



# The Inspectors' Report

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## No longer a teenager: IOIA Turns 20!

**IOIA will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March 27, 2011 in Tampa, Florida**

The International Organic Inspectors Association will be turning 20 this coming year! Started as a loose association of independent inspectors that saw a need for more consistency in the inspection process, IOIA has continued to grow in size and influence over the years to become a valued member of the organic community. Through numerous Boards of Directors, the vision of the association has been expanded and solidified. And, IOIA continues to be the *only* organization in the world that is devoted to teaching *organic* inspection values and techniques. No one else does what we do – and we are proud of that fact!

There will be an **Advanced** training on March 25-26 that precedes the meeting Annual General Meeting and dinner. Confirmed speakers for the training to date include **Miles McEvoy**, Deputy Administrator, NOP; and **Gwen Wyaard**, processing specialist with OTCO. **Julia Govis** of Illinois will present the first-ever IOIA training session with a focus on **urban agriculture**. Some sessions initially developed for advanced trainings in Oregon and Pennsylvania will be expanded for Florida, including a session on **detecting and deterring fraud**.

Venue for the event will be **Mainsail Suites Hotel and Conference Center**, near the Tampa airport, with free shuttle service to/from airport. It is a gated facility with 11 separate buildings over 18 acres, with better security and more privacy than a regular hotel. There will be a choice of 1 or 2 bedroom suites. Each bedroom in the 2-bedroom suites has its own private bed and bathroom, so essentially all rooms will be private rooms. The cost of each bedroom room in the 2-bedroom suites costs less than \$90 including taxes. Each suite has a full kitchen, dining, and living room. The hotel features a new conference center, a spacious fitness center, and outdoor pool. Check it out at [www.mainsailtampa.com](http://www.mainsailtampa.com).

Local field trip options will be available to tour local urban agriculture with Julia Govis on March 28. Sites will include **Sweetwater Farm**. This is the largest urban agriculture project in Tampa with 4 separate farms and a CSA project. It was brought into being by former IOIA BOD Chair **Rick Martinez**.

Watch the IOIA website for more details, draft agenda, and speaker bios.

***Please mark your calendars and plan to attend  
this special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary AGM and Advanced Training!***

## First AFI North America meeting in Boston

The first Anti Fraud Initiative meeting in North America was held October 11 - 12, 2010 in the Marlowe hotel in Boston, prior to the Expo East organic trade show.

The meeting was an initiative from Robynn Schrader, CEO of the National Cooperative Grocers Association, with the support of IOAS, UNFI and EOCC.

Over 40 persons attended; certifiers, traders, distributors, retailers, representatives of the Organic Trade Association and the Accredited Certifiers Association, and two staff from the National Organic Program of the USDA.

While already a series of meetings have taken place in Europe, it was a first such meeting on the topic in North America. The Anti Fraud Initiative started [see **AFI**, page 4]

## Notes from the Chair by Bob Durst

This will be mostly a report on the recent NOSB meeting and what impact decisions made there might have on us as inspectors.

**Miles McEvoy** continues to stress that we are in the **age of enforcement**. Expect the NOP to be more adamant about making things right.

Other things from by Miles and a number of the folks that testified at the meeting had to do with the **quality of inspections and inspectors**. This was mentioned a number of times and I'm sorry to report, **not** in complimentary tones.

**We are all going to have to step up our game if we want to keep the structure of the system that we are all used to alive and well.**

An example of the kinds of comments that were made include a WI dairy farmer who mentioned [see **Notes**, page 4]

**Don't forget to  
return your  
Bylaws Ballot  
by December  
15.  
Dues and  
membership  
directory  
updates are due  
December 1.**

## Resources

The National Organic Program (NOP) has made available a complete listing of organic operations certified by U.S. Department of Agriculture accredited certifying agents during the 2009 certification year.

For the first time, the listing, available at <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/nop/>, can be searched by keywords, name of operation, certifying agent, certificate numbers, primary and secondary scopes of certification, country, state, and products produced. The database covers almost 32,000 products. The database works like a charm and will be updated annually when certifiers submit their lists to NOP. This is a huge, positive development after much long waiting!

## Required Reading

The website Grist.org recently printed a version of a blog by Rebecca Thistlewaite entitled "Do you have the balls to really change the food system?" The Sept 9, 2010 blog takes a very sobering look at what many of us think are good enough habits regarding our food buying and eating habits, and pulls no punches in its assessment of our shortcomings.

<http://www.grist.org/article/food-do-you-have-the-balls-to-really-change-the-food-system/> gives tips on how to really walk your talk with regard to our food system. Check it out and recommend it to your contacts list – the tips are much more in depth than any 10-point 'what to do' list, and it deserves to go viral on the web.

## Farm Bill on Facebook

"*Understanding the Farm Bill: A Citizen's Guide to a Better Food System*," is a new Facebook page started by the Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy and is designed to provide a venue for sharing information and opinions about the forthcoming US Farm Bill.

The page exists to demystify food and food policy in time to make a difference in the 2012 Farm Bill, an enormous piece of legislation that has a tremendous impact on our health, our communities, economic development, and domestic and global poverty. All are welcome. Awesome links abound.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Understanding-the-Farm-Bill-A-Citizens-Guide-to-a-Better-Food-System/>

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## IOIA Seeks Office Manager.

Full time position. Location Broadus Montana. Closing date January 1. For more information, contact the IOIA office.

## Studies Link Range of Major Diseases to Pesticides, New Database Launched

The *Pesticide-Induced Diseases Database* currently contains 383 entries of epidemiologic and laboratory exposure studies and will be continually updated to track emerging findings and trends. The database is a new and ongoing effort by environmental watchdog Beyond Pesticides to maintain this comprehensive database of the studies that the group says "supports an urgent need to shift to toxic-free practices and policies." To view the database, go to [www.beyondpesticides.org/health](http://www.beyondpesticides.org/health).

## Organic Broadcaster Now Available Free Online

To better serve the organic community, the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) now offers the *Organic Broadcaster* newspaper as a FREE online publication six times a year. This newspaper offers farmer-focused current news and info that assists farmers in successful organic production and offers relevant updates about the organic community. To see the current issue go to <http://www.mosesorganic.org/broadcaster.html>.

## Richard 'Lance' Christie

IOIA lost friend and longtime member Lance Christie on October 28. He was 66. Lance passed away after a 2 year battle with pancreatic cancer. Normally a 4 month sentence, Lance sought alternative strategies to the disease and used his time to enjoy life to the fullest.

Full obituary is at:

[http://www.moabtimes.com/pages/full\\_story/push?article=obituary-Richard+Lance+Christie+-1944+-+2010%20&id=10162792&instance=1st\\_right](http://www.moabtimes.com/pages/full_story/push?article=obituary-Richard+Lance+Christie+-1944+-+2010%20&id=10162792&instance=1st_right)

September 25 marked the 20th anniversary of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA), the landmark law that standardized organic food and farming systems across the U.S.

## 2010 Membership Directory Updates

(Changes made by T. Lindberg 11/8/10)  
Please note the following changes to your 2010 Membership Directory. 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 2010 Online Directory.

**WELCOME NEW INSPECTOR MEMBERS:**  
Michael Larsson (Ottawa, Ontario)  
Lucy Murton (Ceredigion, United Kingdom)

## WELCOME NEW SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:

Ely Battalen (Northampton, Maine)  
Janna E. Fakier (Santa Clara, California)  
Anna Gullickson (Butler, Pennsylvania)  
Jeff Gunderson (St. Paul, Minnesota)  
Billy Healey (Santa Cruz, California)  
Kevin D. Hein (Iroquois, South Dakota)  
Tom Miars (Boulder Creek, California)  
Wayne Monsen (Stillwater, Minnesota)  
Leonard Pollara (Santa Monica, Calif)  
William Robbins (Vincentown, New Jersey)  
Dan Scheele (Ingersoll, Ontario)  
Harry Schexnayder (Baton Rouge, LA)  
Andria Schulze (Eugene, Oregon)  
Ryan Sitler (Asheville, North Carolina)  
Thomas Spohn (Broomfield, Colorado)  
David Stephens (Rectortown, Vermont)  
Michael Sumner (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

## IOIA Board of Directors

Bob Durst .....Chair  
Michelle Sandy .....Vice Chair  
Eric Feutz ..... Treasurer  
Jennifer Clifford .....Secretary  
David Konrad .....Director at Large  
Julio Perez .....First Alternate  
Bob Howe .....Second Alternate  
*The Inspectors' Report* is the newsletter of the International Organic Inspectors Association. IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization, whose mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training and to promote integrity and consistency in the organic certification process. Editor: Diane Cooner, Box 1259, Guerneville, CA 95446 USA. 707-869-3017, fax 707-869-1478.

[ioiaweb@ioia.net](mailto:ioiaweb@ioia.net)

Deadlines are Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 & Nov 1.  
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## Upcoming Trainings

### Anyang, Gyeonggi, Korea - November 24-28, 2010

IOIA and KOIA, will cosponsor a 4.5 day Basic Organic Processing Inspection Training using the Korea Organic Regulation (FIPA) as a reference. The course will be given in Korean and held in Anyang, Gyeonggi, Korea, November 24-28. For enquiries, please contact Isidor Yu at Ph: +82-10-9133-5431 Fax: +82-505-116-5431 e-mail: Isidor.yu@gmail.com

### Webinar –Verifying compliance to NOP Pasture Rule: December 10

9 a.m.-12 PDT, 10-1 MDT, 11-2 CDT, 12-3 EDT

This essential session for the livestock inspector or reviewer will prepare participants to verify compliance with the new NOP Pasture Rule. Co-presenters are Garry Lean of Ontario and Sarah Flack of Vermont. The course includes pre-course reading assignments. It is geared for inspectors with an understanding of livestock inspection. The session will review the new regulations and provide inspection tools and guidance to verify them. Topics include basic grazing management; an overview of the various common grazing systems for ruminants; factors that cause pasture Dry Matter Intake (DMI) to go up or down; methods for determining Dry Matter Demand (DMD); and an introduction to making quantitative and qualitative assessment of pasture. The course focuses primarily on cattle dairy operations but also includes information for beef, sheep, and goats. Participants will see examples of DMI calculations and work sample exercises. At the conclusion of the course, participants have the opportunity to complete an additional assignment to qualify for a Certificate of Completion. Session consists of 2 parts, each 1.25 hours long with a break between. Enrolment in each session is limited to 20. Early registration discount is available until Nov. 30. To register, see <http://ioiaregistration.ganconference.com>

### Tampa, Florida – March 25-27, 2011

IOIA will sponsor Advanced Inspection Training March 25-26, in conjunction with the Annual Membership Meeting on March 27. All events will be held at the Mainsail Suites Hotel & Conference Center, near the Tampa Airport. For more information, contact the IOIA office. Application forms and more details will be posted on the IOIA website as available.

### Tampa, Florida – April 11-15, 2011

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

### Vermont, June 2011

IOIA is developing Basic Organic Livestock Training.

**Other Trainings:** IOIA is developing in-house trainings with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food; the Idaho Department of Agriculture; and Hawaii Organic Farmers Association. IOIA and Assiniboine Community College in Brandon, Manitoba will cosponsor Basic Crop and Livestock Inspection trainings in May 2011.

Watch upcoming IOIA newsletters and [www.ioia.net](http://www.ioia.net) for details as these and other trainings develop.

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## Comprehensive History of the US Organic Program in *The Organic Standard*

US Organic Pioneer and longtime IOIA member **Grace Gershuny** has written an excellent article on the history of the organic program in the US. The 3 part series appears in the August, September and October issues of *The Organic Standard*, an international publication put out by Grolink AB, and is the best thing written to date that covers the whole history, including the numerous conflicts that have always accompanied the standards discussion, in a condensed form. According to the article's introduction, when writing this series Grace's intention was not to present an 'objective' report, but for it to act as a call to the organic community to reexamine their assumptions about the purpose and limits of organic standard-setting as a means of realizing the larger organic principles.

The introduction further states that "Grace presents herself as 'an early pioneer of organic certification and a leader at the national level, organizing among grassroots organic farm groups in the US, then joining the NOP staff to help write the regulations that were so vehemently opposed by my former colleagues. For the past ten years I have worked as a policy consultant, teacher and organic inspector for various companies and organisations.'" Grace Gershuny was the keynote speaker at the IOIA AGM in Vermont in 2003.

*The Organic Standard* is available to IOIA Inspector Members ONLY at a fantastic bargain rate of **\$10 per year**. To get this special arrangement, sign ups are only allowed on an annual basis, and NOW is the time. So if you are an Inspector Member and are interested in getting this great publication, that covers the standards discussion from a global perspective, contact the IOIA office today.

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## Notes, from page 1

that at his recent renewal inspection (I may get some of these details wrong, as I'm not a livestock/dairy inspector and don't know the details of what's involved in one of these inspections), the inspector had run all the numbers and the dry matter input was well under the minimum requirement and thus he was out of compliance. He claimed that he really did comply and that with his herd being out on pasture nearly all the time, the inspector was naive and didn't know what he was doing. While I have no idea what the true story is in this case, this is the kind of thing that is **absolutely unacceptable** - to the inspected party, to the NOP program, to the certifier and to the industry as a whole. I can't stress this enough - **if we don't always bring our A-game to every inspection, then we run the risk of becoming irrelevant.** The NOP, in this 'age of enforcement' is going to do everything that they can in order to keep the program alive and functioning they are going to make us all step up to the plate.

Back to changes suggested or coming from the NOSB and NOP. Some of the other things that are likely to be challenges to us include the upcoming apiculture rules. These were outlined at the meeting and are available at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/> then navigate to the Oct 2010 meeting agenda and download the .pdf. The apiculture standards that were approved at the meeting will be quite a challenge for inspectors, but with suitable training and attention to detail we will have certified organic honey. There has been some discussion on the IOIA forum about apiculture rules and it's worth following the discussion there if you're interested.

Regarding farm plans (again-not an area of my expertise), these must include **\*in the plan\*** preventative treatments that may be necessary. The example cited was occasional treatment for late blight. The farmer must include options in the farm plan rather than the options of applying something, which might be organically acceptable, that is not in the plan and hence out of compliance. The other option might be forgoing treatment to prevent being out of compliance which might cause significant premature losses of an orchard. Neither of these are preferred outcomes. Now it's not our role as inspectors to consult or inform an

inspectee of things that they should be doing better, but I know that we have other avenues for getting messages like this out.

Another area that we will have to learn more about is sampling and sample testing protocols. The NOP is pressuring certifiers to implement **significant additional residue testing.** That will mean that someone - likely us inspectors- will be asked to gather those samples. This is something that will again require us to get additional training so that we can do a quality job of sampling so that the testing can provide meaningful data.

## AFI, from page 1

in Europe early 2007, at a time when many new suppliers were entering the system. Three individuals with a track record in organic quality assurance; Bo van Elzakker, Beate Huber and Jochen Neuendorff, volunteered to organize multiple stakeholder meetings to discuss the issues.

During the two day meeting, speakers from a variety of backgrounds introduced the topic. The atmosphere was open, everybody was there to learn. A number of known examples were reviewed and there were vivid discussions to get an idea in how far fraud is an issue in the organic industry in North America, how it looks like, why it happens and what can be done about it. It is important to note that it is not just new suppliers or in far away countries. In a survey conducted among US certifiers, these confirmed that there are also domestic cases.

A number of fraud cases are unveiled because of complaints, whistleblowers and tipoffs, and better use should be made of this information. It should also be dealt with by professionals. An example was given of a genuine organic grower who was subject to a bad mouthing campaign from some in his surroundings. And of another producer who was hit by the fall - out of a scandal while he was no part of it himself.

Better timing of the annual inspection would also help. Residue testing has become a big thing in Europe. However, it is quite expensive. Not just the test but mainly the investigation to explain how the residues got in the product. Residue testing of product on the shelf has limited value, it better to be done during the

production cycle. While it is a useful tool to detect irregularities, residue free is by no means proof that a product is organic.

There was some debate about the competence of the average organic inspector to conduct fraud investigations. While some training can be given to help them detect fraud, investigations are more the work of forensic experts. One such an expert, from the financial sector, said that the symptoms were very similar. That same expert said that it is much cheaper for the industry to deal with the issue proactively rather than after some cases are exposed in the press.

One particular initiative was presented, **Sherlock**, to add specific measures onto the regular certifier's work, to improve the rate of detection (and therefore prevention). Based on a risk assessment, which banks on worldwide experiential knowledge, certifiers are asked to do some extra exercises during the annual or unannounced visit. Forensic auditors investigate when fraud is suspected. This is targeting high risk situations. It is not a burden or a cost for the vast majority of genuine organic producers. It is an international private sector initiative, an add - on to a company's QMS that complements and cooperates with the NOP.

There was a well received presentation from the USDA Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, of the National Organic Program. He explained the progress in making the regulation more effective. He for example announced that suspensions, revocations and re - instatements are to be published. The US has a public complaints mechanism (lacking in many European countries). Complaints are welcome at [NOPcompliance@usda.gov](mailto:NOPcompliance@usda.gov)

The meeting concluded that there is more to be done on awareness raising and that a next meeting would be useful, with a larger audience. A small team was identified to take the initiative further.

For more info about AFI, contact Jon Fogarty, [jon.fogarty@ncga.coop](mailto:jon.fogarty@ncga.coop) or (866)709 - COOP, ext. 1105

Presentations are available for download at: <http://www.organic-integrity.org/meetings/afi-5-2010/presentations/>

## Notes from the ED

By Margaret Scoles

**ED goes to the land of Oz:** This has been a year of international travel for the ED. The trip to Asia in March/April was the trip of a lifetime. And now I've had two trips that fit that description, both in the space of one year. As you can read elsewhere in this issue, IOIA and NASAA collaborated on training "Down Under" in August. And **Sacha Draine** (IOIA International Training Services) and I already have tickets to Germany (BioFach, February 2011). When IOIA sets foot at BioFach, we will set a new record of six continents in one year, (for IOIA, that is, not all for me personally). A good way to celebrate IOIA turning 20! My husband and I traveled to Australia on a combined IOIA training trip and vacation. We were gone nearly two weeks together, the first time in over 20 years. Communicating with home by email and phone was generally too difficult to navigate, which was a huge blessing once I gave up worrying and being frustrated. We flew to Melbourne, traveled by car to Adelaide, then crisscrossed South Australia and Victoria to visit 4 national parks (The Great Ocean Road; Flinders Ranges and Wilpena Pound; Naracoorte Caves and fossils; and the Grampians). It was a great way to see the country. All told, Bob drove over 2000 miles "on the wrong side of the road" with no mishap. I could barely get up the courage to move our Holden car in the parking lot. The high point of the trip for Bob was visiting livestock operations. We visited three registered Simmental operations and one raising South Devon. It was even more fun than we expected because they were all preparing for a big show, which is the all-breeds show that happens every 2 years somewhere in the world. This year it just happened to be Melbourne, Victoria in September. Prize bulls, cows, steers, and heifers were tied up to fences and being blow-dried, vacuumed, brushed, and gentled for the show. The country we saw was very much like our Arizona home, only with fewer stickers and thorns, and lots bigger. And what an interesting time it was---we were in Australia for the highly contested national election. We left not knowing who would be leading their country. On election night, we went in for a pint at the pub where we had a room. I expected the TV to be blaring results and commentary

on the election. Nope. Australian football clearly trumped the election. I can't wait to enter my photo of the six striped emu chicks and their dad in the county fair under 'wildlife photography'. Oz was an amazing experience. My only disappointment was not managing to see either of my Australian friends, **Rod May** or **Liz Clay**.

### **Guelph Organic Conference, Ontario, January 2011:**

IOIA is a sponsor again this year, supported by the IOIA Canadian Committee budget. I have accepted the task of moderating a panel at Guelph on non-food certification (pet food, fiber, personal care, etc.) If you plan to attend the conference, please let me know so that we can organize an inspector meeting or gathering.

**Two major activities** of IOIA (in addition to a heavy fall training schedule and trying to make sense of the insurance situation) were the IOIA Certifier Survey and Expo East in Boston.

**Certifier Survey:** In September, IOIA distributed a survey to 100 certification agencies. To obtain broad perspective, the group included all NOP accredited certification agencies, all IOIA supporting certification agency members, and those certifiers who fit into other IOIA membership categories (inspector, supporting individual, supporting business/organization). The group was diverse and international. It included members and non-members and governmental, non-profit, and for-profit certifiers. Of the 30 certifier respondents, about two-thirds were IOIA supporting members.

The effort was supported by the National Association of State Organic Programs (NASOP) and the Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA). Thanks go to **Brenda Book**, president of NASOP and **Pat Kane**, Executive Director of ACA for helping distribute the surveys outside the IOIA circle. IOIA's own **Diane Cooner** is much appreciated for tallying the responses and submitting a comprehensive report for the October BOD meeting.



**ED Margaret Scoles and ViceChair Michelle Sandy at the OTA Annual Dinner party, Boston.**  
Photo by Trish Crapo, courtesy of Organic Trade Assn.

The Board is still analyzing the responses but at least two things are clear: 1) The Certifier-Inspector Dialogue Conference Calls that brought it into being are very worthwhile; and 2) Responses will be a critical element in shaping the next steps of the IOIA Training Institute.

Survey questions focused primarily on contractual and training issues. Certifiers were asked to rank IOIA membership services and training needs. Certifiers ranked IOIA training (basic and advanced) and training discounts as the highest value membership service. Certifiers were also asked whether they require proof of independent contract status and insurance, and if so, what kind of insurance.

The next Certifier-Inspector Dialogue Conference Call is scheduled for December 6. Acting on results of the survey will be one of the main topics.

### **IOIA in Boston for Expo East and ATO:**

For the past 2 years, IOIA has not participated in Expo East. We have, however, participated in All Things Organic™ (ATO) every year since 2002. When ATO moved back in with Expo East, it was clearly time to go east. The show will move back to Baltimore next year, so this was the finale for the Boston show. **Michelle Sandy**, Vice-Chair of the BOD, joined me in Boston to represent IOIA. We were not able to attend the pre-show Anti-Fraud Conference. However, several IOIA members did. My first activity on October 13 after a walk on the Winthrop Beach was a long lunch with members **Maarten** [see ED page 17]

## CalLiquid President Indicted for Fraud

A federal grand jury in San Francisco indicted Peter Townsley, 49, of British Columbia, Canada, with eight counts of mail fraud, two counts of making false statements, and one count of conspiring to commit mail fraud. The Indictment was unsealed October 9 after Townsley was arrested at Los Angeles Int'l Airport (LAX). Townsley is charged with engaging in a scheme to defraud purchasers of organic fertilizers, and the agency that approves fertilizers as organic, by falsely representing his company's fertilizer to be an organic product when he knew that the product contained prohibited synthetic materials.

According to the indictment, Townsley was the president of California Liquid Fertilizer (CLF), a business formerly located in the Salinas Valley in Gonzales, Calif. CLF sold what it represented as organic fertilizers to organic farms in California. Beginning in approximately April 2000 and continuing until December 2006, Townsley allegedly engaged in a scheme to defraud that involved a CLF product called Biolizer XN.

The Indictment charges that in 1998, Townsley signed and submitted applications to the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) to have OMRI certify the Biolizer XN product as organic. Townsley's final application on behalf of CLF stated that Biolizer XN was a liquid organic fertilizer composed of ocean-going fish and fish byproducts, feathermeal, and water. In reliance on these representations, in February 1999, OMRI approved Biolizer XN to be listed as an organic fertilizer. CLF then began marketing Biolizer XN as an organic fertilizer that was OMRI listed.

The indictment alleges that in approximately May 2000, Townsley knowingly changed the chemical ingredients in Biolizer XN so that it no longer contained fish or feathermeal; instead, it allegedly contained synthetic ingredients, including ammonium chloride and subsequently ammonium sulfate. Despite knowing that the new formulations did not contain fish and feathermeal, had not been approved by OMRI, and contained synthetic ingredients, Townsley allegedly continued to sell Biolizer XN as an organic product until December 2006. CLF only stopped selling the Biolizer XN as an organic

product when the California Department of Food & Agriculture launched an investigation of the product. The Indictment states that Townsley, via CLF, marketed and sold approximately \$6 million worth of Biolizer XN between May 2000 and December 2006.

In addition to labeling Biolizer XN as organic and OMRI-approved, the indictment alleges that Townsley submitted annual renewal applications to OMRI stating that Biolizer XN continued to contain organic inputs when he knew that it did not. As a result, OMRI continued to list Biolizer XN as a certified organic fertilizer and Townsley continued to label and market Biolizer XN as an organic product.

Townsley was arrested on Oct. 9, at LAX. He made an initial appearance on Oct. 12 in federal court in Los Angeles and was released on a \$150,000 bond. The matter has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer in San Francisco. Townsley was scheduled to make an initial appearance before in San Francisco on Oct. 15.

The maximum statutory penalty for each count of mail fraud is 20 years of imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000, plus restitution. The maximum statutory penalty for each count of making false statements is five years of imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence.

Note that an indictment contains only allegations against an individual and, as with all defendants, Townsley must be presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

## Korea Keeps Market Open

The Korean Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MIFAFF) has extended its current organic labeling regulations for imports until Dec. 31, 2012, thus allowing continued access by U.S. organic companies to export organic food products to Korea. The organic industry and USDA officials had requested the extension of the labeling requirement provided under Korea's Food Sanitation Act that had been scheduled to be withdrawn at the end of 2010. The extension will allow time to negotiate with MIFAFF for recognition of the

National Organic Program as equivalent to the Korean Organic Regulation while keeping the Korean market open for U.S. organic exports.

## ITC Approves First 'O' Import/Export Trade Codes

The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) has agreed to establish export and import codes for selected organic products under the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States. In a press release issued Oct. 20, Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan commended the committee for efforts to establish the codes. "As the organic industry continues to grow in the United States and around the world, this will provide a more complete picture of the international demand and sources of supply for organic products," Merrigan said. The new codes will be available Jan. 1, 2011, on the [ITC website](#).

## Appeals Ruling Upholds Dairy Right To Know

On September 30, The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit ruled in favor of the Organic Trade Association in a landmark case that would have prevented consumers in Ohio from knowing whether products on grocery store shelves were produced without synthetic growth hormones. The court's decision upholds consumers' rights to receive truthful information about organic production practices on the labels of their milk and other dairy products. Additionally, it recognizes the rights of organic dairy farmers and processors to communicate truthfully with consumers regarding federally regulated organic production practices under the USDA Organic seal. As a result of this victory for organic, consumers will continue to see truthful information on organic product labels in Ohio and across the country.

## COFA loses accreditation

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service revoked the California Organic Farmers Association (COFA) accreditation as an organic certifying agent. The NOP accredited COFA as an organic certifying agent in 2002. In 2007, NOP conducted an audit of COFA's facility and records, and found 12 non-compliant items. COFA submitted corrective actions, but NOP determined that 10 of

the items were not adequately corrected. NOP then proposed that COFA's accreditation be revoked for failure to comply with the NOP regulations, or to proffer corrective actions. COFA appealed the NOP's decision, but it was denied. COFA then requested a formal administrative proceeding, but in August 2010 withdrew the request, thereby upholding the denial of COFA's appeal and revoking COFA's accreditation for 3 years.

## Promiseland Suspension Upheld

A judicial officer has upheld a decision to suspend the organic certification of Promiseland Livestock, LLC. The order, which names Promiseland Livestock as well as Anthony J. Zeman, upholds a decision issued by Chief Administrative Law Judge Peter Davenport on Nov. 30, 2009, that the parties violated the Organic Foods Production Act and the governing organic regulations. It also increases the period of their disqualification from receiving organic certification from four years to five.

"This careless disregard of a statutory requirement is sufficient to find that Promiseland's violations of the Organic Foods Production Act were willful," said Judicial Officer William Jenson in the October 25, 2010 decision and order. He upheld the decision that Promiseland had repeatedly withheld records from authorized bodies of the USDA, including NOP employees and AMS investigators, that would have allowed them to conduct audits of the company's facilities, thereby violating the OFPA and federal organic regulations on multiple occasions between Jan. 22 and June 5, 2007, June 6, 2007, and June 10, 2008.

The suspension becomes effective 60 days after the order has been served to Promiseland and Mr. Zeman. The national organic standards prohibit operations from representing their products as organic during the period of suspension.

## NOP Seeking Comments

NOP has posted five draft guidance documents for comment: compost and vermicompost in organic crop production; wild crop harvesting; outdoor access for organic poultry; commingling and contamination prevention in organic production and handling; and the use of chlorine materials in organic production

and handling. [Comment online](#) using Docket number AMS-NOP-10-0048. Deadline is Dec. 6.

## APHIS Launches Online Feedback Site

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has launched an online site, [Tell APHIS](#), to allow stakeholders to share their thoughts and ideas about agency policy and programs.

Currently they are seeking comments on a draft environmental assessment for GE sugar beets in order to address a request for a partial deregulation of the crop. The draft environmental assessment is [posted online](#). [Comment here](#) using Docket number APHIS-2010-0047. The deadline is Dec. 6.

## Cooperative Grocers Adopt Personal Care Policy

The National Cooperative Grocers Association has announced that it expects "that all vendor partners currently making "organic" claims will submit a plan for compliance with either the USDA NOP standards or NSF/ANSI 305 standards to us by Oct. 18, 2010. This should include any products that use "organic" or "organics" as part of the brand name." Also, as of March 2011, NCGA will only promote products from manufacturers who have submitted a plan, and starting with the June 2011 promotions, NCGA "will not promote brands or items in our promotions programs that are not compliant with USDA NOP or NSF/ANSI 305 standards."

## RMA Offers Organic Crop Insurance

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) will offer an organic price election for cotton, corn, soybeans and processing tomatoes for the 2011 production year. In addition, RMA is eliminating the current five percent surcharge for organic crops insured under ten crop insurance programs.

## Wilmot New ED at OFRF

Maureen Wilmot will take over as Executive Director at the Organic Farming Research Foundation effective January 1. She has been serving as Deputy Director of OFRF since February 2009.

## Retailers Kick-Off 1st Non-GMO Month

October 2010 was the first ever [Non-GMO Month](#). Nearly 300 independent retailers and co-ops nationwide participated in this marketing campaign intended to raise awareness of food and products that do not contain genetically modified organisms. Nearly 900 products have been Non-GMO verified to date.

## Online Debate Held on GMOs and Sustainable Ag

A debate on the motion "Biotechnology and sustainable agriculture go together, not against each other" was held on the website of *The Economist* magazine in early November. Chuck Benbrook, Chief Scientist for The Organic Center, debated Dr. Pamela Ronald of U.C. Davis. Visitors to the Economist debate website voted electronically as the debate proceeded.

In its comments during the debate, The Organic Trade Assn (OTA) cited a growing body of scientific findings showing serious harmful effects linked to genetically engineered crops and studies that show organic agriculture, not biotechnology, offers the most hope to poor farmers living in such regions as Africa. When the poll ended, opponents of genetic engineering [carried the day](#) with 62% of the votes, against 38% supporting the motion.

## Emmy's Recognize Grandin

At the recent Emmy Awards, the HBO program "Temple Grandin," starring Claire Danes, received seven nominations and won five awards. The program tells the story of Dr. Grandin, chronicling her struggles with life as an autistic person and her unique ability to relate to animals. Dr. Grandin has emerged as a leader in the field of animal welfare and is most widely known for her invention of more humane slaughterhouse practices. Follow this link to learn more about [Dr. Grandin's work](#) on animal welfare.

## Autism Epidemic Firmly Linked to Environment

Important connections are made in this article that was published August 10, 2010. *Thanks to Patti Bursten Deutsch for sharing this article on the IOIA Forum.* [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-barrie-nd/child-autism-epidemic-fir\\_b\\_696179.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-barrie-nd/child-autism-epidemic-fir_b_696179.html)

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## Canadian Update

By Kelly A. Monaghan

### Canada's Organic Science Cluster Funding

At the Organic Agricultural Centre of Canada in Nova Scotia on September 1<sup>st</sup>, it was announced that the federal government will provide \$6.5 million in funding to create an Organic Science Cluster that will help organic farmers become more competitive and profitable.

This funding will support collaborative research and innovation to be conducted by over 50 researchers in 45 research institutions across nine provinces. Their activities will include work in soil fertility, grain cropping systems, greenhouse production and food processing.

### Canada's First "Organic Week"

October 9-16 was Canada's first "Organic Week" marked by an organic Oktoberfest, retail promotions, organic farm tours and many other activities. The Canadian organic sector promoted this week with a six-page insert in the national *Globe & Mail* newspaper.

The end of Organic Week was celebrated on Parliament Hill in Ottawa with industry representatives visiting Members of the House Standing Committee on Agriculture to discuss the importance of supporting our growing industry and the Canada organic logo. An organic reception was held on Parliament Hill which was well attended by over fifty Members of Parliament and Senators. Several days later in Toronto a similar reception featuring organic wines and cheeses was held at Queen's Park to which provincial MPs were invited.

### Standards and PSL Update

The 5<sup>th</sup> ballot of the CGSB's Organic Technical Committee has been returned by the voting members to the CGSB. There were over 100 items balloted, only a handful of which generated enough disagreement to return them to their respective Working Groups for further analysis.

The rest of the balloted amendments that passed through the ballot process will now be advanced for second level approval as discussed in the last issue of this newsletter.

The Working Groups continue to confer on the over 200 items on the current work list and are making preparations for the first five-year review of the standard which is required by CGSB to begin in 2011.

### Standards Interpretation Committee

The Standards Interpretation Committee met in person in Ottawa in September and worked through over twenty new questions resulting in a total of 68 Q&As that have been prepared. In addition, at this meeting the SIC reviewed approximately 60 comments that had been received subsequent to the earlier Q&A publications. The latest batch of these responses will soon be posted on the COO's webpage to initiate the 60-day review period before designation as formal interpretations to the standard.

Congratulations to Rochelle Eisen, IOIA Member, who has recently been requested to join the Standards Interpretation Committee. Rochelle will complete Laura Telford's term which is scheduled to end in December of this year. We know that Rochelle will be a tremendous asset to the Committee.

### Canada Organic Office

The COO's Regulatory Affairs Officer has just returned from the NOSB meetings in Wisconsin where she was present to answer questions regarding the Canada Organic Regime.

The COO has completed successful surveillance audits for two-thirds of the Conformity Verification Bodies (CVBs). The COO reports that communication with the CVBs is constant and collaborative. The next face-to-face meeting with the COO and the CVBs is scheduled for January 2011 when they will review outstanding issues related to accreditation and certification.

Version 13 of the COO Operating Manual (updated in June 2010) is not yet available on the COO website but should be available upon request of any CVB or CB.

The COO is planning three initial training sessions across Canada for CBs, the first of which is scheduled for Jan. 28, 2011 at the Guelph Organic Conference.

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

### Canadian International Negotiations

*United States* – on Oct. 12 & 13 Canada and U.S. representatives met to discuss the ongoing implementation of the equivalency arrangement. Discussions were held on the development of a Steering Committee (a group to oversee the implementation of our trade agreement) and a Technical Working Group. Terms of reference for these two bodies should be available on the COO website within the next month.

The NOP has indicated to the COO that they will soon provide clarity on some outstanding issues including some confusion around sodium nitrate use. They will also address the results of livestock density investigations that the NOP has been conducting since the implementation of the equivalency arrangement.

*European Union* – the COO is still awaiting word back from the EU on the findings of the peer review undertaken in Ottawa last May. The results of the COO's review of the EU system undertaken in Europe last June are ready and will soon be submitted via proper international negotiation protocols.

### Organic Aquaculture Standards

Late October in Ottawa saw the first three days of standards meetings on the draft organic aquaculture standards. Many comments were received by the CGSB in August in response to the first published draft standards and the process continues.

*Kelly Monaghan is Chair of the Canadian General Standards Board's Organic Technical Committee. She also acts as IOIA's Membership Chairperson.*  
[www.ashstreetorganics.com](http://www.ashstreetorganics.com).

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## So, who IS Mac Stone, anyway?

By Margaret Scoles

The AMS news release describes him as “Mr. Robert Mac Stone, a certifying agent representative from Georgetown, Ky. Mr. Stone is the Executive Director for the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and oversees the Kentucky Organic Program. Mr. Stone is also co-manager of the Elmwood Stock Farm, a certified organic farm in Georgetown, Ky.” Many in the organic sector would like to know a bit more. Some are still wondering how high profile certification agency representatives such as Jake Lewin and Gwen Wyaard were passed up with this appointment. Many more are just plain curious about Mac. Mac Stone is not a familiar face at NOSB meetings. He follows 6 years of Joe Smillie of QAI, a private certifier, filling the position. And before Joe was Jim Riddle. The appointment of Riddle, although he was not actually a certifier, was generally viewed favorably by both state and private certification agencies. Appointing a certifier from a state agency this round does have a ring of logic to it. And anyone who has met the soft spoken giant of a man would probably vouch for Mac’s character.

Mac is employed by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) as the Executive Director of Marketing, which includes the organic program as well as many others. KY’s organic program was funded by tobacco settlement funds, in an effort to provide alternatives to former small tobacco farmers. High value crops were essential for the survival of these small farms. Kentucky’s organic farms now enjoy some of the lowest certification fees in the country because of that commitment.

Mac currently serves on the board of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, a term that started in 2005 and continues thru 2011.

IOIA and Mac Stone have known each other for some time. IOIA and the KDA cosponsored training for the first time in 2002. And in May of this year, KDA hosted IOIA’s basic crop and processing trainings in Frankfort. Mac stopped by to visit and give support for the training. But we worked most closely together in 2005

when IOIA and the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) collaborated on the publication of *The Southern Organic Resource Guide*. The project was funded by the USDA Risk Management Agency and focused on assisting development in 5 underserved states (KY, TN, LA, MS, AR). These states lagged far behind most other regions in the number of certified farms. The publication provided statistics and resources for each state and included a few farmer profiles. It remains one of the most significant resources for the Deep South. Elmwood Stock Farm in Georgetown was one of the featured farms for the KY section of the guide.

A bit about the farm: Elmwood Stock Farm, a diversified and multi-generational family farm, is located in Bluegrass farmland. The family has been farming there for more than 6 generations. In 2005, it was the largest organic farm in Kentucky, with more than half the certified acreage in the state. They now farm 326 certified acres, including heritage turkeys. To avoid conflict of interest, the farm has been certified by Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) since 2005. The farm is worth far more dollars if sold for development, but the Stones staunchly refuse to develop their farm. Gradually it has become a green and healthy oasis in the midst of suburban development. Several family members live on the farm and are involved in the operation. The farm still produces some tobacco, but also a variety of organic crops and livestock. Ann and Mac Stone, are most visible at farmers’ markets. They see to the organic poultry, sheep flock, farmers’ markets, and CSA pickups of Elmwood products. The farm produces Black Angus breeding stock and Dorset-Suffolk cross sheep. Elmwood Stock Farm sells through Kentucky farmers’ markets in and a CSA.

Elmwood Stock Farm received a Master Conservationist award from the National Resource and Conservation District of Scott County in October 2004. For sure, Mac Stone deserves credit as a dedicated organic farmer, and a respected overseer of Kentucky’s organic program. We wish him well as he takes on the serious challenge of representing private and state certification agencies.

Mac invites our readers to check out other KY ag programs, including KY Proud, their buy-local program at [www.kyagr.com](http://www.kyagr.com) You can also read more about their farm at [www.elmwoodstockfarm.com](http://www.elmwoodstockfarm.com)



Ann and Mac down on the Farm.

*Photo from Southern Organic Resource Guide, published in 2005 by IOIA in collaboration with the National Center of Appropriate Technology*  
<http://attra.ncat.org/sorg/downloads/sorg.pdf>

## New Members Named to NOSB

US Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the appointment of five new members to the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) on Sept. 29.

The appointees will serve terms beginning Jan. 24, 2011, and ending Jan. 24, 2016. The 15-member advisory board comprises four organic producers, two handlers, three environmentalists, three consumer advocates, a scientist, an organic retailer, and an organic certifier.

The new appointees include:

Mr. Colehour J. Bondera, an organic producer from Honaunau, Hawaii. Mr. Bondera farms at Kanalani Ohana Farm and produces organic coffee, vegetables, avocados, fruit and cacao. He is a board member of the Kona Coffee Farmers Association and has spoken at many workshops on organic agriculture;

Mr. Nicholas C. Maravell, an organic producer from Potomac, Md. Mr. Maravell is owner of Nick’s Organic Farm, which has been operating since 1979. He participates in on-farm research and actively engages in policy discussions concerning organic legislation;

Mr. Robert Mac Stone [article this page]  
[ see NOSB, page 17]

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## Develop the program, Keep the same policy

By Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, JOIA

A Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA)/IOIA basic farm inspectors training course was held May 26-29, 2010, at Fuji city (my town), Shizuoka prefecture, Japan. JOIA skipped the farm course in 2009. It was the first time we did not have any farm inspectors training course since JOIA started the IOIA training. So this year, we expected more attendees than we had in the last 2-3 times, and tried to find tips for a new program for our activities and income.

For various reasons, JOIA did the previous farm course training in 3 days. Of course the schedule is very hard in 3 days, starting early and finishing late. And we did not have time to write a report during the course. For several years we discussed having one more day for the farm course. Then finally we set up a 4-day training (so attendees would still write a report after the course).

The new challenge was to set up a “Half course” - only study in a room, not including mock inspection, report and exam. It would be useful for certification staff and reviewers, or distributors who would like to know more about organic certification. And we expected some people to come who could not spend the time or money at once, even though they would like to work as inspectors.

What was the result? We got 5 attendees who took the half course (first 2 days). Then other 19 attendees worked 4 full days to finish the course. Two of the 5 attendees that took the half course were certification staffers that were new hires, that is, less than 10 months working for the certifier, and they had no mock inspection experience, but mainly coordinate the inspection/certification. The other two were staff at one of the big consumer coop distributors in Japan. They are handling healthy foods products mainly, including organic. The two just moved to the section which needs to control their contract farmers. So they needed to know about the organic certification structure as their basic knowledge. The last half course attendee was a local farmer who wished to apply for organic certification.

The recent trend in Japan is that the number of inspectors has increased, but the number of new organic farmers has not increased. Sometimes we have questioned having more inspectors, but some certifiers say they are always looking for new (qualified) inspectors. And some certifiers send their staff or contract inspectors because our courses are well recognized among certifiers and government staff. In the last several years, number of independent attendees has been decreased, with just a few in each training. This balance was not changed this time. Only three of 19 attendees have a will to become inspectors independently, with other attendees coming mainly from certifiers and companies.

Regarding the training, we also challenged attendees to make small exams on the first and second day. Of course we had a final exam on the last day.

The half course attendee's evaluations were done by the 2 small exams, and full attendees were evaluated by the total of exams. The difficulty of the agenda was we needed to finish basic presentations, such as the certification process, inspectors role, standards, Risk assessment, audit, on-farm processing, how to conduct farm inspection, review of farm input, and how to write a report, in the first 2 days. Even though we set up 4 days for this training, the busy schedule was not changed as much as we had expected. This is the point we would change next time.

To have small exams in the last 30 minutes of the first two days gave us more information. But this time, we could not use the information fully. The balance of questions in small exams and final exam, also the volume balance, we need to discuss more for next time. But the purpose and the level of the “JOIA/IOIA training course completion certificate” must be maintained.

After this training, board members of JOIA and some other trainers got together and discussed future trainings, not only for inspectors but also including consumers. The sessions may not be limited for organic. It could include food safety issues, or give more

agriculture information to consumers or distributors. As same as for inspectors, the world is not limited to “organic”, so we could make use of our skill/knowledge for various situations. There are a lot of possibilities to develop our program. But we also recognized its value - we stands by organic inspection and join with IOIA. IOIA has a program related to the worldwide organic industry. This is the most strong point of our work and we would develop our activities on this policy.

## IOIA in Africa

By Lisa Pierce – *[reluctantly dusting the red sands of Africa off her boots]*

The simple cement classroom in the tribal village seemed confined as the participants found their seats. And then, they started to sing. As the 42 voices rose, the walls seemed to



expand and a kind of chill started in the centre of my spine and traveled upwards raising the hairs on the back of my neck. The first IOIA Organic workshop in Africa began and ended with a song and prayer. And even in the recounting, the power and simplicity of that moment still reverberates. This was my first trip to southern Africa. It was also the first IOIA organic inspection course to be held in Africa and the first time we have delivered a series of one day organic workshops for local community organizations. The IOIA training and workshops were sponsored by CARANA and funded as part of USAID's Southern Africa Global Competitiveness HUB Project. The IOIA Organic Crop Inspector training was held in Pretoria from September 13-17, 2010 and the organic workshops were held the following week.



The IOIA Organic Crop Inspection training was attended by 13 participants from various regions in South Africa and one participant from Mozambique. The range of participants included local inspectors and persons from the national cotton organization, development agencies, companies developing inputs for the organic sector and consultants. The course referenced the NOP organic standards. Currently there are about 370 certified organic farms in South Africa and 10 certification agencies in South Africa that certify to the EU and or NOP standards. South Africa plans to release the publication of its own organic standards in the next few months. From the classroom in Pretoria to the harsh beauty of the bushveld in the Northern Cape. The flight from Johannesburg to Kimberly in the Northern Cape reminded me of the flat, wide open areas of the US Midwest or the prairies in Canada. The first workshop was held near the large Kumba Iron Ore mine in the village of Manyeding that edges the Kalahari Flats. The workshop was envisioned to introduce workers for a new

agricultural project in the community, to the concepts of organic farming. The project site (160 hectares) had been used to grow rice in the past (in South Africa!) and the irrigation pipelines and dam were being repaired in preparation for the production of vegetables. There is no surface water in the region and the entire area is dependent on underground aquifers for its water supply.

Subsequent organic workshops were held near Thabazimbi and near Middelburg in the Limpopo region and Mpumalanga region north and northwest of Johannesburg. In all, the three workshops were attended by a total of 85 persons, 59 women and 26 men, from eight



different agricultural projects plus some representatives of local municipalities and community leaders. Certificates were given to each participant as part of wrap-up ceremony at the end of each workshop.

South Africa is a vast and incredibly diverse bioregion – almost any agricultural product can be produced somewhere in the country. Export crops include various fruits and vegetables; the development of an organic cotton industry is also in process. Establishment of the domestic market for organic products has begun – I spent an afternoon walking to the local Pick and Pay grocery chain and Woolworths (a whole foods kind of store) in Pretoria and verifying organic products on the shelves. After gathering several sample labels, I think I have enough organic Rooibos tea to last me for the next year or two.... The tea may last, but it remains to be seen if I will last that long away from a country that has had such an affect on me.

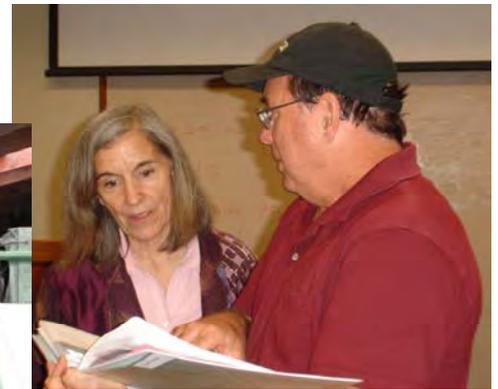
# OR Basic Crop Course

By Sarah Costin

Since I am wrapping up the Basic Crop Training in Oregon as I prepare to leave for the Basic Crop training in Taiwan, I'll be brief out of necessity and let a few photos tell most of the story. The Basic Crop training returned to the excellent facilities of Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon on October 4 – 8, 2010. We had beautiful autumn weather- it didn't rain until the day of the field inspections! The class of 25 participants represented a wide range of organic possibilities including NOP staff, certifier staff, certified operations, current inspectors looking to expand their scope, and farmers. Their differing perspectives resulted in a lot of classroom discussion- some off topic, but most adding real-life examples to the material. Lisa Pierce contributed a great deal with her expertise, energetic presentations, and humor- and provided valuable "tutoring" outside of class for anyone who asked.



Many thanks to Oregon Tilth for help with mock inspections, to Sunbow Farm, Lost Creek Farm and Circle H Farm for hosting the mock inspections, to the OSU staff who, along with Margaret, helped things run smoothly on site, and to the IOIA staff who get it all together behind the scenes. Now for some pictures worth thousands of words...



Sarah Costin, IOIA Trainer, helps Marty Beagle, head of WSDA's organic program, with a sticky question during the basic organic crop inspection course.



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## IOIA Basic Course for Organic Processing Inspection

Corvallis, Oregon October 4-8, 2010

### Thoughts on Basic Processing Course

#### From Linda Condon, WA:

IOIA went ahead with this training even after a late cancellation brought the number of students down to 9. Only 9 students but oh so many opportunities to learn from one another with our various links to the organic world: 2 current inspectors, 2 future inspectors, 2 certification reviewers, 2 certified organic processors, and 1 OMRI product review coordinator. The training was well planned and executed with varied learning styles for continued engagement. The inspection of a certified processor brought it all together with real life scenarios (*"hmm...can't seem to find that information in this new database system..."*). We all walked away with a much better understanding of the NOP regulations and improved skills for navigating through the regulations as well.



**Processing course attendees. Contributor Linda is fourth in from right with her hand on the post. Annie is kneeling at front left. Antonin is in the center straight over the center of the Kettle sign. Trainer Garry Lean is second from left.**

#### Annie Amos, Product Review Coordinator, OMRI, October 2010:

I attended the October 2010 IOIA Basic Processing Inspection training in Corvallis, Oregon. The information I learned in the course will be beneficial in my role as a Product Review Coordinator at OMRI. I gained a better understanding of the intricacies of organic food processing, learned ways to format inspection reports, and saw first-hand processing documentation systems. The course provided a unique opportunity for representatives from different sectors of the organic industry, including certifiers, inspectors, input material reviewers, organic producers, and retailers, to have in-depth discussions on organic food processing and learn together.

#### Antonin van der Lely, BC Canada:

This fall basic process training took place in Corvallis Oregon. The training was taught by experienced process inspector, Garry Lean. The group was smaller than average with only 9 participants. All coming from a varied background, the small group had many discussions from simple inspection techniques to how to conduct a mass balance taking into account water gain or loss. To top off this great training, Margaret Scoles made a few star appearances to impart her knowledge and experience to the group. All attendees were both happy and pleased to take part in this unique and fun training.

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### McEvoy Lists NOP Priorities at Lively NOSB Meeting

The NOP has enthusiastically entered an Age of Enforcement, as was witnessed at the recent NOSB meeting, held Oct 25-28 in Madison, Wisconsin.

NOP Deputy Administrator **Miles McEvoy** gave a presentation at the meeting, starting with an outline of NOP's list of priorities for the coming months. Included in this list were upholding and enforcing standards, implementing and enforcing the Access to Pasture final rule, implementing NOP's strategic plan, implementing NOSB recommendations, instituting a quality management system, increasing oversight of foreign operations, and improving the training and accountability of supervisors.

To review the complete PowerPoint presentation, visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5087263>.

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## Advanced Training in Oregon

By Janine Gibson

The IOIA/OTCO ADVANCED INSPECTOR TRAINING COURSE was well attended and held in Corvallis, Oregon, October 4 & 5th, 2010. It was an excellent example of team work, from the agenda to the welcome party. **Patti Bursten Deutsch** worked with **Margaret Scoles**, with help from **Mike Mountain** and **Bob Durst** and many more excellent resource personnel to develop a training targeted to expressed inspector needs. Bob and wife Sherry Clark were magnificent hosts of a gourmet vegetarian welcome feast at their beautiful home on a local mountain side.

Facilitated by trainer Janine Gibson, the participant agenda included an NOSB hot topics panel, a conversation on tricky materials & corn steep liquor that could barely be contained and informative sessions on sampling protocols by **Al Quaglino** of Primus Labs & **Steve Thun** of Portland Ag Labs.



Sean Feder, CCOF, shown here with Connie Karr of OTCO.

**John Foster** and **Tracy Miedema** of Earthbound Farm, currently serving on the NOSB gave, along with **Arthur Neal** of the NOP, well received updates. **Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador** presented the always topical OMRI perspective.

Starting off Day Two was *Inspecting Perennials with a Grape Focus* by **Robert Albee**, a captivating combination of inspector and grower perspectives, beautiful visuals and wine samples! *The Organic Wine Label Game* with **Connie Karr** of OTCO was a learning hoot, followed by updates on the Canadian Organic Regime and the EU. **Sean Feder** (CCOF) and **Andrew Black** (OTCO) gave an excellent presentation on Unannounced Inspections.

**Processing Topics**, a panel facilitated by **Dag Falck** of Nature's Path, covered Commercial Availability, Updates on lists.605 & 606, Communicating Issues Clearly and an Audit Exercise Review.

Feedback from participants indicated this was the type of exchange of perspectives and current information, that keeps IOIA in demand as the training institution it is !

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### NOSB Bits, from the October 25-28 meeting

**Nanotech Prohibition:** The board approved its Nanotechnology recommendations with some additions reflecting public comments, including the following statement: "The NOSB proposes that Engineered Nanomaterials be prohibited from certified organic products as expeditiously as possible. We respectfully request that the NOP take immediate actions to implement this document."

**Labeling Organic Honey:** The current recommendation outlines proposed standards, building on a) the draft apiculture standard, created 2001, that established allowed and prohibited production practices for organic apiculture operations based on the requirements of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) and b) a document prepared by the Accredited Certifiers Association Apiculture Working Group and presented to NOSB in Fall 2009. The current recommendation also attempts to harmonize certain requirements - such as the forage zone, surveillance zone, and transition period - with EU and Canadian organic apiculture standards. After making several minor revisions to the draft apiculture standard, NOSB voted unanimously (14-0) to recommend it.

#### New NOSB Officers for 2011

Tracy Miedema - Chair  
Joe Dickson - Vice Chair  
Wendy Fulwider - Secretary

**Next NOSB meeting** -- Seattle, Washington  
Tuesday - Thursday, April 26-29, 2011  
Red Lion Hotel on Fifth Avenue  
1415 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101-2313  
<http://www.seattleredlionfifthavenue.com/>

**BOARD RESIGNATION:** Annette Riherd-Organic Producer.  
It is still not clear how this spot will be filled.

## IOIA Down Under

By Margaret Scoles

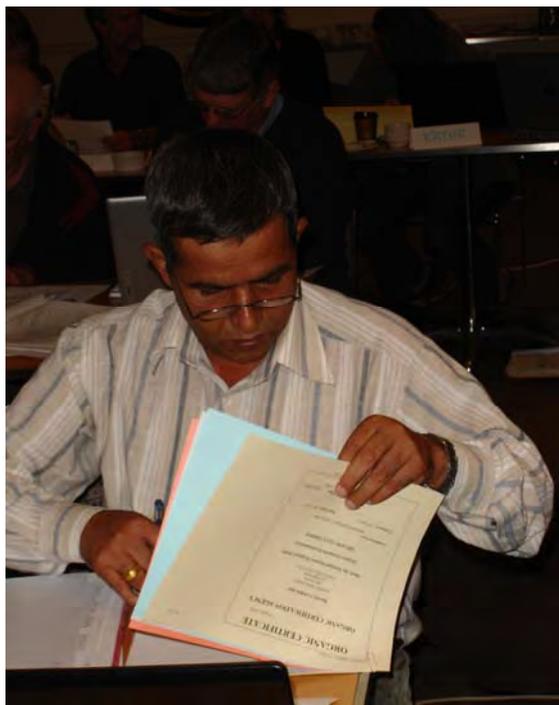
NASAA Certified Organic (NCO) and IOIA collaborated on August 17-18 to provide the first IOIA training in Australia since 2000. It was the first IOIA cosponsored advanced training in Australia. And it was the first IOIA advanced training to end with a test.

The training focused on NOP standards (crop, livestock, and handling) and ended with about two hours of audit training. It included a dinner update on developing NOP apiculture, aquaculture, and mushrooms standards. Participants took a virtual tour of a cheese plant, completed audit traceability tests and audit balance exercises, and practiced writing issues of concern from these exercises.

The course included 25 participants, of which about 20 were inspectors, some with more than 20 years of experience. Six of the group were NASAA staff, including Stephanie Goldfinch, Executive Officer of NCO. Most had some NOP training previously and many had done NOP inspections. The inspectors were independent contractors; many work for other certifiers in addition to NCO. NCO provided the training as an in-house training and managed the on-site logistics. I served as Trainer.



**NCO Executive Officer Stephanie Goldfinch and Margaret Scoles celebrate a successful training.**



**Former BOD member Maheswar Ghimire of Nepal was among the group of inspectors.**

Special thanks go to Delia Hollbach--originally of Perth, and now living in the Midwestern US. She is working through an inspector apprenticeship (I am one of her mentors). She was home visiting family at the time of the training. She met Bob and I at the airport in Melbourne and traveled with us to the training. What was the biggest laugh at the training, besides my accent? When Delia asked me if I'd like tea and how I'd like it. I answered "black tea with milk". Then I learned that tea comes two ways in Oz—with milk (white) or without milk (black).

The size of some Australian farms and stations (ranches) provide challenges most US inspectors don't often face. Planes are used to fly many of the larger pastures in the outback. One of the highlights of the training was when the formal training was all over. About a dozen of the inspectors treated my husband and I to dinner and a long visit. This conversation reinforced how inspectors all around the world have common concerns. How to keep up with standards changes? How much to charge? How to use certifiers' forms? How to be efficient with time and charge for the time it actually takes? How to have another life outside of inspecting?

NCO is accredited by the USDA NOP in crops, livestock, handling, and wild crop. Different from the US, each certifier has its own standards. The national standard is not mandatory, although AQIS organic requirements apply to all exported product. The NASAA crop and handling standards are very similar to the USDA NOP standards. However, the livestock standards are more similar to Europe and Canada. NOP livestock is important in Australia, with a significant amount of export to the USA.



**Still smiling after 2 grueling days of training and a test.**

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## **BOD Minute Highlights** – for full minutes, please go to the inspectors only section of the IOIA website, [www.ioia.net](http://www.ioia.net) **IOIA Board of Directors Conference Call July 20, 2010**

**Attendance:** Bob Durst, Eric Feutz, Jennie Clifford, Bob Howe (Alternate, Voting), and Margaret Scoles, ED. Michelle Sandy arrived by 7:20 due to technical difficulties. Absent: David Konrad and Julio Perez. Minute taking: Jennie Clifford

**Treasurer's Report:** Discussion regarding possible market for pipeline trainings in the NE due to the natural gas industry having gained a strong foothold in PA and NY. IOIA has had no pipeline trainings this year, a significant change from past three years. Gain from last quarter. Financially IOIA is on track. Bob asks for idea of finances for webinars. ED replies that webinars are difficult to generalize. They all carry their own costs, time involved and profit margins. Currently the area for the greatest cost savings and increase in efficiency is to give \$\$ collection over to GANC. Action Point: ED to run the numbers and provide update on financial numbers for webinars in future ED Reports.

**Inspector Insurance:** IOIA is collecting a list of companies who offer or are willing to offer insurance policies to inspector members. IOIA is not endorsing any specific insurance company. Action Point: Michelle and ED will continue to work on preparing insurance list for members.

**International Trainers in the US:** How can we support trainers coming to the US to train for IOIA? IOIA has discussed options with counsel. Action Point: Bob Durst and Margaret will continue work on this item.

**Certifier Survey:** A handful of ACAs have already expressed willingness to participate. The focus of the survey will be the Training Institute and ACA's inspector training needs.

JOIA has asked how IOIA will participate in the **World Congress** in September, 2011 and how/if IOIA will request JOIA to participate. Basic training with KOIA may occur. A low-budget Advanced International inspector symposium would be of interest to IOIA.

**ED Report:** ED looking forward to fundamental office personal staying put and ED remaining stationary for a period of time annually.

## **IOIA Board of Directors Conference Call August 31, 2010**

**Attendance:** Bob Durst, Jennie Clifford, Michelle Sandy (excused herself at 8:05), Julio (Alternate, Voting, excused himself at 8:25), and Margaret Scoles, ED. Absent: David Konrad, Eric Feutz, Bob Howe. Minute Taking: Jennie Clifford

**Treasurer's Report:** The Finance Committee recommendation that IOIA retain a cash reserve of \$42,500 was approved; and ED will notify the BOD whenever cash on hand plus accounts receivable minus accounts payable is less or equal to the cash reserve amount. Michelle moved, Jennie seconded. The board deferred to move on the treasurer guidelines until the finance committee approves or disapproves them in committee.

**Promotion:** At the AZ BOD meeting the board discussed updating IOIA's logo and promo materials. The BOD decided to table promo material updates until post Expo East. Logo decision, brochure and display items will be picked up at the BOD meeting in September. It is the BOD's goal to have all updated materials completed and ready for distribution by the next AGM. Margaret and Michelle are definitively and Bob and Jennie may be attending Expo East. IOIA will arrange a social gathering in Boston during the Expo.

**Insurance:** Michelle succeeded in locating 3 insurance companies/underwriters who would create and insure inspectors for: Business liability and Errors and Omissions for an annual fee of \$1,590. This was the same figure Margaret was given for a group. Michelle also found companies who would separate Business liability and E&O. Michelle will discover whether the aforementioned policies are available countrywide. The question remains whether these policies are sufficient for most or all ACAs. Margaret and Bob will bring this to the next IOIA/ACA telecall.

**IOIA's 2011 AGM:** Looks like Tampa toward the end of March(?). It is a celebratory year! The board needs to decide on dates for its 2011 Board Retreat. We discussed scheduling the retreat two months after the AGM. We decided to postpone decisions until BOD members announced their intention to be re-nominated or not.

## **IOIA Board of Directors Conference Call September 21, 2010**

**Attendance:** Bob Durst, Jennie Clifford, Eric Feutz, Bob Howe (Alternate, Voting), and Margaret Scoles, ED. Absent: David Konrad, Michelle Sandy, Julio Perez. Minute Taking: Jennie Clifford

**Secretary's Report:** The August 31 minutes were approved, Eric moved, Bob D. seconded, with the following emendation: The finance committee recommendation that IOIA retain a cash reserve of \$42,500 was approved.

**Membership Dues 2011:** Inspector Member dues last rate change was in 2009 and will remain constant at \$150 through 2011. Supporting Individual membership dues will be increased from \$100 to \$125. Supporting Business/Organization membership dues will be increased from \$125 to \$150. Supporting Certification Agency dues will be increased from \$275 to \$350. The motion to accept these items was made by Jennie, seconded by Bob Howe, and approved by the board. General agreement to strive to increase the number of supporting certification agency members.

**Certifier Survey:** The board agreed the Certifier Survey could be forwarded to the ACAs.

**Accreditation:** The board approved Kelly O'Donnell of OTCO as the ARP Certification Representative. Eric moved and Bob H. seconded the motion.

**Insurance:** A great deal of work has gone into researching Inspector Liability Insurance for our members. Philadelphia Insurance is a national primary carrier who will offer Liability and Error and Omissions Insurance to inspectors. Currently they are the only national entity offering a package satisfying the requirements set forth by IOIA. Selective Insurance is a carrier [see **BOD** page 17]

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## ED, from page 5

**Sansom** and **Fred Ehlert**. They had attended the anti-fraud conference and gave me a highly favorable synopsis. Later that day, our group expanded as IOIA members converged on the Pho Hoa Restaurant in Chinatown for an IOIA member gathering and dinner. Joining Michelle, Maarten, Fred, and myself for dinner were **Al Johnson**, **Silke Fuchshofen**, **Lori Wyman**, **Grace Gershuny**, and **Kelly Monaghan**. The trade show opened on October 14. Our IOIA booth was supported for 3 days by an excellent cadre of volunteers: (thanks, Bob H, Silke, Al, and **Amy Leblanc!**). A few highlights of the event:

**Organic Integrity from Farm to Table:** a power session. Miles McEvoy, NOP, was the first speaker. He talked about compliance actions and transparency, and reiterated his earlier messages regarding 'The Age of Enforcement'. He addressed essential aspects of quality certification (thorough OSPs, quality review by qualified staff; quality inspections, sales and yield audits included; feed audits for livestock; and quality and well-trained inspectors). **Brenda Book** (WSDA Organic Certification Manager and president of NASOP) spoke on using residue testing in organic certification. She described WSDA's residue testing program. Sampling has been part of their program since the beginning. WSDA is the oldest state organic certification program. The testing program focuses on samples of the edible portion of the crop and looks primarily for organophosphates and organochlorines. Typically 5-10% of their clients have a sample pulled each year for testing. She said that they frequently find some residues of materials with no set tolerances for the crop. If residue tests are positive, a letter of non-compliance is issued. Most common reasons for residues are inadequate buffers or drift. Less common reasons are shared equipment and previous land use. However, they rarely find residues >5% EPA tolerance. **Jake Lewin** (CCOF) spoke on using unannounced inspections in organic certification. About 5% of the CCOF clients experience an unannounced visit each year. **Francis Blake** (Soil Association) spoke on the positive aspects of organic integrity, upholding organic principles and delivering what consumers expect. SA certifies 70-80% of the UK market. He urged being pro-active with the media and gave an example of an oat

fraud cause. They released the story first, and it became a 'non-story' whereas if they had tried to hide it, the press would likely have been negative. **Ken Commins** (IOAS) spoke on the anti-fraud initiative (similar to presentation at IOIA's AGM in Arizona).

**OTA Annual Meeting, Oct 14:** This was the start of OTA's 25th anniversary celebration.

**Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA) Meeting, Oct. 15:** IOIA had a requested a spot on the agenda to discuss with certifiers the Certifier Survey and our plans to expand the Training Institute. That includes creating an inspector accreditation program that is more meaningful for certifiers, inspectors, and the sector.

**OTA's Annual Dinner Party, 25th anniversary celebration, Leadership Awards: Oct. 15.** My good friend **Bob Quinn** of Kamut International was one of the two award recipients. Bob was a charter member of the NOSB. He was also one of the committee that reviewed my application to become an organic inspector in 1988. He and I have worked together in the founding of the Montana Organic Association. We have marched down the halls in DC together on OTA's Hill Day visiting our congressmen. I'd thought that I should attend because there would be so few Montanans. But that was before I saw the tables of his family members, including both of his parents, now in their 90's. His acceptance speech was extraordinary. **Theresa Marquez**, Chief Marketing Executive of Organic Valley, was equally honored.

**IFOAM North America meeting, Oct. 16:** IOIA supporting member **Brian Baker** (formerly of OMRI, now at Cornell University in New York) and **Katherine DiMatteo** (IFOAM BOD President) helped spearhead the meeting to discuss the IFOAM effort in North America. Brian has served on the IFOAM Standards Committee in the past and over the past 2 years as the informal and volunteer coordinator of the discussion. So far, the group is completely informal. More than 20 people attended the Boston meeting. Discussed goals are to improve the North American presence in IFOAM and to coordinate/communicate among the IFOAM members to try to improve voting participation, etc. No conclusions were reached about formally organizing. If an organization does form and uses

IFOAM in the name, all members must be IFOAM members on their own. General consensus was that a coordinator must be paid, also that members are reluctant or unable to pay double dues (once to IFOAM and once to IFOAM North America). So there seems to be potential for only a shoestring budget. **Amy Leblanc**, IOIA Inspector Member from Maine, attended this meeting with me. Amy has attended all four of the last IFOAM World Congresses and is making her plans for Korea.

**And LOTS of other meetings.** To name just a few -- We met with **Cyril Bourdarot** of ECOCERT about collaborating on training. **Michel Reynaud** of France, their ED, will be coming to the US for this training. We met with **Miles McEvoy** and **Melissa Bailey** of NOP on inspector training issues and were pleasantly surprised that we are very much on the same page.

## NOSB, from page 9

Dr. Jennifer E. Taylor, a public interest representative from Tallahassee, Fla. Dr. Taylor is the Small Farms Program Coordinator at Florida A&M University. The program is designed to assist and equip underserved farming communities and their families toward sustainable development; and

Dr. Reuben C. Walker, a public interest representative from Lafayette, La. Dr. Walker is a researcher of small scale organic operations and professor and program leader at Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, La. He is currently involved in transitioning the university's pork farm to an organic production system.

## BOD from page 17

who fulfills the desired qualities though offers services exclusively in the eastern US. The BOD has decided to inform the membership of these options. Information will be posted on IOIA's website and updated regularly as more information becomes available. ED to write the draft and run it by the BOD before posting on website and to the IOIA Inspector list group.

## IOIA Board of Directors

**Conference Call October 19, 2010** – minutes pending approval. Next meeting: November 16.

## GM Mosquitos Released in Caymans in 2009

Experts in the safety of genetically modified (GM) organisms have expressed concern over the release of GM mosquitoes into the wild on the Cayman Islands, which was publicised internationally only in October 2010 — a year after the initial release.

The trial of the OX513A strain of the dengue-carrying *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, developed by UK biotech company Oxitec, was carried out on Grand Cayman island by the Cayman Islands' Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU) in 2009, followed by a bigger release between May and October this year. Together they represent the first known release of GM mosquitoes anywhere in the world.

Unpublished results of the trials, showing that the GM male mosquitoes competed with wild males, were presented at the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene annual meeting in the United States on 4 November.

The male GM mosquitoes mate with normal females to produce larvae that die unless the antibiotic tetracycline is present. In tetracycline's absence an enzyme accumulates to a toxic level, killing the larvae. The developers hope the strategy could be combined with other mosquito control methods to reduce transmission in dengue-prone areas.

Unlike malaria, which is also spread by mosquitoes, dengue outbreaks are unpredictable and bed nets are of limited use because dengue-spreading mosquitoes also bite during the day.

Ricarda Steinbrecher, a geneticist and co-director of EcoNexus — a UK-based non-profit research organisation — expressed surprise that the trials had occurred, saying that they had not been mentioned at the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety — which addresses international safety issues relating to GM organisms — in Nagoya, Japan, in October. She described the lack of publicity surrounding the trials as "worrying, both from the scientific perspective as well as public participation perspective".

Steinbrecher said that until a full, long-term environmental assessment of the Cayman trials has been carried out, the recently announced Malaysian trials of the same strain should not go ahead.

Just over three million male mosquitoes were released in the Cayman Islands this year. From May to October, scientists released batches of male mosquitoes in cages three times a week in a 40-acre (16-hectare) area. By August, mosquito numbers in that region dropped by 80 percent compared with a neighboring area where no sterile male mosquitoes were released.

Angela Harris, senior researcher at MRCU, told SciDev.Net that her unit consulted with several Cayman Islands' government departments beforehand.

"Currently there is a draft biosafety bill, and despite the fact that this bill has not yet been implemented we carried out a risk analysis and review of the trial as if this bill was already in place."

She said that there had been a newspaper article and public consultation within the Cayman Islands.

Luke Alphey, research director at Oxitec, said an extensive risk analysis was carried out and "we did lots of engagement work in Cayman, but no special effort either to spread the word internationally or not to [do so]". On the sidelines of a recent press conference in London, he said that he had not wanted to publicise the trial until the results were known. He did not know what the Nagoya meeting was, he said. An environmental assessment of the trial site is now being carried out. Alphey said that the experiment complied with the Cartagena Protocol because prior informed consent was obtained from the Cayman government.

John Marshall, of Imperial College London, who has argued that the Cartagena Protocol needs overhauling to deal with the special demands of GM insects, said: "Because the mosquitoes aren't going to spread to other countries, it's a national issue."

The next step for Oxitec, said Alphey, is to test the strategy in conjunction with other mosquito control methods.

Alphey said their GM mosquitoes can't permanently change the ecosystem because they only last for a generation. But to stamp out dengue in endemic areas like Asia and South America, billions of the special-order mosquitoes would likely be needed to stifle their wild counterparts.

Kathy Jo Wetter, a researcher with the ETC Group (Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Cooperation), a Canada-based organisation that promotes the socially responsible development of technologies, said ETC was unaware of

the release. "Oxitec considers its trial 'successful' just days after the experiment has ended," she said. "But unintended impacts on the environment cannot be known, and Oxitec's unproven technology could make things worse in the long term. There is no possibility of recall if something goes wrong — who takes responsibility in that case? Extreme techno-fixes require extreme precaution," she added.

Alphey said they are waiting for approval for the release of GM mosquitoes in Brazil, Panama and the United States.

*Katherine Nightingale, www.SciDev.net, 11 November 2010*

*Some interesting comments followed this internet news article. They are posted here anonymously as food for thought:*

"Here in Hawaii there are lots of animals and vegetation that was let loose by scientists and people who thought it was a brilliant idea. Every time it's been a disaster.

"In the article a representative says the mosquito won't get to other countries. How does he know that? The mosquito did not exist in Hawaii until the Europeans brought it in their ships by accident.

"The GM companies are using islands as laboratories because they know it's dangerous to let loose their experiments. They believe an island is cut off from the rest of the world. It is a lot like the thinking of scientists in the movie 'Jurassic Park'."

"It's very possible that this EXPERIMENT could be a complete success. Monsanto, etc. wants a string of successes. Unfortunately that will lead to everyone dropping their guard then something will eventually be created that is something these biotech creators thought was impossible. Something awful will occur and their apologies won't do much to pay for the loss of a species, a food group or a portion of mankind."

"People are forgetting that these pests also feed many species of bird, amphibian, fish, and even a few carnivorous plants, as well as being the #2 pollinator, just behind bees. What will happen to our food supply as a result of not having these pollinators? Will this cause the deaths of other animals, possibly even wiping out other species? Think about it."

## U.S. Talking Patent Reforms

The New York Times headline in late October seemed too good to be true: “U.S. Says Genes Should Not Be Eligible for Patents.” In a friend-of-the-court brief filed in the landmark breast cancer gene case (now in appeal), the U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) said patents on human and other genes should not be awarded because they are products of nature, not human inventions, and acknowledged that this position went against current practice at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Indeed, it does.

Many in the seed world are asking, What about plant genes? While the government sides with biotechnology interests in agreeing that patents on genetically engineered plants are warranted, this brief signals a crucial opportunity for discussion on abuses of the current patent system as it pertains to plant research. For example, broad patent claims limit breeders’ access to important germplasm. According to Professor Tom Michaels at the University of Guelph, patents on seed-reproducing plants not only limit use of these varieties in breeding programs, but limit the usefulness of unrelated germplasm that duplicates a claimed characteristic.

At this point in the discussion, we need further investigation into patent claims on plant DNA naturally occurring in nature, material the DOJ explicitly describes as not eligible for patents:

*... the patent laws embrace gene replacement therapies, engineered biologic drugs, methods of modifying the properties of plants or generating biofuels, and similar advanced applications of biotechnology. Crossing the threshold of section 101, however, [of patent law] requires something more than identifying and isolating what has always existed in nature, no matter how difficult or useful that discovery may be.*

The time is also ripe for an investigation into the use of restrictive licensing agreements, and not just in the context of biotechnology products. Licensing agreements have been in the press lately regarding USDA and industry research. But the use of these agreements, allegedly for products absent patents, demands the attention of the U.S. DOJ.

*Posted on November 1, 2010 by Kristina Hubbard, Organic Seed Alliance, Seed Broadcast blog, Oct 16-29, 2010.*

## Study Shows Roundup Link to Birth Defects

A major new scientific study has confirmed growing conviction that the world’s most widely used chemical herbicide, Monsanto’s Roundup, is toxic and a danger to human as well as animal organisms. The latest scientific research carried out by a multinational scientific team headed by Professor Andrés Carrasco, head of the Laboratory of Molecular Embryology at the University of Buenos Aires Medical School and member of Argentina’s National Council of Scientific and Technical Research, presents alarming demonstration that Monsanto and the GMO agribusiness industry have systematically lied about the safety of Roundup. Roundup in far lower concentrations than used in agriculture is linked to birth defects. The health implications are huge. All major GMO crops on the market today are genetically manipulated to “tolerate” Roundup. It was initially patented and sold by Monsanto under the trade name Roundup, which also contains non-disclosed added chemicals the company refuses to divulge for “trade secret” reasons. As of 2005, 87% of all US soybean fields were planted with glyphosate-resistant varieties (also mostly sold by Monsanto) of GMO soybeans and sprayed with Roundup.

The problem with this cozy arrangement is that glyphosate has now been demonstrated to be linked to birth defects as one of the most highly toxic substances in agriculture. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nonetheless continues to regard Roundup as “relatively low in toxicity, and without carcinogenic or teratogenic effects.”

Now a new international scientific team headed by Prof. Carrasco and including researchers from the UK, Brazil, USA, and Argentina have demonstrated that glyphosate causes malformations in frog and chicken embryos at doses far lower than those used in agricultural spraying and well below maximum residue levels in products presently approved in the European Union<sup>1</sup>. The Carrasco group was led to research the embryonic effects of glyphosate by reports of high rates of birth defects in rural areas of Argentina where Monsanto’s GE “Roundup Ready” (RR) soybeans are grown in large

monocultures sprayed from airplanes regularly.

Carrasco presented his group’s findings at a press conference during the 6th European Conference of GMO Free Regions in the European Parliament in Brussels. He stated, “The findings in the lab are compatible with malformations observed in humans exposed to glyphosate during pregnancy.”

Widespread reports of human malformations began to be reported in Argentina beginning 2002, two years after widespread aerial spraying of Roundup and planting of RR Soybeans was begun. The test animals used by Carrasco’s group share similar developmental mechanisms with humans. The authors concluded that the results “raise concerns about the clinical findings from human offspring in populations exposed to Roundup in agricultural fields.” Carrasco added, “The toxicity classification of glyphosate is too low. In some cases this can be a powerful poison.”

The maximum residue level (MRL) allowed for glyphosate in soy in the EU was raised 200-fold from 0.1 mg/kg to 20 mg/kg in 1997 after Roundup Ready soy was commercialized in Europe. Carrasco found malformations in embryos injected with 2.03 mg/kg glyphosate. Soybeans can typically contain glyphosate residues of up to 17mg/kg.

In August 2010 an organized mob violently attacked people who gathered to hear Carrasco talk about his research in the town of La Leonesa, Chaco province. Witnesses implicated local agro-industry figures in the attack. Viviana Peralta, a housewife from San Jorge, Santa Fe, Argentina was hospitalized together with her baby after Roundup spraying from planes flying near her home. Peralta and other residents launched a lawsuit that resulted in a regional court ban on the spraying of Roundup and other agrochemicals near houses.

*By F. William Engdahl, September 30, 2010. Download Chaco State Government report on the effects of agrochemical spraying on GM soy and rice on human health in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).*

<sup>1</sup> Paganelli, A., Gnazzo, V., Acosta, H., López, S.L., Carrasco, A.E. 2010. Glyphosate-based herbicides produce terato-genic effects on vertebrates by impairing retinoic acid signaling. Chem. Res. Toxicol., August 9, accessed here <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/tx1001749>



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## 2010 - 2011 Calendar

**December 6 -10** Domestic Fair Trade Association. Hosted by Swanton Berry Farm and Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, UC Santa Cruz. Afternoon tour of Swanton Berry Farm and evening opening reception. Santa Cruz, CA.  
<http://www.dftassociation.org/>

**January 19 - 22, 2011** 20th Annual Southern SAWG Conference, Chattanooga, TN.  
<http://www.sawg.org/conference-.html>

**January 23 - 26, 2011** USCC's 19th Annual Conference & Tradeshow. US Composting Council will be hosting the 19th Annual National Composting Conference and Exposition. Hyatt Regency in Santa Clara, CA.  
<http://www.compostingcouncil.org/>

**January 26-29, 2011** Animal, Vegetable, Mineral, e-Lectrical! 31st annual Ecological Farming Conference, Asilomar Conference Grounds, California.  
[www.eco-farm.org](http://www.eco-farm.org)

**January 27 -28, 2011** 13th annual Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference, Madison, WI.  
[www.rivercountyrcd.org/valid.html](http://www.rivercountyrcd.org/valid.html)

**January 27-30, 2011** Guelph Organic Conference, Guelph, Ontario.  
<http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca>

**February 4-5, 2011** NPSAS Winter Conference. "Sustainability in a Changing World". Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, N.D. Workshops, exhibit hall, plus much more!! [www.npsas.org](http://www.npsas.org)

**Feb 24-26, 2011** 22nd Annual Organic Farming Conference, an educational

weekend packed with 70+ workshops, 150+ exhibitors, terrific food, foot stompin' entertainment, acres of food and farming books, and plenty of time and space to network and mingle.  
[www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org)

**March 2 - 4, 2011** National Ag Ed Summit. Sponsored by The National Council for Agricultural Education and the National FFA Organization. Orlando, FL. [www.naae.org/links/newsitems/](http://www.naae.org/links/newsitems/)

**March 27, 2011** – 20th IOIA AGM, see page 1 for details

*Have a  
Happy New Year,  
Everyone!*

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