livestock training of this size), it left a waiting list of almost 10 others. Much of the demand was attributed to the new NOP pasture rule. The group included NOP staff, certification agency staff, farmers, and experienced inspectors. The usual 4.5 day training was extended with an additional optional poultry field trip to a layer operation.

Stan Edwards didn't have a voice by Day 3, but he could still join in music-making with Jim Pierce (R) and Les Dale (L) after a viewing of 'What's Organic?', compliments of PCO. For more info about the movie, see <http://whatsorganicmovie.com>

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Costa Rica Basic Farm Inspection Training

November 15 – 19, 2011

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. And since we only have 45 words and not a thousand to share about the training in Costa Rica, we ask that you please enjoy these pictures!

Comments from participant Pablo E. Guzmán López, Puerto Rico:

“La certificación orgánica es una estrategia de competitividad que contraresta efectivamente la desigualdad ante la comercialización de productos convencionales. El tomar el Curso Básico de Certificación Orgánica Internacional me ha provisto de las herramientas necesarias para impulsar y desarrollar la agricultura orgánica en mi país”.



UDAF Processor Inspector Training January 24-28, 2011

By Stan Edwards

One side of the room faced the other in a typical classroom U; UDAF regulatory inspectors vs staff from Central Milling Company and two independent attendees from California. Within hours though, inspection scenarios forced the factions to commingle and pretty soon, the full immersion was underway, with lively conversations of regulations, inspection protocols and report requirements. Our field trip to a flour milling operation brought all of this information together and each group was able to find the staged contamination and commingling situations set up by our host. The course would not have been the same had it not been for Pam McKinstry's teaching expertise and her invaluable perspective as a full time independent inspector.



IOIA and Korea Organic Inspectors Association (KOIA) cosponsored Basic Crop Inspection Training in Chungbuk, Korea Sept 29-Oct 3 2010 and Basic Processing Training in Gyeonggi, Korea Nov 24-28. Watch for full article next issue.

Guam Basic Crop Inspection Training

Mangilao, Guam Nov 28 to Dec 2nd, 2010

By Luis Brenes

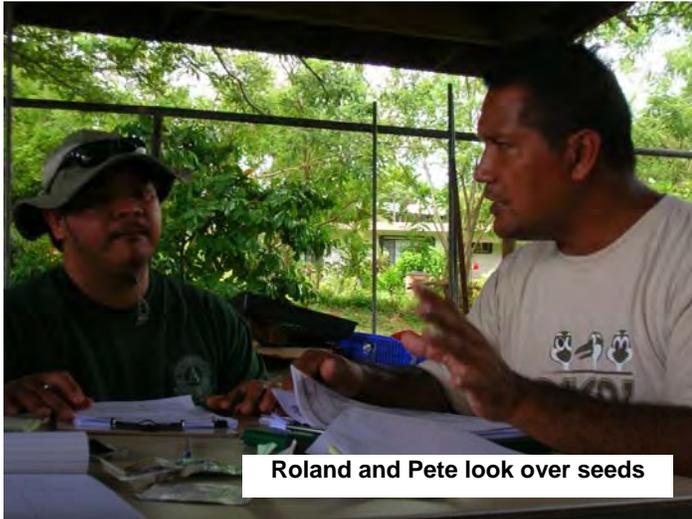
Hafa adai!

In the beautiful island of Guam, cosponsored by the University of Guam through the cooperation of Dr. Bob Barber and all his team that works in sustainable agriculture, we had this 4.5 intensive training with 18 students coming not only from Guam but also from the Marshall Islands and Fiji.

From standards review to inputs evaluation (do we need to be a chemist?), from ethics and conduct to math exercises (math? help!) the 18 participants contributed with a continued effort and enthusiasm in all the sessions that Luis Brenes and Garry Lean managed in the little time allocated. On Day 4 we had the field trip to the Guam's Department of Agriculture organic demonstration plot - The Wellness Farm, just a few minutes away from the university campus.

This is an interesting place with lots of potential where a very diversified agriculture is practiced, including contour terraces with vetiver grass and lemon grass, and a large variety of tropical fruit trees and vegetables.

IOIA wants to thank Dr. Bob Barber for trusting on our capability of contributing with the development of the organic agriculture in the Pacific islands. We look forward to a strong and continued increase in the number of farmers and acreage turning to organic production. Thanks Guam!



Roland and Pete look over seeds

Agriculture officers, university and regional agriculture professionals, and organic agriculture enthusiasts from Guam, Palau, Pohnpei, Chuuck, Kosrae, Marshall island, and Fuji.

The training was held at the University of Guam to introduce the concept of organic agriculture inspection certification system in US and in the world, and to offer the inspection certification test at the end of the program. Having a group of participants with the wide range of background was a challenge with trainers, Mr.



Mari checks records

Luis Brenes from Costa Rica and Mr. Garry Lean of Canada. The students enjoyed lectures and on-site visits, receiving practical trainings and an idea of what would be like as an inspector. We were impressed with trainers' knowledge and excellent teaching skill, and we appreciate their patience teaching to those who had no ideas of OA inspection standards.

Participant Comments:

Pete Terlaje

Before taking the course there was a certain level of anxiety due to other Organic courses that I have taken. I can say the presentation, knowledge and techniques in which Luis and Garry brought to the course made all the difference in the world in absorbing critical information needed to be a better Organic everything. If you are looking to increase your knowledge with regard to the inspection processes and all the tools you will need, "Take The Class".

Mari Marutani

During November 29 – December 3, 2010, more than 20 Pacific Islanders from Micronesia participated in the IOIA Basic Crop training in Guam. The students were comprised of farmers, extension agents,

Department of



Larry checking inputs

Fumbling Towards Complexity, Part I

A Brief Review of Biodiversity in the Certification Process — History, Assessment, and Institutional Imperatives

By Tony Fleming

[*ed. note-this is the first of an occasional series examining the role of natural resources in the certification process, and exploring some of the practical and institutional challenges that hinder inspectors' ability to assess and interpret biodiversity management on NOP-certified farms*]

Natural resources of the operation.

The physical, hydrological, and biological features of a production operation, including soil, water, wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife.

—NOP Definitions

Ask anyone connected with the organic community about whether organic methods of production are better for the environment, easier on natural resources, and more supportive of biodiversity than their conventional counterparts, and you're virtually certain to get an affirmative answer. Next to the absence of synthetic inputs, ecological benefits are probably the most widely evoked image of organic farming. And with good reason. Fostering biodiversity and sustainably utilizing indigenous natural resources have been cornerstones of "sustainable" agriculture from the appearance of the earliest agricultural civilizations to the advent of the modern organic movement, when the term "organic" was coined. Indeed, the original definitions of the organic method given by the fathers of the modern movement, Sir John Howard and J.I. Rodale, are based on emulating nature and emphasize the importance of biological complexity in promoting the productivity, quality, and resilience of crops. There is widespread agreement on this point among today's proponents of organic agriculture; even for many consumers, who may not be familiar with the details of the method or the NOP standards, *it is a matter of faith that organic foods are produced in harmony with nature.*

But is this really the case? How come some organic farms are showplaces of biodiversity, while a significant number of others seem like they are suffering from a case of nature deficit disorder? Surely, inspectors are routinely verifying that organic farms are, in fact, operating in accordance with these long-held tenets, right? Following clear and consistent guidelines provided by certifiers, the NOP, and the rule itself, which spell out major noncompliances for violations that undermine the very natural resources that are supposed to sustain and be sustained by the organic method? An honest examination of these questions suggests that the widespread perceptions and expectations regarding the relationship between nature and modern organic agriculture may not be entirely justified. The reality is that the answers to these and other questions concerning how, and how much, natural resources should figure into the certification process are shrouded in ambiguity, resulting in wide disparities in the quality and management of natural resources observed at certified farms, inconsistencies in the way they are handled in the inspection and certification process, and, most of all, an atmosphere of uncertainty and ambivalence. It seems that we, as a community, have become distracted by a host of other ancillary questions during the early years of the NOP—organic seed, access to pasture, soil-less methods of "organic" production, and a veritable tsunami of "substances", among others—and as a result, have largely overlooked more fundamental issues, questions, and opportunities at the core of organic agriculture.

This article is the first in an occasional series intended to give a brief overview of natural resources in modern organic agriculture from an inspector's point of view, focusing on the interplay between three different but closely related issues: assessing the quality and significance of natural resources in an agricultural landscape; applying the NOP rule to the interpretation of frequently complex field situations; and the institutional and cultural frameworks within which the first two necessarily take place.

"Natural resources" is a wide-ranging, technical topic, and it is impossible to adequately cover all the important aspects in the confines of this series. Instead, I will enumerate a few key points I have learned from observing the natural resources and related practices at hundreds of unique farms, mostly in the Great Lakes bioregion. This initial article introduces these themes. In doing so, my goals are to set the stage for future articles that will highlight specific topics within this vast field, and to invite constructive dialogue among all involved in the certification process. Note that, for purposes of this discussion, I use "natural resources" and "biodiversity" interchangeably, even though they mean somewhat different things.

Assessing the quality and management of natural resources during an inspection should, in theory, be simple: you run down the inspection checklist to verify the operator's OSP and farm map, on which are detailed (hopefully) many natural features and conservation-related practices intended to "maintain or improve the natural resources of the operation", supplemented by an equally well-informed operator who takes the lead in explaining how these different elements of biodiversity function within the context of the whole farm and beyond. In practice, however, observations regarding natural resources are often qualitative in nature, and assessing their management is typically more subjective than many other aspects of the NOP rule, and often subject to a variety of complicating factors over which the inspector has little control.

Natural resources are fluid. Resources like wetlands, plant communities, and bird populations are inherently dynamic, transient, and almost always defined by environmental gradients. There is seldom a sharp boundary around a particular natural community, soil type, or wildlife corridor; instead, they exist within complex mosaics of many communities, soil associations, and wildlife habitats that grade into one another, often subtly and on a very local scale. Such diffuse, transitional

boundaries are called “ecotones”, and they often comprise biodiversity hotspots within a particular landscape. *Properly and efficiently assessing the “natural resources of the operation” depends on the inspector having sufficient knowledge of the local ecosystem to be able to interpret both their own on-site observations as well as what the operator is saying.*

The operator has to be an active participant in this process, not a passive bystander. Due to inopportune inspection timing, the dynamic nature of natural resources, and other factors, inspectors may not be able to directly observe important natural resources at a given farm; a typical assessment relies on various combinations of direct observation, indirect indicators, and, especially, the operator’s knowledge and records. Migration occurs in the spring and fall, for example, so when you visit the farm in July, you won’t see the thousands of waterfowl that stopover in the wetlands the operator’s property hosts. And in late summer, those same wetlands may appear mostly dry because they are ephemeral. The seasonally fluctuating margins of such ephemeral wetlands are a prime example of a biologically diverse and productive ecotone, and how the farmer cares for them—or whether he even recognizes them—is crucial. More fundamentally, if the operator does not offer any information in the OSP or during the inspection, it puts the inspector in the awkward position of having to assume or guess the operator’s attitude or motivations, and removes the most important benchmark for assessing the quality and management of the farm’s resources—the operator’s knowledge.

It is problematic for inspectors to address questions and issues that are not framed within the context of an organic system plan. While there is broad agreement in the organic community about the importance of biodiversity and the need to make natural resources a more prominent element in the certification process, important questions remain as to how this is best implemented and at what

level(s) in the certification process the initiative should come from. Until relatively recently, OSP’s largely were limited to one or two very general questions focused almost exclusively on soil management. This is beginning to change following the addition of biodiversity criteria to the NOSB’s model OSP, and with the publication by the Wild Farm Alliance of detailed and practical biodiversity guides aimed at all levels in the certification process. Still, based on my own recent survey, there is much inconsistency among OSP’s regarding natural resources: a few certifiers include detailed questions about biodiversity based on the NOSB’s criteria, while others provide a very limited number of ambiguous and uninformative questions, such as “do your practices maintain or improve the natural resources of the operation”?

Except in extreme cases, it is much easier to recognize and acknowledge compliance with the rule than it is to identify specific noncompliances. This is partly a function of the peculiar way the rule is written with regard to natural resources and biodiversity, and partly a function of the resources themselves and the challenge of conclusively establishing a clear cause-and-effect relationship between an operation’s practices and the apparent degradation (or improvement) of one or more resources. Some issues, particularly those that might be considered to involve an element of benign neglect, such as the infestation of uncultivated areas by invasive alien plants, do not necessarily rise to the level of a noncompliance under the wording of the rule, but nevertheless seem to require some type of response. Exactly what response remains wide open to interpretation. An important corollary is that there are many opportunities for education at all levels in the certification process, including significant technical and financial resources available to assist producers to implement farm-appropriate conservation practices—if the operator is made aware of them.

The quality and management of natural resources vary widely between existing certified organic farms. This dichotomy reflects a variety of causes related to cultural perception, institutional history, and management differences, as well as basic differences in the resources from farm to farm. Not all organic farms are created equal: some are simply better endowed from the start with diverse natural resources, or better situated with respect to natural features. Others may be starting from scratch on land degraded by decades of abuse. History and geography are important.

Finally, **organic farms aren’t nature preserves (corollary: most organic farmers aren’t naturalists).** While most farmers want to do the right thing when it comes to managing natural resources (and many already are, in at least one or two important respects), it is important to keep in mind that farms are businesses with only so many human and financial resources. It does no one any good if the farm fails, least of all the natural resources that end up being turned into a housing development. Patience and reasonableness are virtues.

Next: a look at the NOP rule and what it says—and doesn’t say—about natural resources.



Tony Fleming is a professional hydrogeologist, naturalist, and self-described “plant geek” who has worked in the fields of water resources management and geo-ecology for more than two decades. He frequently consults with conservation organizations on the interpretation, management, and preservation of natural areas. He worked as an organic inspector for more than a dozen years, during which he visited several hundred unique farms, mainly in the Great Lakes bioregion. The shrubbery shown is the genuine Indiana banana (paw paw).

IOIA BOD Conference Call Minutes - October 19, 2010

Attendance: Bob Durst, Michelle Sandy, Eric Feutz, Jennie Clifford, Julio Perez (Alternate, Voting) and Margaret Scoles, ED.

Absent: David Konrad, Bob Howe (Alternate). **Minute Taking:** Jennie Clifford

Certifier Survey: The Certifier Survey was sent to inspector and certifier members, NASOP and NOP Accredited Certifiers. Of the nearly 100 surveys sent, twenty-nine responses were returned. In November the BOD will discuss how this information will be used and what clarifications we might request. Thanks to Diane Cooner for tirelessly pursuing survey responses.

IOIA BOD Conference Call November 16, 2010

Attendance: Bob Durst, Eric Feutz, Jennie Clifford, Julio Perez (Alternate, Voting) and Margaret Scoles, ED. **Absent:** David Konrad, Michelle Sandy, Bob Howe (Alternate). **Minute Taking:** Jennie Clifford **Treasurer's Report:** The report was accepted.

We discussed the possibility of hiring committee members, for future committee projects, or otherwise supporting the committees by using some of their budget for paid help. Getting Committee Chairs trained to use the GANC website could improve capacity of the committees with a modest increase in committee expense.

The organization hasn't earned or spent as much money in 2010 as in 2009. The budget remains balanced. Operating reserves (three months operating expenses) of \$42,500 are set aside. IOIA's Form 990 Draft 2 was submitted on time after two extensions were requested to accommodate our accountant and office changes. **The Treasurer Guideline Draft** explains current practices.

Certifier Survey: Bob proposed a smaller group of BOD members meet, discuss and decide how to use the information and what to share with the ACA's.

Training Institute (TI): How do certifiers imagine themselves involved in the Institute? We have made progress for Institute templates and procedures but want to expand this effort dramatically. Margaret is on the right track w/the key tasks. We agree the program should be formalized, made widely available and advance in short order. We discussed decreasing the number of Advanced Trainings occurring annually as they are not reproducible, serve a small number of people and are very time consuming for IOIA's office staff. We also discussed including live webinar for remote access to Advanced and other special topic trainings. IOIA staff needs to focus a substantial amount of time on the TI for its success. We had a short discussion on price structure philosophy. This will be revisited. The BOD may have a focused call about programs, direction and finances of the TI. Topic for Dec. meeting is identifying and prioritizing the 200 level courses. We need these courses named in the Work Plan.

Inspector Liability Insurance: It was discovered, individuals can acquire professional owners (Errors & Omissions) insurance without Business Owners (Liability) insurance but not Business Owners without Professional in most cases. Michelle is looking into this issue and will report. People have expressed appreciation for the tremendous efforts made by IOIA for all the research.

IOIA BOD Conference Call December 21, 2010

Attendance: Bob Durst, Eric Feutz, David Konrad, Michelle Sandy, Jennie Clifford, and Margaret Scoles, ED. Alternates Julio Perez and Bob Howe were not present. **Minute Taking:** Jennie Clifford

Budget: A hearty thank you to the Finance Committee for all their additional work and consideration on the 2011 budget. Time was spent discussing additional resources IOIA needs to manage and expand current workloads, Training Institute implementation and NOP work. Other possible changes; increasing training charges, fleshing out new position salaries. The preliminary budget was not approved. The BOD approved a search committee geared to examine IOIA's need for the additional staff position and the finances around that. Bob Durst Michelle Sandy, and Eric Feutz volunteered for the committee.

Training Institute: We discussed 200 level courses and reviewed the polled ACA's opinions of highest value trainings, resource materials and class offerings. The Training Institute is on track as proposed. The BOD supported the ranking of 200 level courses in the same order as the Certifier Survey results. One topic was added at the request of certifiers: Natural Resources Conservation/Crop Rotation.

Audit – more detailed than basic training, still basic skill level

Livestock DMI and Feed Audits

Materials – Crop, Livestock, Processing

Multi-ingredient

Materials – Sanitation, Pest Control

Professionalism

The BOD was in agreement that most training materials should be owned by IOIA. However, in order to increase the speed of putting forth more offerings, we may seek courses that are already developed and available. Bob mentioned that not all resources need to be webinars. For example, he is developing for IOIA a resource list on processing materials allowed on 205.605. IOIA could seek contractors willing to create similar lists for Crops and Livestock.

Certifier-Inspector Dialogue: Certifier-Inspector Dialogue list serve has been set up. A significant outcome of the Dec 6 call was that certifiers requested that IOIA keep reviewers in mind for training. All of the 200 level courses are relevant to both inspectors and reviewers and other certification staff. Each topic is of about equal interest to both groups, actual course content would likely differ.

IOIA Applications/Signatures: IOIA will eliminate the signature step from the pre-training applications, replacing them with checkboxes. This will allow the conversion of all IOIA application forms (membership, training, accreditation, scholarship) for electronic submission. Signatures will be collected at training wherever possible when essential (i.e. confidentiality/liability waivers).

ED Report: ED requested assistance from the BOD to create a proposal to submit to IFOAM World Congress Organizing Committee for an international inspector forum session. ED will brainstorm and send ideas to BOD members for comment.

IOIA BOD Conference Call January 18, 2011

Minutes pending approval. 2011 Budget was approved during the meeting.

Advanced Soil Workshop: Field Evaluation of Soil Quality

By Lisa Pierce

A couple of years ago I attended an IOIA Biodynamic workshop. What has stayed with me about the workshop was the field trip where Jim Fullmer of the Demeter Association brought a shovel to the farm and the first thing we did was dig a hole in the field and look at, feel, and smell the soil. This seems like it should be an obvious part of an organic farm visit but it is not – like so many things these days, the obvious has become the radical.

Last summer I completed some organic inspections for a biodynamic organic certification agency in Canada. One biodynamic farm inspection I went on I starting asking my usual questions about soil management and fertility and the farmer responded by simply walking over to his rows of vegetables, digging up one of his plants and handing it to me. I looked at the root system and the soil in my hand and I knew that that handful of soil contained not only organic matter and billions of living organisms but it also contained that farmer's commitment to biodynamic agriculture. And repeatedly I found that farmers had chosen to belong to this biodynamic organization, not because they believed in the power of a particular biodynamic preparation but because they believed that the system surrounding the organic certification of biodynamic farmers had not forgotten the reverence, the beauty and the mystery... of soil. This experience prompted me to think again about soil, how I assess soil as part of my work as an organic inspector and how the organic certification industry can learn from the biodynamic sector by once again positioning soil as the foundation of our organic crop farm plans, as the foundation of our crop monitoring system and as the foundation of our crop assessment system.

Inspectors will have an opportunity to hone their field skills by both observing and measuring soil and site properties at the **Advanced Soils Workshop to be held March 23 and March 24, 2011** in conjunction with the IOIA AGM and Advanced trainings. Observations and measurements will be evaluated as they relate to soil health/quality and compliance with 205.203.

The soils workshop will be lead by Kate Newkirk. Kate has a unique insight on soil as the culmination of a multi-perspective that has included working with soil as a research scientist, an organic inspector, a farmer and a certifier. She worked on the Virginia Cooperative Soil Survey Program followed by 20 years of experience as a soil scientist and research associate at the Ecosystems Center of the Marine Biological Laboratory (Woods Hole, MA). Currently, Kate is the co-owner of Wintergreen Herbs and Vegetables and an associate director of MOFGA (Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association).

IOIA Cooks Up Anniversary Cookbook Fundraiser

IOIA members are **encouraged** to participate in this FUNdraising membership project.

Our goal is at least one recipe from every IOIA member.

We aren't just collecting great recipes, including your simple, 'on the road' favorites. We also want other tidbits and useful information (read, memorable experiences) that will make this a very collectible book honoring 20 years of IOIA and representing the wide demographic that makes up the IOIA membership.

To submit a recipe for inclusion in the IOIA Cookbook, email lynell@rangeweb.net with the following information:

1. Your full name as it should be printed
2. Inspection experience (types/years) (optional)
3. Your website, blog, twitter handle and/or facebook url. (optional)
4. Category of dish (breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert, drink, snack, etc)
5. A few sentences explaining why this recipe should be included in the cookbook: Why did you choose to submit this one? Is this something that you are known for? Where did the original recipe come from? What makes it so special/delicious? Have you served it at any memorable occasions?
6. The recipe, broken down into ingredients and steps. **In WORD DOC only Please.** Times New Roman, size 12 font is preferable, single spaced. No PDF, or other formatting, no tables.
7. A photo of you, your farm or home. **JPG only Please.** Please send the recipe and photo as separate attachments. Please do NOT embed photos into the recipe document. You may also want to submit a photo of the finished dish.
8. Other tidbits, IOIA history bytes, humorous anecdotes, quotable quotes, or historical photos are very welcome.
9. Please send recipes and photos by the 28th of February 2011.



Please be aware that we cannot guarantee that every recipe will be printed. Duplicate recipes will be printed with the names of all of the members who submitted them.

Ammonia In Poultry Houses

By Terrell "Spence" Spencer

A large scale, confinement style poultry operation can often present challenges for an inspector inspecting for NOP compliance. The inspector may be unfamiliar with poultry in general, or with indoor poultry operations in particular; in addition, some large laying houses, with multiple tens-of-thousands of layers living in double-story houses, can be overwhelming to any person who sees an operation of this scale for the first time.

NOP Section §205.239(a)(1) mandates fresh air as a component of poultry health. In this article, we're going to look at a health challenge common to poultry houses – management of gaseous ammonia. We'll examine what the gas is, where it comes from, how it's controlled, its impact on the health of both the birds and humans that tend the poultry, and simple solutions for the organic inspector to measure ammonia levels in the field.

Ammonia, found naturally as a gas that's lighter than air, is a simple molecule in its nature. Composed of three hydrogen atoms attached to a central nitrogen atom, ammonia is produced when excess nitrogen is exposed to a high pH, or alkaline environment. Chicken manure is high in both nitrogen (from ingested protein) and pH (from ingested calcium for strong bones and eggshells). Therefore, it's not surprising that ammonia can be a problem when poultry are raised indoors. Factors that fuel ammonia production are high flock density (more manure/ft²), heat, litter moisture (from leaky poultry waterers & humidity), age (number of flocks raised on the litter), and pH. In the industry, ammonia volatilization is typically controlled by

- dry, high carbon, bedding (typically wood shavings, rice, peanut, and/or oat hulls),
- ventilation of the house
- moisture control (fixing leaky waterers!)
- chemical additives to acidify the litter

Adequate ventilation is a powerful tool in providing fresh air during periods of elevated ammonia levels. The inspector should keep in mind that ventilation is usually controlled by temperature through use of a thermostat. This is important for two reasons

1. The inspector must try to establish what the average living conditions are like in terms of ammonia concentration

2. Ventilation may be greatly reduced in times of extreme weather to save heating or cooling costs which can lead to high ammonia concentrations.

Now that we know a little bit about ammonia, we need to look at how it affects both human and animal health. Ammonia is primarily a respiratory and eye irritant and hazard. Chronic low-level exposure or acute high-level exposure to ammonia causes irritation or damage to the lungs, sinuses, and eyes, with chronic bronchitis and mucous build up being a problem.

The human body is able to detect, by smell, very low levels of ammonia - as low as 1-2 ppm, in some people. As an inspector, you can use your own body's reaction to ammonia concentrations to very roughly measure the concentration of ammonia in the air. The irritating effects of ammonia begin around 25-30 ppm. The mildly irritating effects typically consist of slight irritation of the eyes and nose. Around 130 ppm of ammonia, the gas causes a burning sensation to the eyes, lungs, and nose creating heavy tearing of the eyes. Breathing may be difficult for some people as the higher ammonia levels can create a gasping effect, sometimes described as suffocating. Over time, the body becomes accustomed to the effects of ammonia, as the body's receptors are dulled. In fact, it is very common that experienced poultry workers are actually unable to smell ammonia anymore, a result of years in high ammonia conditions, so don't be alarmed or surprised if the farmer or poultryman says he can't smell the ammonia that you smell.

Studies have shown that levels above 25 ppm are stressful to the birds, affecting the feed consumption and production rates. Of more concern to the inspector, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) is currently attempting to define the Short Term Exposure Limit (STEL) as 35 ppm (The previous level is 50 ppm). This means that exposure to 35 ppm of ammonia for long amounts of time is considered harmful to human health. Now, if the air quality is a threat to human health, it's a logical assumption that the air does not meet the fresh air requirement of §205.239(a)(1).

A more accurate method of estimating the concentration of ammonia in the air is by using ammonia test strips. Much like the test strips commonly used to detect pH, the ammonia strips are user friendly and affordable – around 10¢ a test, and give accurate results within a few seconds. The inspector can provide the strip to the certifier if needed, or take a picture of the strip in the environment to include with the report. Since ammonia gas rises, the inspector should be mindful that the concentration of gas will vary with height. Depending on the wishes of the certifier, this may be taken in consideration with the Organic Service Plan (OSP). For instance, if a producer provides perches to increase the flock's living area, but those higher perches are at an unsafe ammonia level, this may compromise the OSP.

QA Supplies in Virginia sells an approximately 100 test kit for \$10. Their website is www.qasupplies.com and they can be reached at 1.800.472.7205. Be sure when purchasing the test strips that you are not purchasing ammonia test strips for use in aquariums, as these are designed to test ammonia levels in water, not air. A quick picture of the ammonia monitoring strips can document the levels for the certifier. Be sure to include the colored concentration chart that comes with the strips in the picture.

Most importantly is the protection of you, the inspector's health. If the ammonia levels are excessive, consider asking the farmer to ventilate the house (after testing to document ammonia concentration levels). Clarify with the certifier beforehand what their expectations are of you as an inspector if high ammonia levels are encountered; this can give you an alibi if the farmer can't see your point of view and concern for safety.

Hopefully, this information will make your inspection of large-scale confinement poultry production systems that have organic certification easier and safer. If you have any questions on ammonia or other poultry issues, call the ATTRA hotline at 1.800.346.9140 and ask for Spence.

Terrell "Spence" Spencer is the Poultry Specialist for the National Center for Appropriate Technology ATTRA Project and raises pasture poultry in Arkansas. He completed the IOIA Basic Livestock training in 2010. The article will be posted on the "Inspectors Only" section of the IOIA website as a technical resource.

Carrefour Now Labeling Meat from Animals NOT Fed GM Livestock Feed

The French supermarket Carrefour, the second largest supermarket chain in the world, is now requiring suppliers to label meat and animal products NOT fed GE corn and/or soybeans with a "Nourri sans OGM" ("Reared without GM") label.

Carrefour adopted the new label after 96% of its consumers supporting the need for such labeling and 63% said they would stop purchasing animal products not bearing the label.



Sales of Non-GMO Verified Products Growing at 21% Rate

The California-based Non-GMO Project reported that sales of products verified as meeting its standards grew 21% in 2009.

The Non-GMO standard allows a threshold of 0.5% GM content (one-half of one percent) for human food, and 0.9% for GMOs in animal feeds. The standard applicable to seeds, including alfalfa is 0.1% GM contamination, or one seed in 1,000 seeds.

Food products or ingredients found to contain levels of GM proteins above these standards may not be sold as Non-GMO Project verified. Around 900 products have been verified to date, with thousands more in the process of becoming verified.

US Pressured Vatican Over GMO's

US diplomats pushed the Roman Catholic Church to support biotech food in developing nations, according to secret U.S. diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks. Efforts to push GE crops globally extended even into the halls of the Vatican.

Embassy cables in Spain, Austria and even Pakistan indicate that US diplomats stand with the biotech industry, although issues are still disputed in court and the public at large eyes the biotechnology dubiously, states a Truthout report.

The leaked cable documents a meeting that took place with a U.S. diplomat, a USAID official and Catholic leaders in Rome to discuss biotech foods in 2005. The U.S. representatives reported afterward that the Vatican seemed more concerned about the potential of the biotechnology to entrap farmers into

economic subjugation and rather accepted the biologically altered products themselves.

US diplomats used the vocabulary of a "moral imperative," citing the need to feed growing populations as an argument useful to respond to opposition to the biotech food industry among Catholic activists and clergy.

FWS pulls GMO crops from wildlife refuges in the NE U.S.

As part of a lawsuit settlement, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service announced in early January that it would stop planting GE crops on all its refuges in 12 states in the US northeast, according to Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER).

According to PEER, the lawsuit had charged that FWS "had illegally entered into Cooperative Farming Agreements with private parties, allowing hundreds of acres on its Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Delaware to be plowed over without the environmental review required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)."

It's not the first time that GMO crops in national refuges have sparked controversy, and although this latest lawsuit is a success for the conservation and food safety groups who filed it, additional litigation is being prepared elsewhere to address the 75 other wildlife refuges nationwide that could be growing GMO crops illegally.

In settling the suit, FWS promised to revoke any authorization for further GE agriculture at Bombay Hook and the four other refuges with GE crops: the Rappahannock River Valley Refuge and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Refuge, Montezuma Refuge in New York and Blackwater Refuge of Maryland, unless and until an appropriate NEPA analysis is completed - a condition that has yet to be met for GE agriculture on a National Wildlife Refuge.

FWS policy forbids "genetically modified agricultural crops in refuge management unless [they] determine their use is essential to accomplishing refuge purpose(s)."

National wildlife refuges have allowed farming for decades but in recent years refuge farming has been converted to GE crops because that is the only seed farmers can obtain. Today, the vast majority of crops grown on refuges are genetically engineered. Scientists warn

that GE crops can lead to increased pesticide use on refuges and can harm birds, aquatic animals, and other wildlife.

From TreeHugger.com 2010

GE Chickens Developed to Avoid Bird Flu

Chickens genetically modified to prevent them spreading bird flu have been produced by researchers at the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh. The scientists have successfully developed transgenic chickens that do not transmit avian influenza virus to other chickens with which they are in contact. This genetic modification has the potential to stop bird flu outbreaks spreading within poultry flocks. This would not only protect the health of domestic poultry but could also reduce the risk of bird flu epidemics leading to new flu virus epidemics in the human population.

The study, funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), is published in the journal *Science*.

Taiwan, from page 11

funded by the government and managed on a farm; beneficial insects are released to problem locations for biological control. Another certified organic farm, "Chia-Fong" consisting of 3.6 ha with greenhouse set up and storage facilities was visited. This farm has over 10 years of operation. Lisa experienced several different farming systems in Taiwan. She found that the east coast could be an ideal organic farming area. The small size of farms in central Taiwan is a challenge for organic farming. It is possible, however, for farmers to get together for organic cultivation to reduce the set up of buffer zones required to separate organic farms from sources of contamination.

Lisa observed that most farmers in Taiwan have discovered very creative ways to deal with their farm work. Therefore there should be a bright future for organic farming. She said she had learned a lot from volunteer Chen about friendship, communication, observation and listening. MingDao University is very grateful to host the IOIA Training Courses. The Organizer would like to express its gratitude for the support of IOIA and IFOAM as well as the participating trainees from various countries. It is looking forward for future collaboration.

IOIA Annual Report -2010 – Executive Summary

Prepared by Bob Durst, IOIA Board Chair, and Margaret Scoles, IOIA Executive Director

Note: The complete Annual Report is posted on the IOIA website (www.ioia.net) and copies will be available at the Annual Meeting on March 27.

Key Activities and Alliances:

- Successfully launched the IOIA web-based training format. The training schedule included four webinars on the new NOP pasture rule and one webinar produced in collaboration with the Non-GMO Project and FoodChain Global Advisors. Preparatory pre-course webinars on food processing were developed by Joe Montecalvo, PhD and provided to participants of the Basic Processing courses. A webinar on Input Materials was developed and delivered to two Basic Crop courses. The preparatory webinars are now a part of the standard curriculum.
- Initiated regular Certifier-Inspector Dialogue conference calls and a Certifier Survey in response to member concerns. IOIA had a positive impact on certifier requirements such as insurance. The ongoing dialogue is invaluable.
- Outlined and presented the IOIA Training Institute to certifiers and government. The BOD, with certifier input, prioritized intermediate level (“200 level”) training topics for development and web-based delivery. These were identified as topics not covered comprehensively in the basic courses but essential skills for all inspectors. Courses will all be delivered or in development during 2011. Farm inspector topics are Audit Trail, Natural Resource Conservation, and Crop Input Materials. Livestock inspector topics are Audit Trail, DMI and Feed Audits, and Livestock Input Materials. Processing inspector topics are Audit Trail, Multi-ingredient, Sanitation/Pest Control, and Processing Input Materials. Inspector Professionalism is relevant to all three inspection categories.
- Researched inspector liability insurance options on behalf of the members. Posted an insurance document and short list of providers on IOIA’s website.
- The ED and Board Chair traveled to Korea and Japan, engaged in training with inspectors’ associations in both countries (JOIA and KOIA), and met with government officials. With IOIA’s support, KOIA was recognized as a training body for processing inspection.
- IOIA’s first training on the continent of Africa, bringing IOIA’s training program to a record total of five continents in one year.
- IOIA’s first in-house training for the USDA, conducted via webinar over three days, trained USDA auditors on the Canadian standards.
- Continued to participate on the Canadian General Standards Board’s Organic Technical Committee. Kelly Monaghan, the IOIA representative, serves as Chair of the Committee.
- Participated in All Things Organic™, Natural Products Expo East and Expo West in the U.S., and Guelph Organic Conference in Canada.
- Continued support of OTA, IFOAM, OMRI, COG, Green America, and MT Nonprofit Association through memberships and subscriptions.
- Quarterly newsletter, annual Membership Directory, IOIA Forums (English language, Spanish language, and Canadian members), member discounts.
- In recognition of the move to more web-based continuing education and fewer advanced trainings, IOIA increased social networking for inspectors. Events included a member gathering in Boston in conjunction with Expo East and a dinner reception at the home of the Board Chair in Oregon.

Trainings:

IOIA training continues to increase in value and global recognition. IOIA again expanded both global reach and the diversity of types of training and languages. French language training was provided in Québec. A downturn in trainings in 2009 had resulted from the global economic slump, but cosponsor-managed trainings rebounded in 2010. And the webinar format greatly increased access to IOIA training. Compared to last year (499 people trained in 30 events), IOIA trained more people on more continents and in more languages than ever before (607 in 35 events). The increase was largely due to webinars, more live advanced trainings, and a major increase in Crop/Farm Inspection Trainings. Crop/Farm training, the course in greatest demand globally, was up from six events to 16! IOIA trained inspectors in Manitoba, Québec, Arizona, Kentucky, Montana, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Guam, Peru, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Australia, and South Africa.

Finances:

IOIA ended the year with a positive financial position. This was accomplished while reducing the number of basic crop trainings in the US, typically the most profitable training course, by one. See 2010 Balance Sheet for details. Treasurer Guidelines were developed and adopted. A full audit of the IOIA finances is scheduled for 2011.

Committees: Full Committee Reports will be available at the Annual Meeting.

Board of Directors in 2010:

Retiring Board members: Gene Prochaska (4 years) and Stephen Bird (2 years).

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

The BOD met in person at the AGM and 10 times via conference calls. The key topic for the meetings in Arizona was visioning the Training Institute concept. BOD minutes highlights are published in each newsletter. Full minutes are available on the Inspectors Only section of the website.

Last year's AGM proposed to eliminate Alternates on the Board of Directors. The membership favored increasing the size of the Board to seven and changing bylaws to remove the alternates. The number of directors specified in the Bylaws was no less than five (5) and no more than twelve (12). The exact number of Directors is set for the following year by the AGM. A ballot was submitted by the Bylaws Committee to eliminate alternates. The ballot passed; the 2011 AGM will determine the size of the Board.

**International Organic Inspectors Association
Balance Sheet (Cash Basis)
As of December 31, 2010
Current and Previous Year**

ASSETS		Dec 31, 2010	Dec 31, 2009
Current Assets			
	Total Checking/Savings	191,204.42	183,020.92
	Total Accounts Receivable	254.55	1,050.92
	Total Other Current Assets	4,740.30	5,078.34
	Total Current Assets	196,199.27	189,150.18
Fixed Assets			
	Building	35,000.00	35,000.00
	Total Fixed Assets	35,000.00	35,000.00
	Accumulated Depreciation	-511.94	-511.94
	Total Other Assets	-511.94	-511.94
	TOTAL ASSETS	230,687.33	223,638.24
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Equity			
	Contributed Property-FM Value	29,031.80	29,031.80
	Restricted	1,156.00	1,036.00
	Retained Funds	193,570.44	146,913.90
	Net Income	6,929.09	46,656.54
	Total Equity	230,687.33	223,638.24
	TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$230,687.33	\$223,638.24

Statement is Subject to review and approval by IOIA Board of Directors
Final Copies will be available to members at the IOIA AGM and on the website.

Staff:

Margaret Scoles continues as Executive Director.

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

Kathy Bowers, Office Manager
(thank you to Rita Wenzel, who left in 2010)

Diane Cooner, Newsletter Editor, Website Manager, and moderator of the IOIA Forums

Sacha Draine, International Training Services

Teri Lindberg, U.S. Training Services (thanks and farewell)

Renee Higgins, Financial Officer

Lynell Denson, Administrative Assistant

Gordon Mulkey, Office Assistant

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

IOIA Trainings in 2010		
Type of Course	Number of Events	Number of participants
Basic Crop	16	262
Livestock	2	33
Basic Processing	4	55
Advanced	6	124
Pasture Webinars	4	80
Other	3	53
Total	35	607



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Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!

2011 Calendar

Feb 24-26 22nd Annual Organic Farming Conference, an educational weekend packed with 70+ workshops, 150+ exhibitors, terrific food, foot stompin' entertainment, acres of food and farming books, and plenty of time and space to network and mingle.
www.mosesorganic.org

Feb 26 11th Annual Oregon Small Farms Conference, Corvallis, OR
<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/2011SF>
C

March 2 - 4 National Ag Ed Summit. Sponsored by The National Council for Agricultural Education and the National FFA Organization. Orlando, FL.
www.naae.org/links/newsitems/

March 3 17th Annual ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace Springfield, MA
<http://www.ecolandscaping.org>

March 4 - 6 COABC annual conference, Sidney, British Columbia, Canada
www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca

March 10-13 Expo West, Anaheim Convention Center Anaheim, CA. Education & Events: March 10-13, Trade Show: March 11-13. www.expowest.com

March 16-18 USDA Organic Farming Systems Research Conference Washington, D.C. Info at:
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/ConferenceCenter/OrganicFarmingSystems/>

March 17 - 19 Chicago FamilyFarmed EXPO Chicago, IL
<http://www.familyfarmedexpo.com/>

March 20 - 23 The Farmworker Conference 2011 San Antonio, TX
<http://www.mafofarmworker.com>

March 24-25 Northwest Regional Food Summit: Building Community Food Connections. Rice Lake, Wisconsin.
email Tracey Mofle for info.

March 27 20th IOIA AGM, see page 1 for details
COABC

March 30 2011 Ohio Farm to School Conference Cleveland, OH
<http://www.ccbh.net/ccbh/opencms/CCBH/modules/campaigns/0034.html>

April 1 - 2 Growing Communities - One Garden at a Time. Southwest ACGA Conference. Tempe, AZ
<http://www.communitygarden.org/>

April 6 - 7 OTA Spring Policy Conference and Hill Visit Days, Washington, D.C. www.ota.com

April 26 - 29 NOSB Meeting, Seattle, WA.

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateJ&page=NOSBMeetings>

May 19 - 21 Food Policy from Neighborhood to Nation Portland, OR
http://foodpolicyconference.org/Food_Policy_from_Neighborhood_to_Nation/About_the_Conference.html

June 9 - 12 Food and Agriculture Under the Big Sky Missoula, MT
<http://www.blackfarmersconf.org/about-us>

June 16 - 17 Food for Thought: Food System Literacy in Classrooms, Cafeterias and Communities, Simsbury, CT
<https://www.nais.org/environmental/index.cfm?ItemNumber=153585&sn.ItemNumber=153587>

July 17 - 20 Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Annual Conference Washington, DC, DC.
http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2011_annual_conference/

For a complete listing of upcoming IOIA trainings, please see page 3 of this issue