

Celebrating
20 Years!

The Inspectors' Report

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Crosby to Direct IOIA Training Institute

The International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) has hired Jonda Crosby of Helena, Montana as its new Training Services Director. She joins Sacha Draine, who is in charge of IOIA International Training Services. As Training Services Director, Crosby is in charge of developing both live and web-based curricula for new and advanced organic inspectors, as well as for other audiences.

“I have had the pleasure of working on collaborative projects with Jonda in many educational settings over the past ten years,” said Margaret Scoles, Executive Director of IOIA. “Her dual background in education and sustainable agriculture is a huge asset to IOIA. Her commitment and understanding of sustainable and organic farming systems will benefit inspectors and the whole organic community. Jonda took the IOIA basic crop inspection course last year and inspected organic farms. She brings a fresh perspective on both IOIA’s training program and inspection work.”

Crosby is an accomplished educator and organizational leader, with a strong background in sustainable and organic agriculture. She earned an undergraduate degree specializing in agronomy and soils and a Masters in Agricultural Education from Murray State University. Crosby grew up on a registered Holstein dairy farm in western New York.

Most recently Crosby worked as Executive Director of AERO, a Montana-based, membership-driven nonprofit organization focusing on sustainable agriculture and renewable energy. As an educator, Jonda has worked for the Cooperative Extension Service at both Cornell University in New York and Penn State University, and has taught high school vocational agriculture. While on staff at AERO, she developed sustainable and organic agriculture education materials, publications and outreach for farmers, agriculture service providers, researchers and educators. Jonda also was instrumental in organizing the Montana Food Systems Council, the Montana Organic Association, and the Grow Montana Policy Coalition. Jonda is a past Board member of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, the Western and Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Groups. She received the Montana Organic Association’s “Leadership in Organics Award”.

[see Crosby, p 4]

Board Retreat Report

By Jennie Clifford

The IOIA Board of Directors held a three-day retreat at the Shaker Meadows B&B, south of Albany, NY, November 18-20. We were inspired and rejuvenated by the quantity, quality and success of our work done together. This was the first multi-day retreat separate from the annual meeting since 2007. Both Margaret, our ED, and Bob Durst, our past BOD Chair urged us to make space and time for a retreat, which we agree was solid advice!

This year at the AGM in Tampa, five of our seven BOD members were elected, four of which [see BOD, p 4]

Inside:

IFOAM/Korea
Training News
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Livestock Inputs
About TSPing
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Resources

And More!!

IOIA Gets Even More Global

IOIA recently received a request from Anna Galovich, a blogger in Estonia, who found our site interesting and wanted to translate our homepage into Estonian.

Who knows what this might lead to for the good people of Estonia – perhaps trainings there? We'll see. In the meantime, to take a look at what our homepage looks like, go to <http://blog.1800flowers.com/international/ioia-association-es/>

On-Farm Modes of Transportation '09

By Ib Hagsten

When I visited farms throughout the eastern half of the US this summer, interesting experiences presented themselves.

During a very wet Iowa summer, we were driving on a level, on-farm dirt road, to inspect the fields. When the road tilted we slid sideways into the bean field; with the power of four-wheel drive we traversed the rows perpendicularly to reach the grass waterway for "traction" -- leaving two deep "trenches" behind us.

Stopping my car at a neighboring Pennsylvania farm, as I had arrived 20 min early, I turned off the engine to make phone calls. 15 minutes later I turned the key, only to find my car apparently "dead." A son of the Amish family noted my dilemma and he loaned me his 21-speed bicycle. Much to the surprise of the farmer client, I "pedaled in" on time.

In west Texas, where it only rains 5 inches annually, the farmer and I drove to inspect 1,000 acres of alfalfa at 5-inches per hour. It looked like Lake Pontchartrain, where nothing but water is visible as far as the eye can see in all directions.

Completing the audit trail with an older farmer we went out to do a drive-around of the fields/crops. Seeing a "unique" vehicle near the barn, I inquired. "Wish you hadn't asked," he said, "but since you did, I was a rodeo clown 50-years ago." We ended up driving the old car rigged to tilt backwards and spew smoke (to divert the wild bull).

It's "no bull" that I inspected fields on two wheels.

Only an inspector would get these stories, so if you have some good ones to share (and you know you do!), send them to Diane at webgal@ioia.net

2011 Membership Directory Updates

(Changes made by D. Miller 11/30/11)

Please make the following changes to your 2011 Membership Directory. *Any changes are italicized.* Other parts of the addresses remain the same unless noted. Any additions or corrections to information categories other than addresses and contact numbers will be listed in the 2011 Hardcopy Membership Directory or can be viewed in the 2011 Online Directory.

Address Changes: Inspectors

Kimberly Hagen

kimberlyhagen@comcast.net

Maarten Samson

wmaartensamson@yahoo.com

Dale Stoy dalejstoy@gmail.com

Welcome New Members: Inspectors

Brian Baker

bb123organic@gmail.com

Les Dale jldaleaba@aol.com

Beverly Hammond

bjhfaith@yahoo.com

Delia Hollbach djhrep@aol.com

Betsy Levy ilimatx@gmail.com

Jennifer Megyesi

fatroosterfarm@gmail.com

Luella Mozingo

egg lady0@gmail.com

Leonard Pollara

lepollara@gmail.com

Elizabeth Whitlow

Elizabeth@ccof.org

Supporting Business Members:

Biosun Certifier Co.

info@biosuncertifier.com

Organic Consulting Solutions

negrete.ana@gmail.com

Welcome New

Supporting Individual Members:

Elizabeth Amos

fiddlinglizard@gmail.com

Demian Bartholomew

naimed07@yahoo.com

Tabitha Emmelhainz

tabithaemmelhainz@yahoo.com

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Teresa Gilardoni gilardoni@att.net

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IOIA Board of Directors

Michelle Sandy.....Chair

Jennifer Clifford.....Vice Chair

Eric Feutz.....Treasurer

Helene Bouvier.....Secretary

Debra Bunn.....Director at Large

Silke Fuchshofen.....Director

Ib Hagsten.....Director

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

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Upcoming Trainings

San José, Costa Rica, November 28 - December 2

IOIA and Eco-LOGICA will cosponsor a Spanish language 4.5 day Basic Organic Farm Inspection training at ICAES Coronado in San José, Costa Rica from November 28 to December 2nd, 2011.

American Canyon, California, Crop, Processing, Advanced, December 5-9

IOIA will sponsor Basic Crop Inspection Training and Processing Inspection Training running concurrently December 5-9 at the DoubleTree by Hilton™ Hotel & Spa Gaia Napa Valley-American Canyon. IOIA and California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) will cosponsor Advanced Organic Inspector Training on December 6-7. This training will focus on organic wine inspection and residue sampling. IOIA will collaborate with the Non-GMO Project and FoodChain Global Advisors to offer Non-GMO verification training on December 8. For more information about the Non-GMO Project, see www.nongmoproject.org. FoodChain Global Advisors is the technical administrator for the project. Jennifer Schomp, Technical Co-Director at FCGA, will deliver the training.

Webinar: IOIA/OMRI Crop Inputs Webinar, December 14

This webinar will cover what farm inspectors should look for during inspections, and how OMRI reviews materials. Inspectors and certifiers who attend will gain skill in understanding input assessment, and in navigating the resources available on the OMRI website (www.omri.org). OMRI will provide the technical expertise of Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador, OMRI Program Director, as lead presenter. The course includes pre-course reading as well as in-class discussion and exercises, with opportunity for Q & A. Attendees will also receive an individual subscription to OMRI and a graded post-assessment. Joint IOIA and OMRI Certificates of Completion will be awarded to successful participants, and discounts are available for current OMRI subscribers and IOIA members. To register, see the IOIA registration page: <http://ioiaregistration.ganconference.com>

Guelph, Ontario, January 26, 2012

IOIA will sponsor Advanced Organic Inspector Training January 26 at Guelph University, Ontario in conjunction with the Guelph Organic Conference. The one-day training will include Identifying Organic Fraud by Ken Commins; Update on COR Standards and PSL by Kelly Monaghan and Garry Lean, IOIA Trainers; Inspecting Hogs to the COR by inspector Dan Scheele; and a Certifier Panel (ProCert Canada, Ecocert Canada and CSI confirmed). The course will include with an open forum “Inspector Issues Discussion and AGM Update”, open to all inspectors, whether or not registered for the training. Ken Commins, originally from South Africa, was the founding Executive Director of the International Organic Accreditation Services (IOAS), the accreditation branch of IFOAM, serving 1997-2011. Commins’ presentation on Anti-Fraud at the IOIA Annual Meeting in the 2010 was highly rated by inspectors. This presentation was made possible through the generous support of CSI. Bill Barkley, IOIA Canadian Committee Chair, will moderate the event. Organic lunch is included in the course fees. For more information about the Guelph Organic Conference, see www.guelphorganicconf.ca. For more information about the training, see www.ioia.net.

Chilliwack, British Columbia, Advanced, February 28-29 and AGM March 1, 2012

IOIA will sponsor advanced organic inspector training in conjunction with the IOIA Annual Membership Meeting on March 1 at the Best Western Rainbow Country Inn in Chilliwack. As the agenda is developed, the agenda and speaker bios will be posted on the AGM page of the IOIA website. The IOIA events follow the Annual Conference of Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC), scheduled Feb 24-26 at the same venue. For more info about that conference, see www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca.

Webinar: IOIA/OMRI Livestock Inputs Webinar, February 2012

This training is under development. For more details, contact the IOIA office, or visit <http://ioiaregistration.ganconference.com>.

Brandon, Manitoba – Crop and Livestock April 30 – May 12, 2012

IOIA and Assiniboine Community College (ACC) will cosponsor Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training followed by Basic Organic Livestock Inspection Training, 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.

State College, Pennsylvania, Crop, Livestock, Advanced, March 31-April 6, 2012

IOIA and Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) will cosponsor Basic Crop Inspection Training and Livestock Inspection Training running concurrently April 2-6. Each basic course includes 4 days of instruction including a field trip to a certified organic operation, plus ½ day for testing. Advanced Organic Inspector Training will precede the training on March 31-April 1. All trainings will be held at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel. PCO is a USDA-accredited certification agency that certifies approximately producers in Pennsylvania and adjoining states (New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, and Ohio). For more information about PCO, visit www.paorganic.org. Application forms and more details will be available soon at www.ioia.net

Crosby, from page 1

In the past 13 years, Jonda co-founded a successful organic feed business, Big Sky Organic Feed, and co-managed an organic farm, specializing in medicinal and spice seed production. Scoles adds, “While on staff at AERO, Jonda demonstrated her capacity for collaborative leadership, fundraising and developing effective program outcomes. She brings a solid experiential and a comprehensive educational background to her new work as the Training Services Director at IOIA.”



Crosby will work from her home base in Helena. She can be reached at 406-227-9161 or jcrosby@mt.net.

BOD, from page 1

were newly elected with the fifth being a second term member. We two BOD members not up for election were beginning only our second year of our first terms – we are a relatively young board with a big job.

A major focus for IOIA this year has been the search for and hiring of the new Training Services Director. While the search went on for that stellar person, the BOD wrestled with numerous other issues. This year was a high profile year for IOIA on the international scene. We were represented at BioFach in Germany, IFOAM OWC in Korea, BioFach China, Expo West in Anaheim and Expo East in Baltimore.

Our ED was also managing the extra workload of the USDA contract, with a final deadline that leaned closely toward our retreat date. Not everything was easy. Our Chair was unable to join us on the retreat. We BOD members hadn't all met face to face yet, carrying on business via conference call since the AGM. We hemmed and hawed about spending the money on the retreat and hiring a facilitator and finally did both, enabling us to set the direction for the coming year and beyond. Thanks to Silke, who arranged both the facilitator and our venue, we were joined by Bruce Withrow of Meeting Facilitators International in Toronto who worked well with the BOD and our long list of agenda items. And thank you to all who traveled from far and wide to be there, with sleeves rolled up to carry on the important work of IOIA.

The retreat began with a short business meeting. Jonda Crosby, IOIA's new full-time Training Services Director, joined us for Day One, the first time any of the BOD members had the pleasure of meeting her. We jumped into the retreat with a look at our Mission Statement and a BOD Self-Evaluation. What do we do

well? What could we do better? Those questions were relatively simple to answer and were a good place to start.



The setting looks tranquil, but you can be sure that the BOD was working during every minute of their retreat on the guidance and future of IOIA.

We next met with a prospective grant writer. Then we launched into the Training Institute. Who and where are our customers? Where is the growth opportunity? What should the structure of the TI look like? What is the role of an Advisory Council? What should our approach be to Licensing/Registration? That topic carried forward to Day Two. New ideas presented themselves along the way such as a suggestion of a 200 level webinar to be offered annually as a membership service called “The Changing Landscape”.

We explored the structure of IOIA and the TI concluding there was no compelling reason for them to be separate. Motivated by the USDA contract, which treated the need for inspector and reviewer training as equally important, we decided to pursue the idea of developing reviewer training. We also considered adding training for producers, processors and consultants but decided to first prepare some background material for discussion within the membership. A key decision made was to form an Advisory Council [see **Retreat**, p 5]

Retreat, from page 4

to the IOIA. An Advisory Council would obtain broader stakeholder input, especially given the shallow pool of potential IOIA BOD members; only inspector members can be elected to the BOD. The topic of an advisory body is not new for IOIA and during this retreat we conceptualized and formulated a structure preparing the way for the creation of an Advisory Council in the coming year.

We looked at IOIA accreditation and also at re-inventing it. We defined terms, i.e. license, certification, accreditation, registration. Accreditation will be a main topic at the next BOD retreat to be held with the AGM, along with a focus group discussion at the AGM. In light of governmental interest in the development of a licensing program, should IOIA proactively develop a licensing program and take action to gain the support of our members, certifiers, the NOP and other national agencies?

We projected into the future an Organic Learning Symposium, recognizing that government agencies plan five years out and that programs take time to develop. We came away from the retreat with tasks: A Job Description for BOD members, with better descriptions of the roles of individual officers, and an overdue Performance Evaluation of the ED. Helene and Ib offered to prepare a proposal for New Board Member Orientation in preparation for the coming AGM, noting they had not felt fully oriented when they came on board. Helene offered to research the potential of a Canadian 'arm' of IOIA. She encouraged IOIA to pursue training for the CFIA in Canada similar to the NOP training in September.

We worked hard and got a great deal done during the retreat. It was a pleasure to work together in person. It was an occasion to become more cohesive as a group, brainstorm, have some fun and become re-inspired about the future of IOIA.

If you are interested in being part of discussions regarding the IOIA's Training Institute, Accreditation/Licensing of Inspectors, or forming a Canadian arm of IOIA, please join us

for the AGM! We will prepare background discussion in advance and hold focus groups at the AGM. We would love your input! Every year the membership discussions seem to run short as IOIA's regular business extends past its allotted time. This AGM we are committed to allocating plenty of time to truly engage you, the membership. Please plan to come, tell us what you think and help your organization progress. Look forward to our next newsletter for more BOD retreat outcomes.

Notes from the ED

By Margaret Scoles

There is so much great material in this issue, I'll be keeping my "Notes" super-brief.

First – let's celebrate. IOIA just completed **one of the most ambitious and daunting projects ever** in just three months. We delivered to USDA **criteria for inspectors and reviewers**; lists of training content for beginning, intermediate, and advanced training based on those criteria; and proposed approaches for training and possible licensing inspectors and reviewers. We did it on-time and within IOIA's prescribed budget. (See last issue for more detail about this project, if you missed it.) Huge thanks are due the shared management team (Joyce Ford and Winfried Fuchshofen), the lead writer for the project (Monique Scholz), and the other team members (Pat Kane of ACA, Jim Riddle, Julia Govis, Garry Lean, Margaret Dickson, Joe Montecalvo). Their efforts were nothing short of heroic. To complicate the project, I was in Korea for the last two weeks of the final task. The project was a useful exercise in gaining clarity about how inspectors should be qualified. It also opened our eyes to pursuing collaborative training for reviewers with greater vigor.

What happens next with the deliverables we created? That is up to the NOP.

The NOP also asked the NOSB last summer to recommend inspector qualifications. Michelle Sandy, BOD Chair, and I represented IOIA on the OTA Task Force to prepare their

response to the NOSB CACC's proposed guidance on unannounced inspections and inspector qualifications. Full text of both the NOSB proposal and IOIA's response are posted on our home page if you are interested to read them. Michelle will be carrying IOIA comments in-person to NOSB in Savannah, Georgia.

I wish each of you a great holiday season. Yesterday was officially the hanging of the greens at my church. It was hard to believe we are nearing the end of the year. Don't forget your dues, your directory update, and mark the date of the AGM, **March 1, 2012**, on your calendar!



Our ED - Awesome in any language

IOIA AGM 2012 – Chilliwack

Don't miss the 2012 IOIA Annual Meeting and Advanced Training, Feb 28-March 1!

IOIA will sponsor 2 days of advanced organic inspector training in conjunction with the IOIA Annual Membership Meeting on March 1 at the Best Western Rainbow Country Inn in Chilliwack. As the agenda is developed, the agenda and speaker bios will be posted on the AGM page of the IOIA website. The IOIA events follow the Annual Conference of Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia (COABC), scheduled Feb 24-26 at the same venue. For more information about that conference, see www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca. Recent IOIA annual meetings in Canada were Montreal (2009) and Vancouver (2005).

SECTOR NEWS

Ohio Drops Dairy Regulation

The State of Ohio has agreed that it will no longer pursue regulations limiting labeling on organic dairy products. Ohio had attempted to prohibit statements on labels which informed consumers that organic dairy products are produced without antibiotics, pesticides or synthetic hormones. After the Organic Trade Association sued the State of Ohio, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals sided with an OTA lawsuit citing consumers' right to know and gutted the Ohio rule, finding that it was unconstitutional.

OMRI signs major contract with USDA

The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) has signed a large contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to produce a comprehensive list of substances permitted for organic crop production. The contract calls for the production of a draft guidance document, the Permitted Substances List (PSL), to clarify which commonly available generic substances are allowed for use in organic crop production, according to USDA regulations. Additional materials lists are expected to follow for organic livestock production and for organic processing.

IOIA Friends Elected to IFOAM World Board

IOIA is very pleased to announce that past board member Gabi Soto of Costa Rica has been elected to serve as Vicepresident of IFOAM.

Gabi has been inspecting for the past 20 years and has served as an IOIA trainer.

Matthew Holmes, Executive Director of Canadian OTA has also been elected to the IFOAM World Board. He is the only representative from North America on the ten-person Board. IFOAM is the worldwide umbrella organization for the organic movement, uniting more than 750 member organizations in 116 countries.

The election was part of the 17th Organic World Congress, held in South Korea Sept. 26 to Oct. 1, which attracted close to 2,000 participants from 76 countries.

USDA publishes proposed rule on tetracycline, formic acid, and attapulgate

USDA is inviting comments on a [proposed rule](#) that addresses the use of

three substances in organic agriculture: tetracycline, formic acid and attapulgate. The proposals reflect the recommendations of the National Organic Standards Board. Tetracycline has been allowed in organic crop production since 2002 solely to control fire blight; the proposal would allow its use until Oct. 21, 2014. Formic acid was petitioned in May 2010 to be allowed as a pesticide to suppress varroa mites in honeybees; the proposal is to allow its use. Attapulgate was petitioned in May 2009 as a processing aid to purify vegetable and animal oils; the proposal is to allow its use. Comments must be submitted by Jan. 9, 2012, to be considered during final rulemaking. Parties can view the docket and submit comments by visiting www.regulations.gov (search for keyword or ID AMS_FRDOC_0001-0854).

NOP website updated with new petitions and technical reports

The National Organic Program's website has been updated with new National List petitions and Technical Reports for several petitioned substances. Technical Reports recently received include Ammonium nonanoate, Arachidonic Acid (ARA) Single-Cell Oil, Color: Beta-Carotene, Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) Algal Oil, Ferric phosphate, Indole-3-butyric acid, and Propane. Recently posted petitions include Ascorbyl palmitate (§ 205.605), Lycopene (§ 205.605), Nucleotides (§ 205.605), Taurine (§ 205.605), Tartaric acid (§ 205.605(b) (to remove), Curry leaf (§ 205.606), and Kaffir lime leaves and fruit (§ 205.606).

NOP Seeking Clarification of 'Other Ingredients'

The NOP sent a memo to the NOSB on November 15, requesting clarification of "other ingredients" in processed organic products. When used as a formulated product, some substances on the National List may contain additional ingredients in various categories, including, but not limited to, carriers, stabilizers, and preservatives. Such "other ingredients" are sometimes referred to as inert ingredients, excipients, or incidental additives.

Since OFPA requires that each non-agricultural ingredient be specifically allowed, and because the National List

doesn't specifically list "other ingredients" commonly found in formulated products, the NOP is requesting that the NOSB specify whether these "other ingredients" are allowed.

Go to this link to view the memo:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5095484>

Super-Committee fails, work to continue on Farm Bill

The US Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (Super-Committee) announced on Nov. 21 that it had failed to reach an agreement on how to find \$1.2 trillion in savings over the next ten years. This means these savings must be found through sequestration beginning in 2013. The House and Senate Agriculture Committees submitted a proposal to the Super-Committee that would have served as the 2012 Farm Bill, and cut \$23 billion from agricultural programs. Because the Super-Committee failed, the 2012 Farm Bill, which authorizes funding for key organic programs, now will likely be written through the normal legislative process. For a comprehensive overview of the Farm Bill, check out [OTA's Farm Bill web pages](#).

OTA Participates in Mexico Seed Workshop

OTA Executive Vice President Laura Batcha and Senior Trade Advisor Robert Anderson recently participated in critical organic and untreated seed meetings held in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico. Officials from the Mexico Ministry of Agriculture, SAGARPA and SENASICA made presentations and engaged in dialogue regarding the current phytosanitary regulations for organic, untreated and all seeds imported into Mexico. Importantly, the U.S. government participated, led by Minister Counselor Daniel Berman, USDA's Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program Miles McEvoy, and a representative from USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) facilitated the meeting. Other participants included Mexican producers, international seed companies and U.S. companies including Driscoll's and Oregon Tilth. Next steps include addressing the urgency for growers to have access to organic seeds, analysis of Mexican soil-borne pathogens,

analysis of the Mexico Seed Database, clarifying country of origin and country of processing requirements, and the submission of proposals to SAGARPA from industry, seed companies and governments. Participants agreed to develop strategies and coordinate measures to resolve the current crisis in organic seeds for Mexican growers.

FY 2012 Ag Appropriations signed into law

On Nov. 17, the US House and Senate passed Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture Appropriations as part of a minibus bill that also included funding for Commerce, Justice, and Science programs. The bill was subsequently signed into law by President Obama. Funding for critical organic programs, including the National Organic Program, Organic Data Initiative, organic research, and Appropriate Technology for Rural Areas were funded in the bill. The minibus also funds through Dec. 18 government programs that are in the remaining appropriations bills that have not been passed.

Job Opening – Certification Specialist

MOSA is hiring an additional Certification Specialist to begin work in early 2012. Primary responsibilities include customer service for organic producers and handlers, evaluating organic plan information and inputs to determine compliance with the National Organic Standards, and communication with clients about certification requirements. The ideal candidate will have a college degree in a related area, or equivalent by training or experience, and knowledge of organic farming and certification. Also requires excellent communication skills, verbal and written; strong computer skills; and the ability to do detail-oriented work in a fast paced environment. This is a full-time position with benefits and requires working out of MOSA's office in Viroqua, Wisconsin. Salary is competitive for a non-profit organization. MOSA offers a friendly work environment, challenging work, open communication, and commitment to a job well-done. Interested and qualified candidates are invited to send a resume, letter of interest and job application (available on MOSA website) to mosa@mosaorganic.org

China Not the Only Producer of Fake Organic Certificates

The National Organic Program recently closed a complaint case concerning a fraudulent organic certificate that originated in Cameroon, Africa, produced by a counterfeit company.

Reported to the NOP by an accredited certifying agent, the certificate falsely represents agricultural products as certified organic under the NOP regulations, violating the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. It contains the following identifying information:

Operation name and location: Villa Feed Association, Bamenda, Cameroon, Africa

Certificate number: CV004-098

Products listed as certified: Sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, cotton seeds, herbs and grains

Certifying agent and location: Agose Culture (NOTE: This is NOT a legitimate USDA accredited certifying agent)

Certificate issue location and date: Vicky Avenue, Cameroon, Africa

The NOP has not found evidence that any product was sold, labeled, or represented as organic using the fraudulent certificate.

ConAgra Sued Over GMO '100% Natural' Cooking Oils

While various lawsuits have been filed in recent years claiming that food companies using the term natural are engaging in deceptive marketing, a suit filed in June in California against ConAgra could make the entire industrial food complex shake in its boots. The plaintiff claims he relied on Wesson oils "100% natural" label, when the products are actually made from genetically modified organisms.

Today's supermarket is awash in items claiming to be "all-natural." If you've ever wondered how even some junk food products can claim this moniker (e.g., Cheetos Natural Puff White Cheddar Cheese Flavored) the answer is simple if illogical: the Food and Drug Administration has not defined the term natural.

Ironically, the complaint cites a definition of GMOs by none other than Monsanto: "Plants or animals that have had their genetic makeup altered to exhibit traits that are not naturally theirs."

Four Wesson varieties are implicated in the case: Canola Oil, Vegetable Oil, Corn Oil, and Best Blend. And it's not just on the label that ConAgra is using the natural claim, but also online and in print advertisements.

The complaint describes the extent of ConAgra's deception, alleging the "labels are intended to evoke a natural, wholesome product."

What makes this lawsuit especially intriguing is its potentially far-ranging impact. According to the Center for Food Safety, "upwards of 70 percent of processed foods on supermarket shelves -- from soda to soup, crackers to condiments -- contain genetically-engineered ingredients." While it's unclear how many of these products also claim to be natural, given incentive to 'go green' going on these days, it's likely to number in the thousands.

Specifically, up to 85 percent of U.S. corn is genetically engineered as are 91 percent of soybeans, both extremely common ingredients in processed foods. The legal complaint also notes that on its corporate website ("but not on the Wesson site that consumers are more likely to visit"), ConAgra implies that its oils are genetically engineered. The company concludes: "Ultimately, consumers will decide what is acceptable in the marketplace based on the best science and public information available."

But by being told the oils are "100% natural," consumers can no longer make an informed decision as they are being misled.

Occupy USA and the Food Movement

This could be a catalyzing moment for the food movement with a real chance for average Americans to see and hear the connection between corporate control of the food supply and the nation's health crisis. Indeed, the declaration of Occupy Wall Street (available on its Facebook page), addresses issues the food movement has been working on for years. The declaration states, "They have poisoned the food supply through negligence, and undermined the farming system through monopolization." More info at:

<http://civileats.com/2011/10/13/occupy-wall-street-and-the-food-movement/>

Canadian Update

By Kelly A. Monaghan

COG Welcomes New ED

On November 17, the Canadian Organic Growers (COG) welcomed Beth McMahon as its new national Executive Director.

Out-going COG Executive Director, Laura Telford, recently accepted a position as Business Development Specialist (Organics) in the Food Commercialization & Marketing Knowledge Centre of the Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives.

“During my eight years at COG, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to have a front row seat as the Canadian organic sector evolved from a small but passionate alternative food movement to a global food system leader with international standards, federal regulation and equivalency agreements with major trading partners. I’m thrilled to be able to leave the organization in great hands and to be staying on in the organic sector in a new capacity.”

Beth has many years involvement with the Canadian Organic Growers, first joining the Canadian Organic Grower magazine editorial committee in 2003, and later working closely with the COG staff as Executive Director of ACORN (Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network), from 2004 to the present day.

With skills in non-profit organizational development, fundraising and organic agriculture, the Board of Directors is confident Beth will continue to build on our past successes and further strengthen the Canadian Organic Growers capacity to fulfill its mandate.

Beth will begin the process of moving from Sackville, NB, to the National Capital Region. Beth can best be reached by email during this transition phase at beth@cog.ca.

First Suspensions of Certification

On July 1, 2011, active enforcement of the Canada Organic Regime began. Since that time there have been a number of suspensions and cancellations of certification. A list of these can be found at the following link:

<http://inspection.gc.ca/english/agen/transp/comp/orge.shtml>

Canada Organic Week

For the second year in a row, Canada Organic Week took place in mid-October. Spearheaded by the Canada Organic Trade Association and Canada Organic Growers, events took place all over the country at retailers, farmers markets restaurants and at industry gatherings.

One highlight of the week was the second annual Parliament Hill Day on Tuesday October 18th. Organic representatives from all parts of the industry in Canada descended upon Parliament Hill in Ottawa to educate Senators and Members of Parliament about organics in Canada.

The key points that the industry stressed included funding of standards maintenance in Canada, the proposed low-level presence policy for GMOs and the need for support of farmers interested in transitioning to organic.

Most MPs were unaware that Canada is the one country which, through its equivalency arrangements with the US and EU, has access to 96% of the global organic market.



A number of representatives attended a meeting of the Agriculture Committee and heard testimony from some supporters of organic. Matthew Holmes, representing Canada Organic Trade Association and Ted Zettel, representing Organic Meadow are two advocates who have testified as witnesses to this committee this fall requesting more support for the organic industry in Canada as a part of the government’s “Growing Forward II” program.

Organic Value Chain Round Table

Semi-annual meetings of the OVCRT took place in Ottawa in November. This group is discussing long-term funding of standards maintenance, a branding program for the organic sector, and the impacts of GMOs on organic agriculture and trade.

Canadian Int’l Negotiations

European Union:

The equivalency arrangement signed in June 2011 between Canada and the European Union is in force however there are some concerns that it does not provide the level playing field desired by Canadians. At present the EU’s letter states that organic products from Canada are deemed equivalent for the purposes of sale in the European Union but only if all components of that product are grown in Canada. The COO has indicated that they are actively working to rectify this misunderstanding.

United States:

The Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture was asked to review a request made to the Canada Organic Office by the USDA’s NOP requesting removal of ruminants from the terms of the Equivalency Arrangement between the two countries.

After consultation with the Canada Organic Office regarding data provided by the NOP on actual stocking densities in place for ruminant animals in the US, the Technical Committee agreed to support the removal of ruminants from the stocking density variance of the agreement.

Funding Update

Despite efforts of those on the funding task force (described in the last newsletter), those active in the industry’s Parliament Hill Day and on the Organic Value Chain Round Table, no funding is yet in place for standards maintenance.

Advanced Inspector Training at Guelph

An IOIA Advanced Inspector training is scheduled for January 26, 2012 during the Guelph Organic Conference. Please see page 3 for full details, agenda and application.

Membership Chair Position Open

Due to other pressing commitments, Kelly will be standing down as IOIA’s membership chairperson. If you are interested in this great opportunity to serve IOIA, please contact us at ioia@ioia.net

Kelly Monaghan is Chair of the Canadian General Standards Board’s Organic Technical Committee. www.ashstreetorganics.com

BOD Conference Call - July 12, 2011

Attendance: Jennie Clifford, Silke Fuchshofen, Ib Hagsten, H  l  ne Bouvier, Deb Bunn, Michelle Sandy and Margaret Scoles – Executive Director
Absent: Eric Feutz.

Minutes taking: Jennie Clifford/Michelle Sandy chair , Margaret Scoles note taking, H  l  ne Bouvier minutes.

2012 AGM: Vancouver area was discussed with date, in conjunction with COABC.

Retreat location & date: BOD Retreat was confirmed for November 18-19, unless an alternate date would make it possible for all BOD members to attend.

Training Services Director Search Committee: Listed position with MT Nonprofit Association, Montana Job Service, EdZapp. Bob is doing a great job of keeping the Search Committee updated. The Committee will have a narrowed short list by the time of the next call.

Korea OWC plans: Discussion over original plan to get a cheap booth. It was found out that it is not possible to get a ‘raw space booth’. Airfare: \$1322; Hotel: \$480; Registration for conference, Mutsumi, and Margaret: \$630; Estimated travel/meals during conference: \$500 **TOTAL: \$2622.** IOIA has purchased an ad in The Organic Standard, and a discounted web-ad for the Advanced training. It is listed on the IFOAM training platform. Margaret will conduct group emails to get wider exposure, and solicit for free advertising from the OWC group.

IFOAM Standards Vote: The deadline to vote on the IFOAM General Standards is July 28. Silke will set up an ad hoc team to see what interest or recommendations IOIA may propose.

OTA Board vote: Margaret will confer with Michelle. They will make a chart on the candidates to allow BOD input to decide IOIA’s chosen candidates.

New IOIA Logo: Logo options will be posted as Doodle or Excel with room for comment. Each BOD member should rank. Michelle’s logo, adapted as per previous input will be one of the options. Who will decide on final logo? BOD will make final decision. BOD should narrow down to only a few, then send out two to membership. Ask for vote, give deadline, then BOD decides final logo.

IOIA Training Policy Re-taking course after Failing Exam or Report: A participant of an IOIA training who failed the report assignment has requested an exception to IOIA policy. Current IOIA policy is that the only way to change a failing grade to a Certificate of Completion is to re-take the entire course. IOIA occasionally gets requests from participants who do well on the report but fail the report, as to whether we will allow them to re-take only the field trip/report writing portion of the class. Another request is whether we will allow them to replace it with an approved mentor and actual apprenticeship in the field. In very rare cases involving participants with ESL issues, IOIA has allowed this exception. The BOD re-affirmed the current policy and did not support an exception for participant.

Mischa Popoff Public Letter: The BOD decided to send a personal letter to Popoff, asking one more time that he discontinue misrepresenting his connection to IOIA, before posting a public letter.

ED Report: NOP has requested that the NOSB Certification, Compliance, and Accreditation Committee (CACC) develop a committee proposal outlining the criteria that inspectors should be required to meet. It should address baseline standards for education and experience, including continuing education. Luis Brenes has written the IOIA ED and BOD Chair encouraging IOIA to write a strong letter to the NOSB. BOD consensus was to write such a letter, especially supporting the IOIA training program in preference to solely in-house certifier training. It is not clear how this initiative relates to the USDA project IOIA has already bid on.

BOD Conference Call - August 9, 2011

Attendance: Jennie Clifford, Silke Fuchshofen, Ib Hagsten, H  l  ne Bouvier, Eric Feutz, and Margaret Scoles – Executive Director
Absent: Deb Bunn and Michelle Sandy.

Minutes: H  l  ne Bouvier. Acting Chair: Silke Fuchshofen. Margaret Scoles note taking.

Secretary’s Report: Minutes of the July 12 meeting were postponed and will be submitted for approval at September 22nd meeting along with August 9 meeting minutes.

9:22 – Jennie left the meeting and remainder of the meeting was without a quorum. BOD meeting continued with discussion only, no decisions.

Treasurer’s Report: Financials were presented in advance of meeting. Eric Feutz reported 2nd quarter financials vs. actual and a detailed budget and balance sheet. The IRS Form 990 was received by BOD prior to meeting. Eric stated the IOIA 2010 IRS Form 990 will be filed by next Monday, August 15th. The Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) was discussed. It has been changed from an Expense account to a Liability account. IOIA Business Plan Income and Expense 2011: Revenue and expenses for Business plan discussed: NOP project, no other special projects planned. It was noted that IOIA does not expect to meet budget projections for cosponsor-managed training, little webinar income reported in first half of year, but no hire of new 2nd Senior Staff person helps keep actual net revenue in line with expected. Consideration to the Business Plan for need to discuss and consider including an increase in capacity and budget income, additional application for non-profit grants.

Mischa Popoff Discussion: BOD reviewed IOIA’s prior action, bylaw exact text and Membership committee’s decision to not accept Mischa Popoff’s membership, previous IOIA BOD approval of Membership committee’s recommendation, staff notification to Mischa. Again, it was noted that no such designation as “Advanced Organic Inspector” exists. The BOD will review adverse membership action and make a final decision at retreat. [Minutes are continued on page 23]

Aquaculture Training in Hong Kong

By Lisa Pierce

The bumper sticker on my truck at home says, “Wild Salmon are Sacred.” I boycott farmed salmon. Perhaps it seems a bit ironic then, that I am the facilitator for the first IOIA aquaculture training held in Asia. But here in Hong Kong, I feel differently about fish farming. In some cases, freshwater fish are still reared using the same practices developed in China hundreds of years ago. Ponds are sometimes supplemented with fertilizer to encourage the growth of plankton. The plankton is consumed by fish and the polyculture system is complemented by three to four different species of fish with different eating habits that utilize different trophic levels in the pond.



The Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre (HKORC) co-sponsored one day IOIA aquaculture training on September 03,



Freshwater pond with city background

2011 at Hong Kong Baptist University. This was the third aquaculture training delivered by IOIA; the first training was held in Wisconsin in 2002 and the 2nd training in Canada in 2003. The morning sessions of the training in Hong Kong were instructed by Deborah Brister using webinar technology. Deborah gave a comprehensive overview of global aquaculture including global trends, history of organic aquaculture, production systems and fish species. Deborah Brister is an international aquaculture auditor and aquaculture consultant who has been extensively involved in the development of national and international organic aquaculture standards. Deborah was the co-chair and coordinator of the International Federation

of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Aquaculture

Group. Since 1999, she has worked closely with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program in the development of organic standards and was coordinator of a National Organic Aquaculture Workshop sponsored by the Institute in June, 2000.

Participants in the Hong Kong training were a combination of persons who had just completed IOIA Organic Crop Inspector training, persons who had previously completed IOIA training, staff of HKORC and government employees of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) with no previous organic inspection experience and training. The afternoon sessions, facilitated by myself, were designed to encourage the sharing of information between those participants who had experience in assessment of aquaculture systems and those who had training in organic inspections. The Aquaculture Fisheries Division of AFCD has published a great series of booklets on Good Aquaculture Practices as part of Hong Kong voluntary Accredited Fish Farm Scheme. By cross referencing Good Aquaculture Practices, HKORC aquaculture standards and organic inspection concepts of contamination and commingling, participants were able to develop organic inspection matrix relevant to aquafarms here in Hong Kong.



Amy Cheung Wai Yee receives her certificate of completion from Lisa

When I left Canada my partner and I were in the midst of canning and freezing fruit and vegetables for the winter. In contrast, Hong Kong is like a brokerage of food where the emphasis is on fresh and if possible – still alive. Fish are displayed in the wet market with the innards intact and exposed. Stalls and stores are filled with fresh fruit and vegetables imported from all over the world and aquariums with swimming supper adorn the front of restaurants. I have this moment where I think, wow, I traveled half way around the world only to stare at live seafood from Canada, probably harvested near where I live. But behind the wonder and international display are local producers struggling. Net cages huddled in the bays and outlying islands of Hong Kong float empty. Producers who have fish ponds in the new territories struggle to compete with farmed fish from Thailand and Vietnam.



Lisa on Lamma Island with fishing village in the background

Organic aquaculture, building on the foundation of Accredited Fish Farm Scheme, offers a new hope for aquafarmers in Hong Kong to create a new market niche for safe, local and organic fish.

Special thanks to my class. I had fun and learned a lot. Immense gratitude to Tina and Sharon and all the wonderful, hard working staff at HKORC. The discovery of the people in the tall buildings and the country behind the tall buildings was unexpected and beautiful. Thank you.

Basic Crop Inspection Training in Hong Kong

IOIA has been invited again by the Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre to provide an inspectors training from Aug 29 to Sep 2nd. Luis Brenes and Lisa Pierce interacted with 26 students which included two auditing on behalf of the HK Customs Department. Among the students we had some experienced farmers, HKORC staff, officers from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, from the Vegetable Marketing Organization, farmers Community Grower Group, and other private and public organizations.

Training was based on the HKORC-Cert standard and included a field trip to four different certified farms to evaluate compliance against this standard. We also had the opportunity to share a friendly dinner with former students and current inspectors in a splendid vegetarian restaurant in Victoria Harbor.

IOIA wishes to thank the Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre for its continued trust in our trainings and wishes a strong and fast growth of the organic sector in Hong Kong.



17th IFOAM Congress – Little Time for Breaks

"Organic is Life", the 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress, Sept 26-Oct 5 was organized and warmly hosted in Namyangju in the Republic of Korea (also known as South Korea). This was the first-ever IFOAM Organic World Congress in Asia.

IOIA presented an OWC workshop on October 1 and hosted a dinner for IOIA inspectors and members later that evening. IOIA was joined by KOIA and JOIA in cosponsoring a booth at the Organic World Fair Sept 28-Oct 2. The IOIA Executive Director represented IOIA and participated in the IFOAM General Assembly Oct. 3-5. IOIA welcomed a new member -- Dr. Mohammad Reza Ardakani, IOIA's first member from Iran. He joined at two levels; as an inspector member and a supporting business member. IOIA member Gabriela Soto of Costa Rica was elected to the IFOAM World Board and then selected as one of the two vice-presidents. The General Assembly took place in a brand new facility that included the World Organic Museum. Precious break times were filled with training discussions, including: Gunnar Rundgren (Grolink); Ong Kung Wai (Malaysia) and Vitoon Panyakul of Thailand about grower group training in Asia; Leslie Zuck (PCO) about the spring training in the US; David Crucifix and Jan Deane of IOAS about certifier training; Elizabeth Henderson about agricultural justice project training; and some old and new friends from the Phillipines, Australia, Uganda, and many other countries. An excellent proposal was submitted by the Buğday Association for Supporting Ecological Living, The next IFOAM GA will be held in 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey.



The grounds were spectacular, including artfully designed demonstration gardens of many varieties of rice, greens, and other crops, with traditional breeds of cattle, pigs, and poultry displayed. A torrential downpour challenged foot navigation one day for the thousands of visitors.

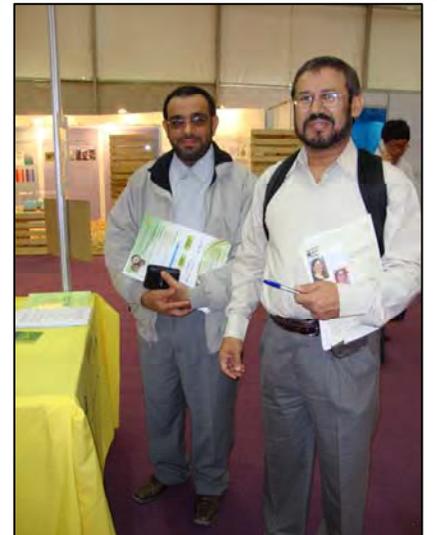


Left: IOIA hosted a small dinner party at a Korean BBQ on October 1. At Left: Han Jung Yeol (KOIA president), Margaret Scoles (IOIA ED), and Leslie Zuck (PCO). At Right: JOIA, Yutaka Maruyama (JOIA president) Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, and JOIA Board members. The group was joined a bit later by IOIA member Raymond Yang and Robert Yang, of Doalnara Institute. Photo credit: Isidor Yu.
Right: Bibimbap or "mixed meal". Delicious!



Left: Isidor Yu, IOIA Trainer, with Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, Seo Sang Boe and Margaret Scoles at the Control Union booth.

Right: Drs. Nasser S. Al-Ghumaiz and Khalid Bin Nasser Al-Redhaiman, inspectors from Saudi Arabia, stopped by to visit the WOF booth and discuss the possibilities of intermediate or advanced training in Arabic language.





Right: A small but enthusiastic group attended IOIA's *The New Organic Inspector* workshop on October 1 at the OWC. Speakers included Margaret Scoles, explaining the IOIA Training Institute and the potential for web-based training; Dr. Jay Sakle, from the Natural Organic Certification Association, who filled in for Sandeep Bhargava, on the topic of Grower Group Inspection and Certification. Yutaka Maruyama spoke about the Japan Organic Inspectors Association and their activities. Isidor Yu concluded with the founding and activities of the Korea Organic Inspectors Association. Originally scheduled for 90 minutes, the workshop stretched into two full hours. The participants came from Europe, Nepal,



Sri Lanka, Japan, Korea and China. Gabriela Soto, IOIA Inspector Member and Trainer from Costa Rica, also attended. IOIA gained a new member from the workshop -- Natsuko Kumasawa of Japan.

Left: Don't try this at home: Margaret learning to make rice cakes.

Top left: At the Scent of Autumn Farm, the gracious head of the soybean paste/sauce plant offers the group a taste of the soybean paste for which she became famous.



Above: The environmentally friendly pear producer explains how he determined what type of music he should play for his pears. According to him, the stomates opened farthest for classical, and they did not appreciate rock music.

Below: A day off! Amy LeBlanc, IOIA inspector member from Maine, and the ED, happy roommates at a certified organic soybean paste plant. Both enjoyed a spectacular blue-sky Yangpyeong bio-tour. The group learned about making soybean paste and

soy sauce; made rice cakes and visited a pear farm, visited a temple, saw how snails are used for weed control in rice, and toured an organic kimchi factory. Thanks to my training team, who shoo'd me away and staffed the booth.



Above: Yutaka Maruyama and Mutsumi Sakuyoshi delivered the one-day of advanced training comparing the key updates and differences for EU, JAS, and NOP Standards on October 3. Training was in English. Isidor Yu assisted with translation to Korean and helped organize the event. Raymond Yang helped translate for the English-language trainers. A total of 16 participants received certificates, including several staff of MAEIL. Mr. Chung of MAEIL explained the practical challenges of organic livestock certification in Korea. Maruyama is Chair of the JAS Review Committee. The JAS Standards are up for review every 5 years, and 2011 is that review year.

IOIA gifted JOIA and JOIA with tablecloths, customized with the names of all 3 organizations at the conclusion of the Advanced Training on October 3. JOIA's featured JOIA in the center; KOIA's cloth featured KOIA in the center. IOIA used the third one for the World Organic Fair booth. Special thanks to IOIA staff Kathy Bowers and Lynell Denson, for this labor of love, which involved many hours of designing, cutting, measuring, and ironing.



Entrenamiento de Inspeccion Organica en Nicaragua

por Humberto
Gonzalez

De acuerdo a los datos estadísticos, Nicaragua es el mayor productor y exportador de productos orgánicos en la región centroamericana.

Cuenta con uno de los mayores potenciales de crecimiento gracias a sus condiciones climáticas, disponibilidad de mano de obra y acceso a mercados.



Actualmente existe un gran incentivo internacional para el apoyo a proyectos de producción orgánica para diferentes rubros, incluyendo la ganadería. La apicultura se perfila como uno de los rubros de mayor facilidad de crecimiento. Es por ello que se requiere la formación de personal técnico altamente capacitado, con conocimientos normativos adecuados para garantizar el acceso y la constancia en los mercados internacionales. Adicionalmente el Estado como ente regulador debe garantizar un control adecuado de los procesos productivos y de comercialización, garantizando transparencia y concordancia con los principios orgánicos.

El IOIA como institución independiente y sus cursos de formación juegan un papel muy importante en el diseño de programas con una alta capacidad técnica normativa que garantiza un manejo adecuado de los sistemas de producción adaptados a los diferentes mercados. En el curso organizado pro Mayacert en Managua, Nicaragua, en Octubre 24-28, estuvieron presentes personas involucradas en los diferentes sectores, desde ONG, Gobierno, productores y representantes de organismos de certificación, lo cual va a contribuir al acercamiento de las partes y una clara interpretación y adaptación normativa local, cuyo objetivo primordial es el desarrollo de la agricultura orgánica local proyectada hacia el mundo entero.

Gracias IOIA por su aporte en el fortalecimiento de la transparencia en la agricultura orgánica.

IOIA in Ecuador

By Patricio Ajitimbay, BCS
Ecuador

IOIA/AGEXPORT/BCS basic organic farm training August 22-26 carried out in the city of Quito, Ecuador was an opportunity to understand better the way to do business in the organic world based on the rules. At the beginning of the course the participants had an idea of what organic means. Now, they have developed their own criteria based on what they learned in the five-day course. They shared their experiences, problems and triumphs as producers, agricultural consultants, students, professionals along with the facilitators who once again have given their best performance with relevant information regarding the matter. The local Regulations were analyzed too.



Training Group in Managua

IOIA in Peru

By Aida Bustamante

Control Union Certifications organized for second time in Peru the course of Organic Inspectors IOIA. This course was held in the facilities of the Crop Research Center at La Molina University (UNALM) in the city of Lima; a total of 3 countries were represented at the training including Peru, Chile and Ecuador. The course was held from November 7 to November 11th, 2011. The Lead Trainer for the course was Luis Brenes who had the support of two assistant trainers: Mrs. Patricia Quijandria and Mr. William Mercedes, both certifiers of Control Union Peru.

The Schedule of the training introduces participants in to the Organic Certification scheme, Organic Production Standard NOP-USDA 7 CFR 205, organic control points and Allowed inputs in Organic Agriculture. On day 2 and 4 participants learned about records, tractability, mass balance, inspectors' code of conduct, organic system plan (OSP), IOIA code of conduct and ethics, risk assessment, elaboration of inspection report and Group certification. The US National Organic



Program (NOP) was introduced and used as the standard to assess organic compliance and crop inputs during the field trip.

On day 3 we have the field inspection, performed in the organic camps of the UNALM. The participants demonstrated



their skills as organic inspectors making all the necessary questions. The inspection was divided in 4 areas: Production Fields, Greenhouse production, Inputs storage, and Field records. Provided staff of El Huerto-Unalm was very helpful in the inspection, guiding us in all their process.



The IOIA course curriculum consisted of 3 days of participatory session, 1 day of field trip and ½ day of graded exams. 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.

All the participants were satisfied with the schedule of the course, the knowledge of the trainer and co-trainers.

“ I found the course very important in my training as an inspector. In fact, I felt that I’ve learn so much things in this course as in my 2 years of experience as a inspector. Luis Brenes, the instructor, gave excellent examples making easy to understand all the aspects in organic certification.” Daniel Oblitas – Inspector, Control Union Certifications –Peru

IOIA Organic Crop Inspection Course

IOIA Crops Course, October 17-21

By Jonda Crosby

Sunday, October 16th, as Garry Lean and Margaret Scoles were setting up for the Organic Crop Inspection Training in Farmington, Minnesota, course participants began to arrive – from all over the U.S. and even from across the globe. This class, not unlike others, had representation from 15 states and even one participant from “Down Under”: Australia. Course participants represented a wide array of professional backgrounds, agencies, and non-profits. There were farmers, agronomists, teachers, soil scientists, a chef, and a college student.

With such a diverse variety of participants, it was hard to imagine how the course trainers would get them all going in one direction. But they did, and the entire class of 25

IOIA Crop Course participants check the buffer between an organic hay and corn field and a conventional corn field as part of the Organic Field Inspection practicum.



Participants at the Organic Certification Training in MN listen as Certified Organic Farmer, Scott Johnson, describes his tillage and nutrient management practices during the Organic Inspection portion of the training.

successfully completed the requirements to become organic inspectors. It was no walk in the park, though. Pre-course reading, assignments, a webinar and then the week-long intensive training, that included more reading, report writing, practice audit trails, role playing inspector interviewing and a final exam – this was a rigorous course. Course evaluations praised Margaret, Garry and Joyce Ford for their expertise and support.

“I thought this course was fun & interesting and I really appreciated Garry’s stories & experience as an inspector.”



“It (the course) gave me some ideas as to what the work is like & what to expect.”

“I felt like Margaret really wanted us to learn how to be good inspectors and was making a great effort to teach, share her experiences & help us.”

“I learned a great deal about inspecting & using the NOP rules, how this works on a farm, etc. I enjoyed this course!”



Margaret Scoles IOIA Executive Director listens intently as the Organic Inspector Training Field Tour host explains his crop rotations for corn, hay, small grains and green manures at the recent Organic Inspectors Training in MN

Inspector training included a balanced mix of class work, practice exercises, games, skits, role-playing, and an on-site practice inspection. The week-long course mixed up the work, the pace and ways of learning. These essential teaching elements, built into the course curricula, helped keep the participants engaged, inquisitive and learning as a group. Clearly this strategy for learning works well, as one participant noted, *“Margaret and Garry were so good at keeping us involved and interacting throughout the class, and it helped us as a group to learn quickly and to feel free to stop the process and ask questions.”* Another noted, *“The pace was a bit fast for me until we did the practice inspection – then I saw all those slides flashing before my eyes – and I realized just how much I had absorbed. I feel prepared to start inspecting farms.”*

Another lasting part of the training is that graduates have access to all of IOIA’s expertise and resources as well as the relationships they developed during the class.

No, we never got all of Jerome’s questions answered, but we ate well from organic food donations organized by IOIA and Gina finally got to ring the retreat center bell!

Jonda Crosby is IOIA’s new Training Services Director



Evaluating Livestock Inputs

As the Organic Industry Grows, Public Material Listings Lag Behind

By Matt Sircely

When Lisa McCrory started as Dairy Technical Assistance Coordinator for NOFA Vermont, there were only a few certified organic dairy farms in the state. "It was definitely exciting," she says. "It felt like a family was growing. Everybody knew each other. It was very cozy and warm and personal." The producers had followed organic practices for years — none were transitioning conventional herds.

But new issues arose as more producers chose organic. Herds dependent on conventional methods like antibiotics experienced heavy cull rates, while producers scrambled for solutions that could meet organic standards. McCrory began compiling lists of allowed materials and products, sometimes categorized by health situation, to support transitioning farmers. Without a public comprehensive organic livestock materials list, certifiers nationwide began to fill the void.

In a sense, little has changed says Jim Riddle, Organic Outreach Coordinator at the University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center. "Compared to crop inputs, the whole organic livestock sector is still in a much earlier stage of development," he says. The fact that certifiers still review most livestock materials means that products "end up on the certifier's list, but the manufacturer isn't driven to get a generic approval from OMRI or WSDA."

Today, the most extensive lists of organic livestock materials are still compiled by certifiers for internal use. Certifiers say that there are many reasons why OMRI listing is less prevalent for livestock products. Some input manufacturers are big enough that the organic sector is beneath their radar, while other manufacturers are so small, that the cost of a generic listing seems prohibitive. Many manufacturers still do not understand the basics of organic certification. Unfortunately, this means that certifiers must review the same product repeatedly and for each different application, each time requesting the most current information from the manufacturer. This can translate to higher costs for organic producers, because certifiers incorporate this unpaid material review work into their certification fees.

As Executive Director of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Association (NODPA), Ed Maltby spends much of his time advocating on a policy level. "What has increasingly become apparent is that different certifiers will allow different products for different applications, and that has caused some certifier shopping. There also seems to be a lack of consistency of what kinds of records are needed, and how to review those records." In his efforts to advance producers' interests, Maltby advocates for a higher degree of qualification for certifying agents performing materials review, along with a greater understanding of the practical challenges producers face.

"Any movement towards more consistent review criteria between certifiers and with OMRI is a step in the right direction," says Johanna Miranda, Materials Specialist and Inspections Coordinator at Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO). "It's better for us, it's better for the operators, less confusion, less certifier shopping. I think the guidance that's coming from the NOP, slow and steady, has been really helpful."

PCO maintains an internal list of more than 7,000 materials — approximately half are livestock oriented. Miranda reviews products such as mineral and vitamin premixes, including the carrier, forage and silage inoculants, medical treatments, teat dips, fly sprays and drinking water additives to control bacteria or pH.

"First, we check with OMRI, because if that product is OMRI Listed, then that certainly saves us a lot of work," says Miranda. She then determines review criteria based on the material's intended use, but then must usually contact the manufacturer. Most are proactive, but she sometimes has to explain the basics of organic certification. "It can really slow down a review if we're not getting responses from the manufacturer," she says.

Jackie Von Ruden, Farm Certification Manager at the Midwest Organic Services Association says materials review is "definitely not always enjoyable. We have a MOSA status of 'MU', she says. "Manufacturer uncooperative." Nevertheless, the MOSA staff have established strong working relationships with most manufacturers in the process of building their comprehensive list for internal use. These relationships grant MOSA quick access to current information, so that they

can verify materials for each specific use. Some manufacturers furnish outreach materials that facilitate quicker reviews. Von Ruden cites broad agreement among certifiers about what should be allowed, but since the process[see [Livestock](#), p 22]

FDA Rejects Petitions to Ban Certain Antibiotics in Animal Agriculture

On November 7, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) denied two citizen petitions that asked the Agency to ban certain uses of antibiotics in food animals. The petitions, filed in 1999 and 2005, urge the FDA to withdraw the approvals for antibiotics given to animals in feed or water for purposes other than disease treatment if the antibiotics are also used in human medicine. The petitions were filed by Environmental Defense, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Food Animal Concerns Trust, Union of Concerned Scientists and other groups because evidence shows that use of antibiotics for non-therapeutic purposes in livestock production can lead antibiotic resistance within human populations. The groups argue that these antimicrobial drugs shouldn't be used for growth promotion and disease prevention, but rather for treating diagnosed illnesses.

The response to these long-standing citizen petitions came after several of the petitioners filed suit in May against the FDA for not responding. In its response to the petitions, the agency expressed shared concern with the public and the need to address this issue, yet proceeded to deny the petitions on the basis of statutory hurdles such as a notice to the drug maker and an evidentiary hearing on the matter. It argues that taking these drugs off the market would simply be too expensive, resource intensive, and cumbersome: "The agency's experience with contested, formal withdrawal proceedings is that the process can consume extensive periods of time and agency resources."

Instead, FDA is "currently pursuing other alternatives to address the issue of antimicrobial resistance related to the production use of antimicrobials in animal agriculture." The proposed alternative is collaborating with the pharmaceutical companies that produce these antibiotics to voluntarily take them off the market for animal feed.

<http://sustainableagriculture.net>

The Lowdown on Being a Technical Service Provider

By Tony Fleming and Ib Hagsten, Ph.D.

Overview

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has for decades provided a variety of technical resources to crop producers and livestock operations, aimed at both improving agricultural productivity and enhancing conservation outcomes. In recent years, programs have been adapted to help producers make the transition to organic production while maintaining or improving the natural resources of the operation. While the principal role of these new programs is to develop organic system plans and grazing conservation plans for both transitioning and established organic producers, there also are many other opportunities to integrate established NRCS programs into organic operations. In recent years, much of this work has been carried out by technical service providers (TSPs)—individuals, businesses, and non-profits qualified to develop, implement, and verify specific kinds of conservation plans and practices. Currently, a huge demand exists nationwide for TSP-qualified individuals to perform these services for transitioning and established organic producers, thereby creating a significant opportunity for experienced organic inspectors to expand their scope of work. Becoming a NRCS-certified TSP is a straightforward process not unlike that involved in becoming an organic inspector.

Background

The TSP program came about via the 2002 Farm Bill, which expanded the scope of USDA voluntary conservation programs to both private and tribal lands. These programs are typically administered by the NRCS and have historically been carried out by local county NRCS staff. Because the demand for these programs was outstripping both the knowledge base—one of several qualifications to write CAP (transition to organic) plans is a minimum of two years of organic experience, which NRCS typically lack—and capacity of agency staff, the bill also provided the mechanism by which the USDA could qualify, use, and retain outside TSPs to expand the scope and availability of these popular programs.

The added focus on organic production came about through the 2008 Farm Bill, which recognized and encouraged organic production methods as a viable means of achieving certain conservation goals. As a result, NRCS implemented the programs noted above, and adapted many others to meet specific parts of the NOP rule (see the NRCS “Organic Crosswalk” at [ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/IA/Programs/OrganicCrosswalk.pdf](http://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/IA/Programs/OrganicCrosswalk.pdf)). The NRCS relies almost exclusively on TSPs to develop organic production plans. Demand for technical services from the organic sector is growing steadily and is present in all regions of the country, but a particularly large need for TSPs exists in the upper Midwest and Great Lakes regions, where there is a backlog of hundreds or thousands of such plans waiting to be written. A brief perusal of the lists of certified TSPs (posted on the NRCS website) for several states shows only a tiny percentage of TSPs as being qualified to perform organic-related services, and of those, a vanishingly small number as having had any direct personal experience in the organic sector, whether in production, livestock, or inspecting. This gap results in a substantial opportunity for experienced organic inspectors to expand their scope of work. Much of the work can be done during the winter, which dovetails nicely with the typical growing-season-focused schedule of organic farm inspectors. The rest of this article briefly outlines the steps involved in becoming a TSP, along with the typical activities, responsibilities, and technical content of the projects.

Becoming a TSP

The steps involved in becoming an NRCS-certified TSP are similar to the process of becoming an inspector. In essence, a prospective TSP signs up with the NRCS, completes several required training modules (either in person or online), and then becomes registered as a certified TSP. The process is outlined below:

1. The first step is to obtain an eGovernment account and password. This enables access to web-based resources and training programs available through the USDA website. To do this, log on to <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/> and establish a Level 2 eGovernment account. Then visit your local USDA service center to activate your

account and obtain a user ID and password.

2. Register as a prospective TSP by logging on to TechReg (<http://techreg.usda.gov>), which is where you will complete a form describing you, your business, and your background. Just like becoming an inspector, this step requires prospective TSPs to demonstrate that they have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter (through training, education, and/or experience). Your background as an organic inspector is ideal.
3. Take the TSP training. The TSP program has categories of technical service, much like there are categories of organic inspecting (crops, livestock, processing, wild harvest, etc), and specialty areas within those categories (for example, there is a constellation of specialty practices associated with the broad category of water quality). Generally speaking, you can pick and choose among categories, but the TSP Orientation Course (7 modules) is required for all types of TSP, including becoming certified for basic organic plan development. Depending on the scope of work one wishes to pursue, NRCS has a wide variety of training courses available through AgLearn that a certified TSP can take at no charge. Thus, if one is doing conservation livestock grazing or water management, for example, there are specific trainings available for those. A test is required at the end of each course, upon which you must achieve a score of 80 or better to successfully complete the training. TSP training is available on line through the USDA AgLearn website, or may be taken in person at regional trainings offered periodically by NRCS, such as the one in Wisconsin recently posted by Harriett on the IOIA forum. The AgLearn website is available at no charge to a registered TSP; NRCS also sends out regular notices to the pool of TSPs, announcing trainings held in classroom-like settings, whose cost ranges from \$250-\$500.
4. Once you have successfully completed the initial training, you will then be listed on the NRCS TSP roster and can begin providing

services. You need not stop there, however. You can add more categories to your qualifications at any time by taking additional trainings available through AgLearn. One such area where a strong need exists falls broadly under the category of “Maintaining or Improving the Natural Resources of Operation”. As mentioned in this column in the Winter and Spring newsletters, this aspect of the rule seems to have fallen between the cracks during the first decade of the NOP, and many certifiers and operators are looking for practical methods by which to better meet both the letter and spirit of that aspect of the rule. Existing NRCS-funded conservation practices and programs as diverse as establishing pollinator habitat, intensive management of rotational grazing, and extending riparian buffers for water quality protection and wildlife habitat all fit handily into the experiential knowledge base of organic farm inspectors.

The TSP Experience

Many kinds of activities directly applicable to organic production are available to qualified TSPs. Broadly speaking, these include developing and writing various kinds of conservation and management plans, designing and implementing a wide range of conservation practices, and performing on-site inspections to verify the proper design, implementation, and efficacy of completed conservation practices. The NRCS **Organic Crosswalk** document noted above suggests the range of possibilities. Perhaps the activity of greatest interest to readers of this newsletter is working with producers to develop and write OSP’s, a document an experienced inspector should be highly familiar with. The NRCS will soon be implementing a template for such plans, similar to those used now by certifiers and following the ATTRA model.

The responsibilities required of a TSP also parallel those of the typical organic inspector. Foremost among these is providing a high-quality product that complies with applicable laws and meets specific program standards, much like a clearly-written inspection report elucidates the operation’s compliance with the NOP. Maintaining the producer’s confidentiality and avoiding conflict of interest will also be familiar to inspectors. Likewise, providing the producer with

clear and complete documentation of the technical services provided (via an OSP, for example) is a key element of the program. Pretty basic stuff for an experienced inspector.

Being a TSP does differ from inspecting in one important way, however. Unlike inspections, which are assigned and compensated through a third-party certifier, *TSPs are contracted directly by the producer*. The scope of services provided, as well as the cost of providing those services, is negotiated directly between the TSP and the producer. The NRCS provides specific cost guidelines (including a not-to-exceed amount) for each type of service. By the standards of the typical farm inspector, however, these guidelines appear rather generous. For example, the TSP typically earns between \$1,000 and \$1,200 for each OSP or conservation grazing plan completed.

Experienced inspectors who take on the challenge of writing OSP’s as a TSP may find it to be a learning experience, particularly for those on the receiving end. Dr. Hagsten produced the first CAP plan in the U.S. When his state conservationist in Missouri excitedly announced to NRCS headquarters, “I got my first one!”, he was asked to supply a copy of that TSP-generated plan for nationwide distribution. The state conservationist happily signed off on that request, obtaining the signed consent of the producer, and shipped the plan off—only to receive scathing evaluations from two categories of NRCS staff: 1) those with desk jobs who had never operated a tractor pulling a disc or any other cultivating implement; and 2) those who knew absolutely nothing about organic farming. A steep learning curve quickly became apparent.

Simple things such as buffers had to be redefined. During seven training sessions provided by Dr. Hagsten to hundreds of NRCS staff, it was amazing to observe the body language and facial expressions of the trainees when it was explained that—in contrast to an NRCS buffer which is designed to contain nutrients *within* a field—an organic buffer is an attempt to keep drift and contamination *out* of the field and away from the organic crop surrounded by the buffer.

Anecdotally, NRCS conservationists seemed perplexed by the concept that

organic systems can greatly reduce soil loss and raised the existential question, “how in the world can we fund a CAP, when T must be less than 5 tons per acre”? NRCS uses a program called RUSLE2, which is based on a computer-generated soil-loss equation, and the conservationists could not imagine how organics could plow, disc, and cultivate reasonable level ground and still have less than 5 tons per acre per year of soil loss. It may be of interest to organic inspectors that by adding a winter rye cover to a three-year rotation of corn-soybeans-wheat, the T value (soil loss) is 2.6 tons/acre. Do we fully realize, as NRCS now has through these experiences, the true value of year-round cover crops?

Following these and other modifications to meet everybody’s perceived needs, CAP plans are now readily approvable by the agency. You can learn more about the TSP program, and initiate the process of becoming a TSP, by visiting the NRCS Technical Service Provider Orientation page:

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/nedc/training/catalog/?&cid=nracs143_024158

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OMRI, from page 22

don’t ask for any additional information from me because it has the OMRI seal.” For Lynn DeVaney, Vice President of Environmental Care and Share, Inc., OMRI Listing is crucial for several reasons. “OMRI not only helps us be sure we are in compliance with the organic standards, it is also a really great source of promotion.”

OMRI has already incorporated into its strategic plan the goal of increasing livestock product listings. “Any time we can increase the utility of the OMRI Products List, we will,” says Executive Director/CEO Peggy Miars, adding: “We’re aware of the organic community’s need for more public listings of livestock products, and we are consistently looking at ways to meet that need.”

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Non-GMO Month a Huge Success

October was Non-GMO Month. From the 46% increase in retailer participation to the historic Right2Know March from New York City to Washington, D.C., food activists got out the word that consumers are not interested in eating genetically modified foods.

Non-GMO Month in Numbers:

1,039 [Participating Retailers](#)

54,000 Non-GMO Project Pocket Guides distributed

50,000+ Followers on [Facebook](#)

40,000+ Visitors to related websites (including the new [nongmomonth.org](#))

466,000+ Overall "engagements" on Facebook (likes, shares, clicks)

3,800+ Followers on [Twitter](#)

2,500+ Mentions on Twitter

598 [Products verified](#) in the 90 days prior to Non-GMO Month

Non-GMO Project Verified products recently hit \$1 billion in annual sales.

[www.nongmoproject.org](#)

Groups Petition FDA to Just Label It

Another highlight in October was the launch of the broad-based [Just Label It!](#) Campaign.

The Center for Food Safety filed a legal petition with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) seeking mandatory labeling for foods made from GM crops. Labeling has been long opposed by big biotech companies.

The CFS petition alleges that the "absence of mandatory labeling disclosures for GE (genetically engineered) foods is misleading to consumers," and says the "requested actions are necessary to prevent economic fraud, and to protect consumers who are deceived by thinking the absence of labeling means the absence of GE foods."

The FDA had no immediate comment on the CFS legal petition, but a spokesman said previous court decisions have found that the agency does not have the authority to require labeling on the basis of consumer interest alone.

The legal action by CFS requires a formal response from the FDA and is the first step toward ultimately filing a lawsuit against the government agency to try to force labeling. CFS, a consumer advocacy organization, has filed several lawsuits against the government in recent years and successfully stymied approvals of

some biotech crops. FDA has 180 days to respond.

The CFS action is backed by a coalition of about 350 organizations that include representatives of the healthcare industry, consumer advocates, environmentalists, food and farming organizations and businesses.

In addition to the legal petition, the coalition has also launched a website petition campaign to encourage consumers to pressure the FDA on the labeling issue. The coalition argues that many other developed countries such as the 15 nations in the European Union, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Russia and China, have laws requiring labeling of genetically engineered foods. A majority of U.S. consumers wants such labeling as well, according to polls.

The petition now has over 300,000 signatures. The campaign vows to make labeling of GMOs an issue in the upcoming US presidential election.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/04/fda-food-gmo-idUSN1E79316220111004>

Consumers Hope for GM Label in CA

California voters may soon enact nation's first GMO label requirement.

The organization behind the proposed labeling law - the Organic Consumers Association - needs to collect 500,000-plus signatures to see their initiative on the 2012 California ballot. If enough signatures are collected, it will give California voters a chance to decide if the state will become the first in the nation with a mandatory label requirement for GMOs.

Despite decades of public outcry to label and even ban this lab-created food, the FDA has seen no need for identifying bioengineered products. Since 1992 FDA policy states there is "no basis for concluding that bioengineered foods differ from other foods in any meaningful or uniform way, or that, as a class, foods developed by the new techniques present any different or greater safety concern than foods developed by traditional plant breeding."

After facing a dead-end in changing federal label requirements, U.S. -based GMO label advocates have since turned their efforts to enacting laws at the state level. While California may become the first state to require labels, it isn't the first to try. Oregon attempted a similar initiative in 2002 - Measure 27; but a

coalition of biotech industries mounted a convincing ad campaign that prompted voters to doubt the value of the measure. Companies such as Monsanto, DuPont, General Mills, and PepsiCo joined forces against Measure 27 in the Coalition Against Costly Labeling Laws. Their \$5.5 million campaign hit voters where it always hurts: their wallets.

With several billion dollars invested in GMO products, this same coalition is likely to pour money into swaying California voters as well. The industry assures consumers that their gene-altered products are not only safe to eat, but also save money by increasing crop yields, and benefit the environment by reducing the use of pesticides. But unlike other technological innovations, the biotech food industry is not interested in identifying its creations from their natural counterparts. For all their proposed benefits, public stigma against GMOs has convinced industry leaders that identifying their technologically-enhanced food on store shelves would be bad for business.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/united-states/push-for-gmo-labeling-on-food-62992.html>

ECJ Issues Ruling on GM Contamination

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) has issued a groundbreaking ruling in a case concerning the contamination of honey with pollen from GM crops. The court ruled that honey contaminated by pollen from a GM maize variety (MON810) cannot be sold on the market, as the maize was not specifically authorised to be in the honey. The case concerns German beekeepers, whose honey was contaminated by pollen from GM maize during field trials of Monsanto's GM maize. The ruling directly challenges the abandonment of the policy of zero tolerance for GMOs that have not been authorised in the EU, and clearly underlines the need for EU regulation that would protect farmers, food producers and consumers against the contamination of their products from GM cultivation.

Commenting on the ruling, Green MEP José Bové said:

"This case is proof that coexistence is a fallacy and that GM cultivation does not leave a choice for GM-free products. Permitting the cultivation of GM crops clearly leads to the contamination of non-GM crops and other foodstuffs like honey. Beekeepers are powerless to

prevent the contamination of their honey by GM pollen, as farmers are for their crops, and thus powerless to prevent the tainting of the foodstuffs they produce and the integrity of their product. The only sure way to prevent this is by precluding the cultivation of GMOs." <http://www.greens-efa.eu/ecj-ruling-on-gmos-4290.html>

EU Feed Imports: Traces of GMOs Now Allowed

The new EU Regulation 619/2011 passed at the end of June allows feed imports to contain up to 0.1% of unapproved GMOs in the future.

The EU Commission regards this value as the "technical recording limit", below which no reliable test results are available. A requirement for the new arrangement is that the unapproved GMO in the EU is first already approved in a country outside the EU, and second has been undergoing an approval process in the EU for more than three months. In particular, feed from South America and the US contain more and more GMOs that are not approved in the EU. Unapproved GMOs are still not allowed in food, however, not even in traces.

The European Union has applied a zero-tolerance policy to unapproved GMOs in feed imports until now. This has meant that not even traces of them were allowed in feed, reports the German Organic Producers and Traders Association (BNN).

Posted on [August 18, 2011](#) by [greemtorganics](#)

Consumers Speak Up Against Monsanto's GE Sweet Corn

In response to Monsanto's release of the company's first genetically engineered sweet corn for human consumption, a coalition has collected more than 264,000 petition signatures from consumers who refuse to purchase the corn and are asking retailers and food processors to reject it. The coalition, including the Center for Environmental Health, Center for Food Safety, CREDO Action, Food Democracy Now!, and Food & Water Watch, announced that they have delivered the signed petition to 10 of the top national retail grocery stores including Wal-Mart, Kroger and Safeway, and top canned and frozen corn processors including Bird's Eye and Del Monte.

Two major national food companies, General Mills and Trader Joe's, have already indicated that they will not be

using the Monsanto GE sweet corn in their products, according to replies the companies sent to a request from the Center for Environmental Health.

In August, Monsanto announced that its Roundup Ready GE sweet corn - as opposed to corn that has been used primarily in animal feed and highly processed foods since 1994 - would be available for the fall planting season. Although the sweet corn is the first GE vegetable of this type to be commercialized by Monsanto, it received swift approval from the USDA since the agency does no independent testing of GE crops and the seed's three distinct traits were previously approved, each separately, in 2005 and 2008. The three traits are corn borer resistance, rootworm resistance and tolerance for glyphosate - the primary ingredient in Monsanto's herbicide Roundup.

Monsanto is aiming to grow its GE Sweet Corn on 250,000 acres next year, which is roughly 40 percent of the US sweet corn market. They believe the corn will be used primarily in frozen and canned corn products, but could also be sold as fresh corn on the cob through retailers.

<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/2011/10/27/enough-tricks-consumers-speak-up-against-monsanto-s-ge-sweet-corn/>

RR Crops to Raise the White Flag?

Herbicide resistant weeds are winning the pesticide "arms race" in US Roundup Ready crops, and Monsanto has no intention of shouldering responsibility for rising weed control costs, according to a briefing by GM Freeze.

The briefing reports that in the 2010/11 season so far, two new weed species have become resistant to glyphosate (the active ingredient in Monsanto's herbicide Roundup used on RR soya maize and cotton), bringing the global total to 21.

Infestations of superweeds now cover 4.5 million hectares in the US alone. The noxious weed Palmer Amaranth is spreading "exponentially" in RR cotton according to Robert Nichols of Cotton Incorporated, and once it has reached a certain size it can only be controlled by hand pulling.

GM Freeze also reports that Monsanto's warranty on the weedkiller does not cover the failure of the product to control weeds that are now resistant to it:

"Growers must be aware of and proactively manage for glyphosate-resistant weeds in

planning their weed control program. When a weed is known to be resistant to glyphosate, then a resistant population of that weed is by definition no longer controlled with labeled rates of glyphosate. Roundup agricultural herbicide warranties will not cover the failure to control glyphosate-resistant weed populations."

The severity of glyphosate resistance has forced Monsanto to sign agreements with other pesticide companies to provide other herbicides to be used in combination with Roundup.

RR crops were once marketed as a cheap and simple way to manage weeds in cotton, soya and maize. Now the rise in glyphosate resistance is cited by at least one investment adviser in its recommendation to sell Monsanto shares. <http://www.gmfreeze.org/news-releases/169/>

Monsanto Corn Falls to Illinois Bugs as Investigation Widens

Monsanto's Bt corn is toppling over in northwestern Illinois fields, a sign that rootworms outside of Iowa may have developed resistance to the genetically modified crop, according to one scientist. Michael Gray, an agricultural entomologist at the University of Illinois in Urbana, said he's studying whether western corn rootworms collected in September in Henry and Whiteside counties are resistant to an insect-killing protein derived from *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt, that has been engineered into Monsanto corn. The insects were collected in two fields where corn had toppled after roots were eaten by rootworms, Gray said. Planting Bt corn year after year increases the odds that the bugs will develop resistance to the insecticide. While the symptoms parallel bug resistance that's been confirmed in Iowa, he said analysis of the Illinois insects won't be complete until next year. Many farmers consider the worm-like larvae of the corn rootworm beetle corn's No. 1 enemy.

Gray detailed his preliminary findings in September in the university's Pest Management and Crop Development Bulletin. He said he's since been contacted by more farmers whose Bt corn is succumbing to corn rootworms.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-09-02/monsanto-corn-is-showing-illinois-insect-damage-as-investigation-widens.html>

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changes may arise as a result. Membership Committee recommended strengthening membership base, implementing a member recruitment campaign and promoting membership benefits.

Deb Bunn move to raise inspector dues, add a payment plan, create and implement a membership campaign. Michelle Sandy seconded. Eric Feutz opposed. Motion carried. Raising dues with small increment this year and additional increment in new year was discussed. BOD appreciates and gave careful consideration to Membership Committee recommendations. Jennie Clifford moved to raise the dues \$15 this year with an additional inspector dues increase next year in conjunction with a Membership Campaign. Seconded by Deb Bunn. Motion carried. Action Point: Jennie Clifford will ask Membership Committee to plan a Membership Campaign, assess membership interest to an Auto-payment option, the option of a dues spread over several months and thank them for all their good work. Kelly Monaghan will be resigning as Chair to Membership Committee.

BOD Retreat Planning: Silke Fuchshofen collected agenda items from BOD. Action Points: Jennie Clifford and Silke Fuchshofen will put forward a concrete plan and work with facilitator on agenda.

- Goals – Business Plan, work with USDA, IOIA role & vision
- Facilitator – to be considered within budget. Potential facilitators discussed
- BOD Preparation –
- Staff Preparation – Action Point: Staff & BOD to read materials from website
- New staff will attend part of November retreat based within budget, time and agenda. **Action Point:** Silke Fuchshofen will visit with new staff whether they could develop and present a workshop for board retreat (decision making, new endeavor, new resources)
- Within Budget – inexpensive venue with facilitator

Bylaws Proposals: Have not heard back from Bylaws Committee. Action Point: Margaret Scoles will send ballot for board and members with any by-laws proposals 45 days before annual meeting, as per bylaws – 1st January to mid-January timeline.

Non-Staggered BOD terms discussed. Currently 5 BOD elected every other year

and 2 BOD elected every other year. Nominations Committee is currently working on nominations and number of candidates. 3 yr. terms vs. 2 yr. Discussion deferred to next meeting.

Grant Writer: Grant writer ad appeared in last Inspectors report. Discussed available USA grant writers, payment structures and grant seekers.

ED Report: Action Points:

- Finance Committee normally meets by December. Preliminary budget normally looked at in November, needed by December. Action Point: Eric Feutz will engage Finance Committee and discuss budget on November 18th. Agreement that we have BOD retreat, Finance Committee report, then BOD meeting December 13th.

- Mischa Popoff's letter turned over to the Membership Committee. It was noted that to meet IOIA membership requirements the by-laws require members to support what IOIA does, and members have training.

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differs, so too do approval results. Some manufactures even use one certifier's ruling as blanket approval, says Von Ruden. "They don't understand why they have to release their proprietary information fifty times. I think the draw for manufacturers to OMRI would be the release of information one time and one time only."

Katherine Withey, Organic Livestock Certification Coordinator and Organic Material Registration Coordinator at the Washington State Department of Agriculture notes few livestock products are publicly WSDA registered even though WSDA has reviewed hundreds of products for individual operators. "The lack of OMRI listed or WSDA registered livestock products means that we have a much more complicated job in other segments of certification. We're doing deeper reviews on a more consistent basis," she says.

The landscape of organic livestock inputs is broad. The National Organic Standards Board continues to discuss several materials considerations, including yeast products, enzymes, genetically modified vaccines, amino acids, and the issue of excipients. With forthcoming regulatory clarifications, input manufacturers, certifiers and producers must remain attuned to minute details of which

materials and ingredients are allowed, prohibited and restricted.

Brad Heins, Assistant Professor of Organic Dairy Management at the University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center operates a low-input trial herd of 90 organic cows alongside a parallel conventional herd. A comprehensive list will be an ongoing need into the future, he says, and is integral to the industry moving forward. "I've talked to some producers who are thinking of transitioning, and one of their biggest holdups is: 'What do I do when a cow gets sick? I can't use antibiotics anymore, so what am I supposed to do?'"

Albert Straus of the Straus Family Creamery in Marin County, California, notes that "Ninety-nine percent of the cure is prevention." Still, he worries most about the health of his fragile calves, and when searching for medications, vaccines and other materials, he generally approaches manufacturers before asking his certifier. "If there was a more user-friendly system to be able to know if something is allowed or not, I think that would be helpful. Most producers and processors don't have time to run around and figure it out," says Straus, adding "OMRI listing is a very effective tool for producers as well as manufacturers, helping to make it a more streamlined process for everybody involved."

Maltby echoes the importance of instant access to information in crisis situations. "There is a great shortage of veterinarians who understand organics, so in times of emergency, producers need to call on the nearest veterinarian and they need to know what they can and can't use."

Many certifiers and consultants agree that a public comprehensive list would aid innovation in the organic livestock sector. The combination of urgency and uncertainty around allowed inputs can drive producers to only use products that have already been approved for their operation, creating disincentives for the use of new products and technologies. Heins echoes the sentiment. "We tend to use things that we've used in the past just because they've been approved. Then we don't have a cow that's sick and need to do some fast thinking."

At Van Beek Natural Science, Anita Soodsma, Research and Development Product Formulator, says she is pleased with how certifiers and producers react to the OMRI Listed status of her organic product line. "They [see **OMRI**, p 19]

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BOD Retreat: Location and cost of facility was discussed with consideration given so that 3 BOD can drive and also where airport is within close proximity with ease to accessibility for shuttle service.

Expo East Participation: Michelle Sandy will attend OTA dinner Wednesday, Sept 21st. Ib Hagsten is available on Sept 22. Silke Fuchshofen arrives 22nd and will represent IOIA during Expo. Action point: Margaret will coordinate BOD Retreat Pre-work meeting to communicate and pre-discuss BOD retreat with Michelle, Ib Hagsten and Silke Fuchshofen present. IOIA will not have a booth, but will attend meetings and events.

ED Report: BOD discussed ED August 2011 report. NOP CORI project (Criteria for Reviewers and Inspectors) is a top priority.

Action point: Dues structure – idea to add option for annual credit card, monthly deduction, with analysis of added cost for credit card, with review with Membership Chair. It was noted that the new hire recommendations will be done by mid-September. Margaret suggested postponing and moving monthly meeting to September 22nd when the first two CORI deliverables were done and the BOD could offer input on the final deliverable (proposed licensing/accreditation program for inspectors and reviewers).

IOIA BOD Conference Call - September 22, 2011

Attendance: H  l  ne Bouvier, Deb Bunn, Jennie Clifford, Eric Feutz, Silke Fuchshofen, Ib Hagsten, Michelle Sandy, and Margaret Scoles – Executive Director. Minute taking: H  l  ne Bouvier. Chair: Michelle Sandy. Dana Miller note-taking, via recording.

Action Point: Silke Fuchshofen offered to interview people and put together BOD November agenda.

Criteria for Organic Inspectors and Reviewers (CORI) Task 1 – 3: Winfried Fuchshofen, as a member of the Shared Management Team for the CORI Project, joined BOD Executive Session to discuss the project. Winfried explained the main differences between these tasks: the first two are research and knowledge based. IOIA has experience, so it’s comparatively straight-forward. Task 1 is criteria for inspectors and reviewers and Task 2 is training content. Task 3 is different – decision based. Discussion presented ideas such as creating an advisory board.

Meeting shifted to Agenda Item #7 to accommodate Bob Durst’s appearance on the call.

Training Services Director Search Committee Report: Bob Durst gave report on the TSD search committee’s activities, as chair of that committee. Bob Durst, Michelle Sandy, and Margaret Scoles conducted the phone interviews. There may be a need for additional training, such as web programs, which would be an added expense for IOIA. The preferred applicant’s references held a great deal of weight with great teaching skills, rejuvenation of organization, good knowledge in agriculture, and references with great credibility.

Set 2012 Member Dues: It was agreed that the inspector dues be raised from last year. The past three years, inspector dues have not been adjusted. The BOD discussed various options, such as an automatic pay option with no renewal process, just an automatic deduction, and it would take action to discontinue; or to raise the dues along with a monthly deduction option. Also discussed was doing business as usual this year and then sending a letter out stating a pay increase next year. Various raise increases were discussed.

2012 AGM and Upcoming BOD election: It will be March 1 or 2. Venue not yet confirmed. Canadian members did not have a problem with setting date back to Friday, rather than a weekend.

3-yr BOD terms and staggered terms were not discussed: deferred to next meeting.

ED Report: Margaret Scoles referred to her written report, adds -- A membership application was received from Mischa Popoff. This will need to be addressed at the next meeting, as IOIA is still in the process of previous related action points.

IOIA BOD Conference Call - October 13, 2011

Attendance: Jennie Clifford, Silke Fuchshofen, Ib Hagsten, H  l  ne Bouvier, Eric Feutz, Deb Bunn, Michelle Sandy and Margaret Scoles – Executive Director. Chair: Michelle Sandy. Margaret Scoles note taking, H  l  ne Bouvier minutes, Silke Fuchshofen timekeeper.

Secretary’s Report: Minutes of the September 22nd meeting were deferred for approval at November 18th meeting along with October 13th meeting minutes.

Discussion of Minutes Procedure: Dana Miller, Margaret Scoles and H  l  ne Bouvier will have a conference call to establish best procedures for note & minute taking.

CORI (Criteria for Organic Reviewers and Inspectors Project): 3.1 & 3.2 were submitted to NOP. This was completed under an intense deadline. IOIA is awaiting NOP’s response. The NOP has requested the NOSB make qualifications for inspectors. The next NOSB meeting is a scheduled in Savannah, GA Nov. 29 – Dec. 2. **Action Point:** Michelle Sandy is attending and could present.

Action Point: BOD will need to decide by email how to present. A written comment and request to be on the list to present oral comments (3 minutes) to NOSB regarding IOIA’s position on the CACC’s proposed guidance re: inspector qualifications. Deadline to submit written comment is November 13, 2011. Public time to speak and put forth oral comments is Tuesday morning, November 29. November 30th the NOSB will put forth their recommendation for proposed guidance to NOP. Ib Hagsten moved IOIA provide written and oral comment to NOSB meeting in Savannah, GA and get on agenda. Seconded by Deb Bunn. Motion carried. Action Point: Margaret Scoles will get a slot on agenda. Michelle Sandy, Jennie Clifford, Margaret Scoles and Luis Brenes (to be invited) will prepare written comment.

September 2012 member dues: The decision to set inspector member dues in the September meeting was revisited. Jennie Clifford is Membership Committee liaison. Action Point: Membership Committee recommends putting forward auto-payment and pay plan questions to assess interest from membership for auto payments and quarterly options. Future by-law [See **Minutes**, p 22]



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2012 Calendar

January 5 – 7 Great Plains Growers Conference, St. Joseph, Missouri.
<http://www.greatplainsgrowers.org/>

Jan 10-14 North American Beekeeping Conference and Tradeshow, Las Vegas.
<http://www.nabeekeepingconference.com/>

Jan 11-13 Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism and Organic Conference & Trade Show Springfield, Illinois.
<http://www.specialtygrowers.org/iscaoc-conference.html>

Jan 11-14 National No-Tillage Conference, St. Louis, Missouri.
<http://www.no-tillfarmer.com/pages/NNTC---National-No-Tillage-Conference-Home-Page.php>

Jan 12-14 [Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference](http://practicalfarmers.org/events/annual-conference.html), Ames, Iowa.
<http://practicalfarmers.org/events/annual-conference.html>

Jan 12-14 [GrassWorks Grazing Conference](http://grassworks.org/?11034000000), Wausau, Wisconsin. Nationally known speakers include Don Huber, Abe Collins and Joel Salatin.
<http://grassworks.org/?11034000000>

Jan 13 – 14 [Future Harvest CASA Annual Conference](http://www.futureharvestcasa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=168), Landsdowne, Maryland. "Farm to Institution: Making Local Food Economies a Reality."

http://www.futureharvestcasa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=168

Jan 14 NOFA/Mass Winter Conference: The 25th Annual Winter Conference will be held in Worcester. John Jeavons to keynote. Click this [link](#) for info.

Jan 17 [Sustainable Foods Summit, San Francisco, CA.](http://www.sustainablefoods.org)

Jan 18 - 21 [Southern SAWG Conference: Practical Tools & Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms](http://www.sawg.org), Little Rock Arkansas

Jan 19 – 21 6th Organic Seed Growers Conference, Port Townsend, Washington. Download the [registration packet](#).

Jan 20 – 22 NOFA-NY Winter Conference, Saratoga Springs, New York. Dr. John Ikerd will speak Friday, January 20 at 8 p.m. as part of the three-day event.
<http://www.nofanyconference.org>

Jan 24 – 26 Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA)/NASOP Annual Trainings and Meetings. Hyatt Regency, San Antonio, Texas.

January 26 – 29th 31st Annual Guelph Organic Conference & Expo.
www.guelphorganicconf.ca/

February 1 [CCOF Annual Meeting & Conference](http://www.ccof.org), Pacific Grove, California. Complete agenda at [CCOF Annual Meeting & Conference page](http://www.ccof.org).

Feb 1 – 4 EcoFarm Conference, Pacific Grove, California. www.eco-farm.org

Feb 1-4 21st Annual Farming for the Future Conference Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, State College, PA. "Breaking Ground for a New Agriculture: Cultivating Versatility and Resilience."
www.pasafarming.org/conference.

Feb 15 – 18 [BioFach 2012](http://www.biofach.de), Nuremburg, Germany.

Feb 23 – 25 The MOSES Organic Farming Conference, La Crosse, Wisconsin. [Registration and lodging information](http://www.mosesfarmers.org).

March 3 [NOFA-NH Winter Conference](http://www.nofa-nh.org), Dover High School, Dover, New Hampshire.

May 21 – 24 NOSB Spring 2012 meeting, Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

June 18 – 21 [2nd International Organic Fruit Research Symposium: Organic Fruit 2012](http://www.2ndinternationalorganicfruitresearchsymposium.org), Leavenworth, Washington.

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