

## Scoles Recognized with OTA Leadership Award

IOIA is very proud that our Executive Director, Margaret Scoles, has been chosen to receive the Growing Organic Industry Award from the Organic Trade Association.

Scoles is one of four leaders selected for their commitment and vision to advance organic. In their July 16, 2018 press release, OTA noted that [Margaret] "has touched all sectors and corners of organic production around the world because of her leadership in training certifiers and inspectors".

"Each [awardee] has proven that they have what it takes to inspire others and uphold the integrity and practices that make organic agriculture the standout way to manage our food system," said Laura Batcha, Executive Director and CEO of OTA.

### Growing the Organic Industry Award

Margaret Scoles, who started out as training manager and coordinator in 1999 for IOIA, subsequently became Executive Director, a title she still holds. But she has been a tireless educator, advocate and ambassador for the organic world even before that. Scoles' involvement in agriculture and the organic movement began in the late 1980s. After graduating from the University of Arizona, she was an Organic Crop

Improvement Association (OCIA) reviewer and inspector. In 1991, she was a founding member of the then-named Independent Organic Inspectors Association.



"Any person on Earth who has taken an IOIA training has been affected by Margaret's indefatigable efforts to improve the integrity of organic farming, production, distribution and sales. She has grown IOIA's training, membership, programs and influence, such that graduates of these trainings are not only professional inspectors. IOIA students can be found among employees of major companies, certifiers, the USDA National Organic Program, members of the National Organic Standards Board, IFOAM and Organic Trade Association Board members. While not every certifier around the world requires

their inspectors to be externally trained, IOIA is considered the highest achievement for inspector and certifier education," her nomination letter explained.

It added, "It is not an exaggeration to say that most every certified organic product on earth is only a few degrees of separation from Margaret. Whether it's

see **Award**, page 4

### Notes from the Chair

by Margaret Weigelt

"In the spirit of humility and dedication that she has brought to the organic community over the past several decades, I am pleased to nominate Margaret Scoles for an OTA award." So begins the heartfelt letter of nomination by inspector member Patti Bursten Deutsch of Margaret Scoles for the 2018 Organic Trade Association (OTA) 'Growing the Organic Industry' Leadership Award.

In a recent phone interview, Bursten told us why it was so important to nominate her beloved mentor, to reach out far and wide for endorsements (67 came in, a record), and to have her recognized for her selfless efforts as 'educator, advocate and ambassador for the organic world'.

See **Notes**, page 4

**Welcome New Members****Inspector Member**

Katie Elsasser - Ohio

John Keep - South Australia

**Upgrading to Inspector**

Joseph Black - Missouri

Trish Clarkweiss- Missouri

Ariel Herrod- Maryland

**Supporting Individuals**

Steve Jack - Alberta, Canada

Tammy Martin -Minnesota

Rachel Tayse- Ohio

**Supporting Certification Agency**

SCS Global Services- California

**Supporting Business**

International Certification Authority

-Oklahoma

**Accreditation Deadline**The next deadline is **October 1**.

Available in three scopes (Crops, Livestock, Processing) for \$80. The cost for one scope is \$60 and \$70 for two. Renewals are every three years, and cost less.

Successful applicants receive a certificate suitable for framing, a wallet sized replica laminated card, listings in the hard copy and on-line Membership Directory. They are also eligible to become IOIA peer field evaluators. Full info on our [site](#).

**IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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*The Inspectors' Report* is the newsletter of International Organic Inspectors Association. IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization. *Our 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 [webgal\[at\]ioia.net](mailto:webgal[at]ioia.net)

Deadlines: Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 &amp; Nov 1.

**WEBINAR Training Schedule**for details & to register go to: [www.ioia.net/schedule\\_list.html](http://www.ioia.net/schedule_list.html)**200 Level Self-Directed Training - AVAILABLE ON-DEMAND**

IOIA/AGA Self-Directed Grassfed Dairy Inspection Training for Organic Inspectors

Presenter: IOIA Trainer Harriet Behar

**300 Level Webinar - September 7, 2018**

Inadequate Procedures When Using Uncertified Vendors—Is this Organic? A Risk-Based Approach

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific Time). One, 3 hour session.

Presenter: Silke Fuchshofen

**100 Level Webinar - September 18 & 21, 2018**

Open Enrollment NOP Processing Standards.

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific Time). Two, 3 hour sessions.

Presenter: IOIA Trainer Luis Brenes.

**100 Level Webinar - September 25 & October 2, 2018**

Open Enrollment IOIA/COTA COR Processing Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 3 hour sessions.

Presenter: IOIA Trainer Kelly Monaghan.

**100 Level Webinar - October 1 & 4, 2018**

Open Enrollment NOP Crop Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 3 hour sessions.

IOIA Trainers: Margaret Scoles and Garry Lean.

**200 Level Webinar – October 15 & 17, 2018**

IOIA Residue Sampling &amp; Responding to Test Results

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. (Pacific). Two, 2 hour sessions.

Presenters: Nathaniel Lewis &amp; Nathaniel Powell-Palm.

**200 Level Webinar - October 18, 2018**

IOIA/OMRI NOP Processing Input Materials

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). One, 3 hour session.

Presenter: Tina Jensen Augustine

**100 Level Webinar - October 23 & 26, 2018**

Open Enrollment NOP Livestock Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 3 hour sessions. IOIA Trainer: Garry Lean.

**200 Level Webinar - November 6, 2018**

IOIA/OMRI COR Processing and Handling Input Materials

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). One, 3 hour session. Presenter: Tina Jensen Augustine.

**100 Level Webinar - November 13 & 16, 2018**

Open Enrollment COR Crop Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 3 hour sessions. Presenter: IOIA Trainer Lisa Pierce

**200 Level Webinar - December 3 & 5, 2018**

Livestock Feed Audits, Grazing and Non Grazing Season

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 2.5 hour sessions.

Presenters: Jonda Crosby and Nate Powell-Palm.

**200 Level Webinar - December 4 & 11, 2018**

Processing-Audit Trail/Balance: Processing In/Out Balances, Traceability &amp; Recipe Verification.

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific). Two, 3 hour sessions.

Presenter: IOIA Trainer Kelly Monaghan

**200 Level Webinar – December 12 & 14, 2018**

IOIA Residue Sampling &amp; Responding to Test Results

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. (Pacific). Two, 2 hour sessions.

Presenters: Nathaniel Lewis &amp; Nathaniel Powell-Palm.

**Webinar Discount Note:**

**All IOIA Inspector Members are eligible for 1 half-price webinar in 2018.**

**On-Site Training Schedule -  
full details and applications at [www.ioia.net](http://www.ioia.net)**

**IOIA Crop and Livestock Inspection Trainings, South Burlington, Vermont**

**Crop Course – September 10-14**

**Livestock Course – September 17-21**

Registration is closed.

**IOIA Advanced Organic Inspector Training, Waitsfield, Vermont - September 16**

IOIA is collaborating with **Vermont Organic Farmers** to develop this training, which will focus on verifying compliance in the supply chain, including for imported products. Topics include port of entry procedures, fumigation monitoring, investigative techniques, and what inspectors need to know to verify compliance to international equivalency agreements. Guest trainer for the day will be **Miles McEvoy**, former NOP Deputy Administrator. Knoll Farm is a certified organic farm, producing U-pick blueberries and Icelandic sheep. It is located about 1 hour from the Burlington (BTV) airport in the scenic Mad River Valley. For information about the venue - [www.knollfarm.org](http://www.knollfarm.org)

**IOIA, Wild Farm Alliance and OEFFA 300 Level Advanced Inspector Training  
Assessing Biodiversity and Natural Resources on the farm**

**September 20 (evening) – through September 22 (early afternoon)**

This one-of-a-kind training features interactive, hands-on, field-based learning at three contrasting farms (certified organic vegetable, livestock, and grain farms are scheduled). The field experience is complemented by in-class exercises and group discussion to help you sharpen your skills in recognizing and interpreting natural resources on the farm while inspecting to the NOP rule and guidance. Our training team brings together a rare combination of deep expertise and practical learning style. Trainers are agroecologist Jo Ann Baumgartner and geologist Tony Fleming. Baumgartner is Executive Director of Wild Farm Alliance and a former organic farmer with decades of experience in assessing and bringing biodiversity to farms. Fleming is a longtime natural resources educator, and former organic inspector, with years of experience in soils, water, natural communities, and their relationships within the larger landscape. Closest airport is Columbus. Cincinnati is also an option. [To register](#)

**IOIA/KDA Field Training for Organic Inspectors, Frankfort, Kentucky**

**Crop Course - September 23 & 24    Livestock Course - September 27 & 28**

**IOIA Field Training as a structured apprenticeship** will include 2 days of practice inspections and report writing. At the Field Training, participants work with an experienced trainer/inspector to participate in two inspections and complete two inspection reports. Please see the [Course Information](#) for full details.

**IOIA/JOIA Organic Farm Inspection Training, Tokyo, Japan - September 25 - 28**

IOIA and JOIA will cosponsor a 4-day Basic Organic Farm Inspection Training using JAS Standards as a reference. The course will be held at Waseda Houshien, Tokyo, Japan. The training language will be Japanese. Please contact JOIA for more information about this training. E-Mail: [info@joia-organic.com](mailto:info@joia-organic.com)

**IOIA Crop and Processing Training, Farmington, Minnesota, November 2018**

**Crop Course – October 29 – November 2**

**Processing Inspection course – November 5-9**

IOIA will sponsor Crop and Processing Inspection Trainings at Mount Olivet Conference & Retreat Center, in rural Farmington, Minnesota. Each course includes 4 days of instruction including a field trip to a certified organic operation, plus ½ day for testing. Please see the [Course Information](#) for further details and registration links.

**Other Trainings under development:**

- **Advanced Training in Huatulco, Oaxaca, Mexico, February 28 & March 1, 2019 with AGM March 2**
- **IOIA Crop and Livestock training in Marin County, California, April - May 2019**

## Notes, from page 1

"I can't ever convey my gratitude enough to Margaret Scoles for sharing her skill and kindness with me. I love being part of something that feels good. I love being an inspector".

Patti attended The Evergreen State College and earned her BA at 30 years old. While working at the school's organic farm she met her first organic inspector - Miles McEvoy, who eventually became the USDA National Organic Program Deputy Administrator. After college, she worked as a laborer on certified organic farms in the states of Washington and Wisconsin. Taking a break from farming, Bursten worked as a tower climber. It was while climbing towers that she realized that she might want to reconsider her life's path.

It's 1997. An IOIA inspector course was offered after the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference held in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin. Patti had signed up. As a conference volunteer she was tasked with picking up the instructor, Margaret Scoles, from the airport. Scoles' reputation preceded her and Patti asked if Margaret was willing to be her mentor.

After the IOIA course at Sinsinawa, Bursten traveled to Montana to accompany Margaret on a series of organic inspections in her home state. Patti recalls traveling many miles into the mountains, far off the grid, in Scoles' old car. An excellent field training lesson was had when a torrential rain at one inspection demonstrated how runoff can move from adjacent conventional fields unto organic. Bursten recalled the trepidation of conducting her first inspection and the caring and considerate guidance given by Scoles.

Patti describes Margaret Scoles as highly skillful and unpretentious, an outstanding teacher, "The Inspector Gold Standard".

"She showed me how to be authentic, have fun and be professional at the same time. She showed how it was important to be yourself, a real person doing a job - that people care when you are being genuine."

Bursten pointed out that organic inspectors are such a small minority, 'the nichiest of the nichiest', invisibly behind the scenes. Through this nomination she not only wanted to honor her mentor but to also give recognition to organic inspectors and the profession. It seems her mentor agrees.

"This award is an extraordinary honor, and I feel all of the inspectors in my global community share it with me," says Scoles in a July 16, 2018 OTA Press Release announcing the leadership awards.

"Inspectors are the invisible but critical link between the operation and the consumer who wants their products. We strive to make sure that when the label says organic, it really means organic. Without inspectors, none of us would be here."



### Postscript:

*IOIA Forum Nov 22, 2012*

*Dear Colleagues,*

*For the immeasurably awesome opportunity organic inspecting continues to be, I send thanks to IOIA.*

*For all the disregard, disrespect, disparagement and disdain we are offered up in the course of our profession, I give thanks for what is still an honor to do and be part of. To all of you, who labor away at this job... thank you.*

*This message of gratitude brought to you by, Patti*

## Award, from page 1

food, textiles, beauty care products; whether it is Europe or Asia or the USA--the chances are that each item was inspected, certified and/or produced by someone who attended an IOIA training, or was trained by someone who attended an IOIA training. The reach of Margaret's leadership has touched all sectors and corners of organic production around the world."

The primary nomination and 67 additional letters of endorsement give testimony to how Scoles has affected their lives, both professionally and personally.

"This award is an extraordinary honor, and I feel all of the inspectors in my global community share it with me," says Scoles. She adds, "Inspectors are the invisible but critical link between the operation and the consumer who wants their products. We strive to make sure that when the label says organic, it really means **organic**. Without inspectors, none of us would be here. IOIA exists to bring connectivity to the inspector community all over the world and to bring the collective voice of inspectors to the table. A big part of our mission is training, but that's not all we do. I believe my work is to continue to push on for more rigorous inspections by well-trained and qualified inspectors."

Letters came from throughout the U.S. including a letter from Senator Jon Tester of Montana, as well as from such places as Australia, Germany, Guatemala, Nepal, and South Korea.

The Organic Trade Association's 2018 Leadership Awards Celebration will take place Wednesday, September 12, at the Columbus Center in Baltimore, MD.

## Notes from the ED

by Margaret Scoles

**On “Fire in the Belly”** – Do you know there is a website posting entitled “Every State’s Favorite Job Listing Buzzword”? I found it inadvertently when I searched for the original meaning and usage of the term “Fire in the Belly”, which turned out to be the favorite corporate cliché in Kansas. The list, hosted on the website [www.finance.yahoo.com](http://www.finance.yahoo.com) told me that “herd cats” is popular in New York, “revolutioneering” is better in Oregon, and Washington DC still likes “shift the paradigm”. What started this odd search? The phrase had appeared in notes from another Executive Director – Liz Moore, who hails from my part of the country, eastern Montana. She has headed up the Montana Non-profit Association, of which IOIA is a member, for the past 7 years. Her notes particularly resonated with me. She says,

*“...every once in a while, I ask myself if I’m still in. Do I still have fire in the belly for the work? As it turns out, I do, and I feel exceptionally fortunate for that. But the work is challenging and I admit – some days I’m not really up for it.”*

That resonated with me. She went on to say,

*“...maybe there is the occasional person who accepts a leadership position and never looks back. But for the rest of us mere mortals, occupying a leadership role isn’t a decision made just once. It’s a decision made many times over”.*

This connected viscerally with me. I commented to thank her for these words. They could have been mine. But she said it so well. I’ve done a bit of soul-searching since I was astonished by a call from Laura Batcha of OTA to tell me that I would receive

### the OTA Leadership Award for Growing the Organic Industry.

Oddly enough, the same day in June that I learned that I’d been nominated for the award was a day that I doubted whether I could make that decision for the next day. So, am I still in? Fortunately, like Liz I can also say “yes”. But I’m thinking now about you, not me - the inspectors who have kept up grueling schedules while grappling with unfriendly reporting forms and web platforms. Thousands of inspections under your belts. Inspecting is really, really hard work. It is hard to keep that “fire in the belly”, but it is essential. **It is what drives us as inspectors to dig deep, look hard, and verify everything.** It is one of the critical ingredients in organic integrity. BTW: “Fire in the belly” first appeared in print in 1882, in an essay by Robert Louis Stevenson, in which he compared historians Thomas Carlyle and Thomas Babington Macaulay.

**On Expo East** – IOIA will not have a booth this year. New Hope has such demand for space that they discontinued nonprofit booths. But fortunately, they will give us two Expo badges. Margaret Weigelt and Margaret Scoles will represent you there. Most of the BOD members will attend the OTA Awards Dinner; meet with **Jenny Tucker**, NOP Deputy Administrator on the topic of inspector qualifications and training; and work to breathe life to the newly envisioned IOIA inspector credentialing program. Thanks to OTA, we will have a free meeting room and passes to educational sessions for all BOD members. We will also have a table at the [Organic Community Resource Fair](#) on Friday, September 14, before and after the keynote. Our neighbors at



An interview with the ED was featured as the July Podcast of The Intellectual Agrarian. <https://intellectualagrarian.com/36-scoles/>. The Intellection Agrarian is managed by Terrance Layhew, IOIA Inspector member.

the fair will be OTA, CCOF, OCIA, the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF), Black Urban Growers (BUGS), and Green America - Center for Sustainability Solutions. Plan to stop by if you are there.

IOIA was founded in Baltimore in 1991, culminating a year of work on the Steering Committee. I was a member of that committee, along with Jim Riddle, Monique Scholz, John Moore, Andy Rutherford, and Philip Hale. Nineteen inspectors plunked down \$50 each to start IOIA. Who on that list is still on the IOIA Inspector member list? Jim Riddle, Monique Scholz, Al Johnson, Harriet Behar, and me. That’s 25% - 27 years later. I call that “fire in the belly”.

It is good to see inspectors recognized and in the limelight, and it’s very rare. **Please join me and bask in that light for a moment.**

## SECTOR NEWS

### Court Rejects USDA's Claim that Organic Animal Standards Withdrawal Cannot be Challenged

On August 21, the federal court for the Northern District of California [issued a decision](#) concluding that Center for Food Safety and National Organic Coalition's legal [challenge](#) to the USDA's withdrawal of organic animal welfare provisions could proceed. The Court's decision rejected arguments from USDA that the non-profits did not have legal standing to challenge the withdrawal decision. The Court held that the withdrawal of the rule that set organic animal welfare standards injures the organizations' members because it "undermines the organic label" for consumers.

<https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/press-releases/5405/victory-court-rejects-trump-administrations-claim-that-organic-animal-standards-withdrawal-cannot-be-challenged>

*National Organic Coalition, August 2018*

### Organic Enforcement: Import Oversight Policies and Updates

As part of the [Enforcement Action Plan](#), and building on recommendations from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) National Organic Program (NOP) has released additional policy memos for importers and certifying agents, along with a report on the continued work to increase collaboration between federal partners at U.S. ports of entry. [Policy Memo 18-1](#): Impact of Fumigation and Irradiation Requirements on Organic Imports

[Policy Memo 18-2](#): Impact of Prohibited Grain Seed Regulations on Organic Imports

[Organic Import Oversight Report](#):

Collaboration Opportunities and Technology Needs Assessment. NOP also recently published a [Joint Letter](#) clarifying requirements for Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) licensees who import commodities that fumigated agricultural products may not be labeled or sold as organic in the United States.

*USDA Organic Insider*

[If you're not subscribed to the Organic Insider from USDA, you should be!](#)

### Joanna Miranda now at OTA

The Organic Trade Association has announced that Johanna Miranda has joined the organization's Regulatory Team as its new Farm Policy Director. She began her new post on August 6.

An expert in organic regulations, Miranda has served as Technical Director for the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) since 2015. Deeply interested in organic food production and sustainable food systems, she has extensive experience in policy development, project management, and technical writing. As Technical Director at OMRI, she has overseen OMRI Standards Manuals for review of materials to USDA's National Organic Program regulations and Canadian Organic Regime standards, and has served as OMRI's primary point of contact for governmental and regulatory bodies, among other duties. Previous to this position, she was Policy Director for Pennsylvania Certified Organic from 2012 to 2015. She also served as a Presenter for IOIA/OMRI webinars.

Miranda will succeed Nate Lewis, who will be focusing more time on his certified organic farm in Washington State after serving four years on OTA staff.

### NOP plans for proposed rule to strengthen enforcement

In a 'town hall' style webinar on July 17, the National Organic Program sought to engage organic stakeholders as the Strengthening Organic Enforcement rulemaking process begins. The proposed rule is expected in spring 2019.

Nearly 400 people participated in the live event. There will also be a formal public comment process once the proposed rule is developed and published.

Proposed Rule Topic areas during the webinar included:

- Federated Organic Certificates
- Satellite Offices
- Inspectors: Qualifications, Training and Field Evaluations
- Certification of Grower Groups
- Operations excluded from organic certification
- Increased reporting to the organic INTEGRITY database
- Import Certificates
- Update regulatory requirements for equivalency arrangements
- Unannounced Inspections
- Updates to noncompliance and appeals process

For each topic area, USDA posed a few questions, and participants provided feedback via the webinar chat function.

1. What challenges would Certifiers face if required to use a federated organic certificate? Is there an alternative you would suggest?

## SECTOR NEWS

2. What should NOP consider with respect to accrediting satellite offices?
3. What should the minimum qualifications and training requirements be for organic inspectors?
4. What specific practices might NOP consider for Grower Groups that are not already addressed by the 2002 and 2008 NOSB recommendations?
5. Which types of excluded operations should be required to be certified and why?
6. Should any of the current exclusions in the USDA organic regulations remain in place?
7. How might the rule address full supply chain traceability from farm to table?
8. How can the rule address the integrity of organic products imported to the United States?
9. What should NOP consider about existing or future trade arrangements?
10. What should NOP consider about the costs of unannounced inspections?
11. Which parts of the noncompliance and appeal process might NOP need to further clarify?

The entire webinar, including participant comments, is [available online](#), and further communication with USDA can be sent to: [NOP.guidance@ams.usda.gov](mailto:NOP.guidance@ams.usda.gov).

### Farm Bill Video

A really great resource that explains the Farm Bill in 7 minutes!

[https://mailchi.mp/thefern/wecanexplainthefarmbillin7minutes\\_6\\_15\\_2018-583065?e=6c07e64429](https://mailchi.mp/thefern/wecanexplainthefarmbillin7minutes_6_15_2018-583065?e=6c07e64429)

### USDA Names Jennifer Tucker Deputy Administrator for the National Organic Program



Jennifer Tucker

USDA has announced the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Tucker as Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) National Organic Program (NOP), part of the Marketing and Regulatory Programs mission area.

"Dr. Tucker's work to strengthen enforcement and improve customer service has already earned her the respect and trust of the program's many diverse stakeholders," said AMS Administrator Bruce Summers. "Under her leadership as Deputy Administrator, I am confident that this trusted program will continue to meet the evolving needs of farmers, businesses and American consumers in this rapidly growing agricultural sector."

Dr. Tucker has served as Associate Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program since 2011. Before joining USDA, she served as a group facilitator and organization development consultant, working primarily with scientific and technical government and non-profit organizations. She earned a B.A. in Environmental Science from Wesleyan University, an M.S. in Manage-

ment from Purdue University, and a Ph.D. in Science and Technology Studies from Virginia Tech.

### OTA Leadership Awards

In addition to the Growing Organic Industry Award that was bestowed on our Executive Director Margaret Scoles, we would like to acknowledge the other award winners for 2018. The Rising Star Award for 2018 goes to Javier Zamora of California, an organic farmer and community advocate and mentor; and the Organic Farmers of the Year Award, given to Stephanie and Blake Alexandre, also of California. All will be recognized at the OTA Awards dinner on September 12 in Baltimore.

### Podcast Interview with Scoles

IOIA member **Terrance Layhew** posted a recent interview with IOIA Executive Director Margaret Scoles on his site, **The Intellectual Agrarian**. You can listen to it here: <https://intellectualagrarian.com/36-scoles/>



Terrance (who goes by "T") has some very interesting and thought provoking information on his site - after

listening to this interview, take a moment to check out the rest of the site! Worth your time.

## Organic News from Canada - IOIA comments to the Canada Food Inspection Agency on the Enhancing Openness and Transparency Policy - Excerpt from IOIA's letter – August 2, 2018

To increase transparency and ensure a level playing field and more consistent and transparent application of the Canadian organic regulations by certification bodies and operations, we urge CFIA to consider the following actions:

### Inspector training and qualifications

There is inconsistency in the skill level and capabilities of inspectors and reviewers who are currently assessing compliance to the COR.

We strongly recommend:

- minimum qualifications for inspectors and reviewers
- standardized curriculum for each scope of certification
- uniform baseline of education and training that includes testing, field training and monitoring of reports
- minimum requirements for hours of continuing education
- requirements for field evaluation of inspectors
- professional credentialing of inspectors and trainers

Inspector qualifications have been identified by the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) as a key focus. Inspector credentialing is also IOIA's current priority. Much work has already been done, and CFIA could draw from that work. In 2011, IOIA developed guidelines for inspector and reviewer qualifications and training content under contract to the NOP, including Concepts of Operations for training and licensing. In 2017, The Accredited Certifiers Association, which includes certifiers from Canada, USA, and other countries, drew from this work to create the [ACA Guidance on Inspector Qualifications](#). A consistent national program is needed. Canada is in a position to be a leader in this area.

### Publicly-available database of organic products / operators

The USDA NOP created a public Organic *INTEGRITY* Database several years ago. It has been a tremendous benefit to the industry. Consumers, certifiers, and inspectors can quickly verify the certification status of any operation and the list of products for which they are certified. This is a significant improvement over the previous reliance on hard copy certificates. Especially in light of recent cases of deliberate organic fraud, the availability of this type of real-time, on-line information would increase transparency and confidence in the organic label.

### Certifier Communication

Inspectors see inconsistent application of the regulations and standards among certifiers, but due to confidentiality concerns, they are powerless to elicit change. Certification bodies in Canada have some regular communication with CFIA, but they do not have a formal structure that requires them to share information for the benefit of the sector. We strongly support the creation of a system whereby more frequent and formal meetings take place to enable certification bodies to share information about organic operators. In the US, the NOP sponsors annual trainings for certifiers. This practice has strengthened the non-governmental organic community. It helped foster the development of the Accredited Certifiers Association, which in turn proactively created numerous consensus-based Best Practices. Almost all NOP accredited certifiers participate in these NOP trainings.

### Enforcement

- **Deterring fraud:** Cross checks are extremely valuable but used infrequently. These could include checks under one certifier umbrella across operations or those between operators certified by more than one operation. CFIA could play a role in encouraging this practice.
- **Penalizing fraudulent operators:** We are deeply concerned that organic operators in Canada can be suspended by one certifier and then apply and become certified soon thereafter by another accredited certifier. In the US any operator who has been revoked by one accredited certifier is not allowed to be certified or to hold a management role in any certified entity -- for at least five years. Noncompliances follow operators, even if they attempt to escape them by changing certifiers.
- **Clarity around requirements for different activities:** The requirements for certification (or attestation) for

continued on next page

## Canada Organic News

### COG publishes new GUIDE TO THE CANADIAN ORGANIC STANDARDS

The standards are the base of the flourishing Canadian organic industry, but they can be challenging to read and apply. To help readers and operators understand the standards and the reasoning behind them, the Canadian Organic Growers has published the GUIDE TO THE CANADIAN ORGANIC STANDARDS in English and French.

The GUIDE explains in a plain language what the standards means, provides background information, and gives examples that are relevant to producers and operators applying them.

As the GUIDE complements the Canadian Organic Standards, readers should refer first to the Standards and Permitted Substances Lists before they use it. It also reflects the current interpretation of the standards by the Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC), which is managed by the Organic Federation of Canada and funded by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

The OFC welcomes the publication of the COG's Guide: reading the guide will surely help stakeholders get ready for the review of the Canadian Organic Standards!

To access the Guide: <https://www.cog.ca/home/resources/standard-guide/>

*From Info-bio July 17 2018 - The Organic Federation of Agriculture Newsletter*

### New!! Organic production systems - Aquaculture

General principles, management standards and permitted substances lists – Supersedes CAN/CGSB-32.312-2012

[http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2018/ongc-cgsb/P29-32-312-2018-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/ongc-cgsb/P29-32-312-2018-eng.pdf)

### Organic Connections Conference & Trade Show

*Growing Organics to Meet the Demand*

November 1-3, 2018

PrairieLand Park - Saskatoon, SK

Largest Organic Conference in Western Canada

<http://www.organicconnections.ca/>



## Continued from previous page

distributors / traders / brandholders – or any other individuals / companies that participate in the trade of organic products without labelling or changing the nature of the products themselves should be clarified. Everyone must be clear as to what is required to ensure the organic integrity of all goods traded throughout the supply chain.

IOIA would be pleased to help as a resource to CFIA on the topic of qualifications, training, and certification of inspectors and reviewers.

*Special thanks to the Committee who worked on the comments – Kelly Monaghan, Chuck Mitchell, Janine Gibson, Monique Scholz, and Margaret Weigelt!*

## 2019 AGM in MEXICO

IOIA is pleased to announce that we have confirmed a venue for our 2019 Annual Meeting. We will be meeting at **Isla Natura Beach Huatulco** in Huatulco, Oaxaca, Mexico ([www.islanaturabeachhuatulco.com](http://www.islanaturabeachhuatulco.com)). Their website is conveniently dual English/Spanish language.

Airport to fly into is Huatulco (HUX). This location is about 5 hours' drive from Oaxaca City, which might be helpful if you plan an extended stay. hope you plan to join in this extraordinary event. The hotel has two private beaches and two pools (one with children and one without). If you are like many inspectors, expecting to be prisoner to frozen ground and ice at that time of year, please start planning your trip NOW! Simultaneous translation services will be provided.

Our current planning committee includes members from Latin America, Canada, and the US. If you are interested in helping to choose the keynote speaker, plan the advanced training topics, or help to organize field trips, please contact the IOIA office.

And of course, volunteers to help during the events are always welcomed!

### Dates and events:

**Field trips - Feb 27**

**Annual Meeting - March 2**

**Advanced Training Feb 28 - Mar 1**

**Field trips - March 3**



The 2019 AGM Organizing Committee met recently and had a rousing brainstorming session about potential training topics, field trips, and keynote speakers. One proposed topic was Grower Group inspection.

We are not sure if that should be a special topic that could be added at the beginning or end of the training, or if it a topic of general interest that should be incorporated into the advanced training. We decided to throw that question out to the Forum. What do you think? Would it be a topic of interest to you for inclusion in the advanced training? Would you prefer that it be provided as an option earlier before the advanced training or afterwards? Or not at all? Please help us, give us your thoughts!?

More details will be posted on [our website](#) as they become available.

## Bylaws Byproduct

During the bylaws review process, we realized that our bylaws require that all BoD meetings be open to inspector members. (see 3.6). Since we met for so many years via conference calls, it wasn't practical to do this. But now that we are all on the internet, there is no added cost to including members.

**Starting with the October board meeting**, there will be an announcement on our site's home page that will direct members to a Board Agenda matrix/list - a web-link to the upcoming meeting will be provided in the Agenda.

Of course, we will have directions listed so that those of you who want to join in will be able to do so!

All BOD meetings are open to members, via web-link connection provided in the agenda. Members will remain in listen-only mode unless they are listed specifically on the agenda. Take notes! Your input will be welcomed under separate email.

## IOIA/UDAF Crop and Processing Courses - Ogden, Utah - June 2018

IOIA and the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) cosponsored Crop Inspection training in Ogden, Utah, on June 4-8 followed by the Processing Inspection Training on June 11-15. Each course had 18 participants. Five were UDAF employees in for a training marathon with two solid weeks of training. Although crop inspections were challenged by unseasonably high temperatures, the city was filled with blooming roses against a stunning background of mountains. Some participants noted their appreciation for being walking distance from mountain trails for hiking and walking.

Garry Lean, Ontario, CANADA, served as Lead Trainer for both courses. He was assisted by Nathaniel Powell-Palm of Montana, plus Margaret Scoles as group leader for the third field trip. Garry was assisted during the Processing course by Corinne Kolm of Nebraska, plus Pam Sullivan of New Hampshire as group leader for the third field trip.

Central Milling hosted all three processing field trips – each at a different site.



**IOIA/UDAF Crop Course participants**



**Deep in audit trail – and the host is still smiling – the group was doing great! The Utah State University student farm hosted this crop inspection training field trip.**



**IOIA/UDAF Processing Course participants**

UDAF was cosponsor extraordinaire – arranging all field trip logistics including providing transport and drivers for all groups. UDAF has cosponsored several training with IOIA, dating back to 2001, but all previous trainings were delivered in-house. This was the first open-enrollment course.

## IOIA training in Quito, Ecuador - 2018

by Juan Carlos Benitez

From July 30<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup> IOIA, QCS and the University San Francisco de Quito held a Basic Crop Inspection training in Quito, Ecuador. This is the first time that QCS Ecuador and the University San Francisco de Quito have organized this type of event with IOIA support. The training was open to any participants, and ended up with 20 students attending the course.

The event had different types of assistants, most of them already part of the organic industry, which made the training richer with the exchange of experiences and deep debates and discussions from the questions received. Students from the mountain ranges and coastal areas of Ecuador participated, and there were also representatives of AGROCALIDAD, the Ecuadorian authority for organic production, along with banana farmers, palm oil farmers, golden berries, tomato producers, cocoa producers, growers groups, and QCS inspectors.



**Group picture and field trip to the university organic research farm. Universidad San Francisco de Quito hosted the field trips and the training; co-sponsor was QCS Ecuador.**

This training also included an AGROCALIDAD presentation of the Ecuadorian system of organic production. Diana Granada made a 2 hour presentation of the role of AGROCALIDAD in the organic production in Ecuador and explained all the activities that AGROCALIDAD is currently engaged in, as well as improvements that will be made to the Ecuadorian Organic System Control.

The University San Francisco de Quito has also 'donated' their experimental farm for the inspection practice, a farm that has diversity of crops, even though the inspection was concentrated on the production of cherry tomato. There were 3 groups on 3 different stations, studying the process that starts at nurseries through the final sales of the product.



Many of the participants reported that the training exceeded all their expectations. This is great news, considering most of them have been working on organic projects for more than 10 years, and having the opportunity to clear many of their doubts made the training much richer. Most of the participants really want to continue participating in any other organic training that has IOIA support, and especially if Luis Brenes is the trainer! Most of the participants really want to go deeper on organic processing or inputs usage on organic operators.

Thank you again, Luis, for teaching and clearing all of our doubts. I participated as supporting trainer but it's impressive how much you can learn just listening to Luis giving a training that you might possibly have heard 3 or 4 times before. We definitely are looking forward to see you in Ecuador next year for another training!



**The exit interview is never easy if the farm dog is actively participating....**

## Luis Brenes Leads IOIA Community Grower Group Webinar

by Margaret Scoles

Just 6 participants registered for the 300-level Webinar, Grower Group Inspection and Certification, on July 10 & 13. Half of the participants came from the US and half from Canada. IOIA proceeded although enrollment was low, because we believe in the importance of making this resource available. It is essential continuing education for anyone planning to inspect grower groups or review the files. It is also useful as part of the professional development to meet accreditation requirements that ask for inspector and certifier's qualifications if inspecting and reviewing Grower Group files.

The webinar includes pre-course reading and self-study, two webinar sessions with experienced IOIA Trainer and inspector Luis Brenes of Costa Rica, and a post-exam. Brenes designed the course. The first webinar session covers the history and background of Grower Group certification and describes in detail the current requirements based on the NOSB 2002 and 2008 recommendations. The second webinar session provides training on how to prepare, conduct and report an organic inspection of a Grower Group. Brenes has many years of experience in consultation and inspection of grower groups. With over 20 years of experience as an organic inspector, he has also audited farms and food processing facilities throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia. Luis is an agronomist with post-graduate studies in tropical Crop Protection who served as an organic extension and on-farm research agent.



Luis Brenes and a friend, on location in Bocas del Toro, Panama, at the site of a cacao plantation. Photo courtesy of Luis Brenes

### What did the participants have to say about the course?

*I am a US crop inspector. After 5 years working in the U.S. I have an interest and a goal to inspect grower groups in Latin and South America. This is a great course. Luis is informative and also very interesting to listen to. I would recommend it to other inspectors even if they weren't planning to do grower group certification- just to know more about how the system works. Luis provided so many resources. Anyone could choose to build a resource notebook to keep after the class (I did) with the amount of material provided.* – **Rachael Savage, Kansas**



Guatemalan women drying organic onions.

Photo courtesy of Luis Brenes

*I really enjoyed this course! My first grower group came across my desk recently. As their initial file reviewer, I was lost! I needed help. The course was very applicable. Just understanding how to navigate the mounds of paperwork with a file like this made the course worthwhile. For example, I did not know that one main OSP oversaw the whole grower group - game changer. I would recommend this course. Luis's style and sense of humor helped transform what would be a rather dry, uninspiring course into one where I could visualize the vast banana forests and coffee farms! He actually made me put 'inspect a coffee grower group' on my bucket list!* - **Shelley Schepp, Manitoba, Canada**

*I took this webinar because I perform internal audits for certifiers that certify grower groups, and I consult for grower groups. It was very applicable in understanding the requirements. It can be confusing navigating the requirements on your own and Luis did an amazing job making it simple! I would recommend this course to inspectors and certification staff, because it provides an in depth understanding that would extremely helpful for those who work with grower groups. It fulfills the requirements for continued education and it was very interesting.* – **Karen Troxell, California**

## NEW Webinars for 2018

### Inspecting Bee Keeping Operations

May 11 was the launch of the first 250 Level – “Inspecting Bee Keeping Operations” webinar. This webinar was a member-initiated webinar, similar to Maple Syrup Inspection and developed by the same trainer. The course includes a pre-course assignment, 3 hour webinar session and a post webinar test. The session began by following a year in the life of the domesticated hive and included an overview of the beekeepers’ seasons in the northern hemisphere. This was followed by a focus on the primary organic control points and what inspectors look for when inspecting beekeeping operations.

The webinar used the Canadian organic honey production standards as a baseline, as there are no national apiculture standards in the US. The presenter was experienced organic inspector **Monique Scholz** of Québec. Monique has been an inspector for over 20 years and she has been training inspectors and industry quality control personnel since 1994. Six participants completed the course. This course is likely to be offered every two years, or more often depending on demand.



**Monique Scholz**

### IOIA/OMRI NOP Input Materials

Johanna Mirenda, now past-Technical Director at the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), presented the re-launch of the IOIA/OMRI Input Materials webinar series with NOP Crop Input Materials on May 17. Sixteen participants completed the course.

The webinars are intermediate 200 level courses. These webinars cover how OMRI reviews input materials and what inspectors should look for during inspections. The courses are geared for persons with an understanding of the related standards and scope for the course and of inspection or certification. Course participants preferably will have completed an IOIA Basic Inspection course. Previous IOIA/OMRI livestock, crop and processing input webinars have been evaluated very highly by inspectors, reviewers, and certification agency staff.



**Tina Jensen Augustine**

Upcoming IOIA/OMRI Input Materials webinars are:

- NOP Processing Input Materials – Oct. 18
- COR Processing Input Materials – Nov. 6

Joanna has moved on from OMRI to take a new position at OTA (see story in Sector News, page 6). Her succedent, **Tina Jensen Augustine**, was the presenter for NOP Livestock Input Materials on August 7, with 10 participants. Tina is OMRI’s Senior Bilingual Technical Coordinator. She started working with OMRI in the Review Program in 2006, and moved to the Technical Department in 2011, where she contributes her technical expertise to support OMRI’s research and education programs, including the development of technical reports for the NOP. Tina holds an B.S. in Biology and an M.S. in Soil Science, both from the University of Washington. She has International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) basic farm and traceability trainings and performs a limited number of inspections for OMRI. She works remotely from Salt Lake City, UT, where she enjoys hiking and raising her two children.

### And while we have your attention....

We would like to remind you that we have another NEW endeavor to offer - **Self-Directed training for American Grassfed Association standards**, with trainer Harriet Behar. More information about this ON-DEMAND course is on page 2 of this issue, and also on our [website](#).

## 2019 Rutherford Scholarship Application Deadline is October 1

IOIA is accepting applications for the annual **Andrew Rutherford Scholarship Award**, which provides full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored organic inspector training course during the following year. Both prospective and experienced inspectors are eligible to apply for the Rutherford Scholarship. It is awarded to an individual on the basis of need and potential as judged by the IOIA Scholarship Committee. Applicants can choose to attend any IOIA-sponsored training. The Scholarship pays for tuition, room and board but does not cover transportation or other expenses.

The late Andrew Rutherford was a farmer, organic inspector, and organic agriculture researcher from southern Saskatchewan. He served on IOIA's initial steering committee and then several years as a Founding Board Member.

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

**Debra Kiliru** of North Carolina USA was the recipient of the 2018 Rutherford Scholarship. She attended IOIA's 2018 AGM in Charleston, South Carolina, and the basic crop training held in Pennsylvania in April 2018. She currently works in the public schools in western North Carolina, learning with children outdoors and supporting teachers to connect their curriculum to the natural world. She plans on becoming a crop and processing inspector.



We received a nice note from Debra after the Pennsylvania training:

*I wanted to let you know that I just completed the Crop Training course in PA this week. It was a wonderful experience. I appreciate how thorough the content was and how focused IOIA is around their mission. I enjoyed meeting other participants and learning together. While it was time intensive, I feel I left with a much stronger commitment to this work and excitement to continue to advance organic integrity domestically and internationally. I will work on lining up some mentor inspections over the next couple months. I also look forward to completing the Processing and Livestock training when I can make that happen financially. Thank you for selecting me as the 2018 Rutherford Scholar. I am honored to be a part of this organization!*



**Lucia Toledo** of Cochabamba, Bolivia, was the recipient of the 2018 OCIS Scholarship. She attended the basic processing training held in Utah in May 2018. Lucia currently works at an organic certification agency called IMOCert Latin America as an office assistant and inspector. She has participated in inspections to certify herbs, coffee, cocoa and quinoa. She is heading to Germany soon to complete a masters' degree, but she took a moment to send IOIA this kind message:

*I wanted to write you both since I came back from USA. I had a wonderful experience in Ogden. Thank you very much for the opportunity. I did my best in the course. The way IOIA put together all the material, the teachers and their practical way of teaching is fabulous. I am very glad I went. And hope more people like me continue having the same opportunity. Sincerely, Lucia Toledo*

**The Deadline for returning Scholarship applications is October 1. Scholarship recipients are notified by December 15.** Applications and supporting forms are available [on our website](#).

## IOIA BOD Finalizes new Comment Policy

IOIA's role as the voice of organic inspectors is one of the primary benefits of membership. A new BOD policy was born out of the need for that voice to be responsive to a dynamic organic sector, sometimes on controversial and divisive topics, with response deadlines that often don't fit BOD meeting schedules. This policy was developed over the past year, presented it to the membership at the AGM in Charleston, and finalized only after robust "fish bowl" discussions there. The BOD adopted the final version during their June 4 BOD meeting.

IOIA's informal policy has always been to restrict our "activism" to items and issues that directly affect organic inspectors or that are clearly a threat to organic integrity. Some members have voiced at recent annual meetings their desires to see IOIA be a more visible and active voice. This policy provides steps to determine whether IOIA will submit comments on local, state, national or international issues in the organic industry that would impact (direct, indirect or cumulative) inspectors and/or the inspection process; or issues outside of the organic industry which impact independent contractors. IOIA is frequently called up on vote on, give input on, and comment on regulatory and policy changes with less than 30 days to prepare.



**Heather Donald, Director, from Pennsylvania (shown) and Margaret Anne Weigelt, Chair, drafted the policy and carried it to completion.**

A few examples of the types of comments IOIA needed to develop recently, all on short notice:

1. Comment on NOSB Recommendations on Import Oversight and Inspector Qualifications.
2. Review and propose edits for the IFOAM North America Bylaws.
3. Response to a National Organic Coalition urging action on the US Farm Bill, which is decided every 5 years.
4. Letter to the Canada Food Inspection Agency on a proposed Enhancing Openness and Transparency Policy.

Issues for comment may be brought up by IOIA staff, BOD, or members. Requests will be taken by the Comment Policy Committee (CPC). The CPC will discuss the impact of the issue on inspectors, using a risk-based approach if it is an indirect impact, and whether commenting on the issue will serve the IOIA mission:

- Does it address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors?
- Will it promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process?

Commenting should also meet IOIA Goals and Endorsement Policy, as outlined in IOIA Policy Manual. If the CPC determines commenting will serve the IOIA mission, the Inspector Membership may be surveyed in the event of a potentially contentious issue to collect their opinion on whether or not the IOIA should comment, and if so, what position they should take. What happens next? A majority of the responding membership must be in favor of IOIA making a comment before IOIA will move forward with the comment.

### **Survey Response Parameters:**

- Must have at least 50 responses.
- Majority is defined as at least 80% of respondents.

If there is a short turnaround time, the survey will still be sent, and if the member response meets the parameters within shorter timeline, the comment procedure will continue as dictated by the majority response. If the parameters are not met, a comment will not be made.

### **Survey responses will be analyzed by the Policy Committee:**

Whether response percentages meet the parameters

Comments regarding how IOIA should respond

The CPC Committee Chair will determine who will write the comment and set a deadline for the comment to be reviewed prior to submission. The BOD and ED will review the comment. Once edits are made, the ED or the BOD Chair will sign the comment, unless extenuating circumstances lead the BOD to select a different signer.

Are you an experienced inspector who would be interested in serving on the Comment Policy Committee?

**We need you!** Please contact Margaret Scoles at [mscoles@rangeweb.net](mailto:mscoles@rangeweb.net)

## Board of Directors Minutes Highlights

(full minutes available to inspector members on the IOIA website)

### June 4, 2018 (Phone Conference)

**Board Members Present:** Margaret Anne Weigelt (MW), Chair; Heather Donald; Matthew Miller; Charles Mitchell; Lois Christie; Ryan Sitler; Philippe Descamps (arrived with time difference at 5:15 pm PDT). Others present: Margaret Scoles (MS), ED

**Agenda Item #4 - BOD Goals Spreadsheet (Check in and Tutorial):** Heather gave a tutorial on how to use the IOIA BOD Goals spreadsheet.

**Agenda Item #5 - Membership Committee Meeting & Further Discussion of Non-member survey (Chuck and MS presentations):** Convened the Membership Committee meeting last week: Eric Feutz, Chair; Kelly Monaghan; Bob Howe; Wendy Paulsen (not on call).

- Margaret reviewed non-member survey. No Canadian Inspectors were included in the survey; Chuck will contact Ecocert Canada and Pro-Cert to see if they will either (1) share their lists; or (2) send the survey to their inspector lists.
- Discussed why IOIA membership is not considered valuable in Canada and Mexico.
- Objective: To grow the membership committee; Need infusion of new committee members. Need to fill one vacancy.
- Survey response results were 62.86%.
- Existing promotional flyer can be used for recruiting. We reviewed the existing flyer.
- Ryan: Add services that give access via the new website; Value added elements that can be added at a low cost; discussion:
  - MS: Add templates and forms that current inspectors use and increase library of resources. Building capacity and staff would help. A free webinar for inspector members once per year: The landscape of organic (materials, guidance documents, NOB updates, etc.).
  - MW: Recommended podcasts; add information from newsletter.
- MW recommended that BOD read survey of non-member survey results.

**Agenda Item #6 - IOIA Comment Policy - Final Draft Revision/Approval:** Heather discussed document revisions made by committee of members on 5/29/18 (Margaret Anne, Heather and Lois Christie). Motion: Ryan. Second: Heather Motion passes unanimously; IOIA Comment Policy accepted as revised 5/29/18 and final version can be added to policy manual.

**Agenda Item #7 - Revised Bylaws - legal review - for final approval:** MS: Matt is Board Liaison and Al is Committee Chair. The legal review raised some questions as to whether some of our other bylaws are compliant with Minnesota laws. Further action on this item was postponed until next meeting. The Bylaws Committee will be convened before then and asked for a recommendation to the BOD.

**Agenda Item #8 - Inspector Qualifications & Accreditation:** Committee Needs to meet soon; Members: Ryan, Philippe, Chuck. Margaret Anne: Needs assessment: (*Designing Certification and Accreditation Programs* cited \$50,000 to \$100,00). MS will talk to Jenny Tucker. The NOP is expected to propose rule-making. BOD Action Point: Review *Designing Certification and Accreditation Program*.

### Agenda Item #9 - AGM Planning:

- AGM committee
- Livestock Training in Mexico: If it is to be done, it needs to be done as a co-sponsored training. MS to discuss with Homero. English with Spanish translation - Adds substantial cost. Simultaneous translation recommended by Philippe.
- Venue - Homero Blas's Recommendation: Hotel Castillo Huatulco Hotel & Beach Club.
- Suggested Advanced Training Topics: Import Fraud
- Keynote Speakers - Ask for Recommendations from Latin American Committee members.

Continued on page 19

## On the Subject of Lobbying as a Non-profit

by Margaret Scoles

Does IOIA have lobbying activities? So far, we've always answered "no" to that question on our annual IRS tax return. However, this year, we are increasing our legislative activity.

What does lobbying mean? If we approach any representatives or senators and ask them to support any legislative bill, we are lobbying. We are using IOIA's resources to "influence legislation". **It isn't a problem for nonprofits to lobby**, but we have to document our activities and it can't be a substantial part of expenses. IOIA just needs to file a Form 5768 with the IRS this year to take a **501(h) election**. Then we will annually report the amount of expenditures for lobbying on our IRS 990. The election is in effect until revoked, so it only needs to be filed once.

IOIA keeps track of staff time spent lobbying. For example, this year, IOIA wrote Montana Senator Steve Daines (member of the Senate Agriculture Committee) and Montana Senator Jon Tester (a certified organic farmer), and asked them to support organic in the 2018 Farm Bill. We were very pleased with their bipartisan support. The work of the National Organic Coalition was especially helpful in understanding how to approach the senators. After the vote was taken, IOIA took time to thank both senators for their support, too. It is too soon to know the final outcome, but so far, increased funding for NOP, certification cost-share, and increased funding for organic research and extension are all still intact in the draft Farm Bill.



Photo courtesy of OTA

From the IRS Tax Code --  
*Section 501(c)(3) states that an organization exempt under that section will lose its tax-exempt status and its qualification to receive deductible charitable contributions if a substantial part of its activities are carried on to influence legislation. Section 501(h), however, permits certain eligible section 501 (c) 3 organizations to elect to make limited expenditures to influence legislation....For any tax year in which an election under section 501(h) is in effect, an electing organization must report the actual and permitted amounts of its lobbying expenditures and grass roots expenditures on its annual return required under section 6033.*

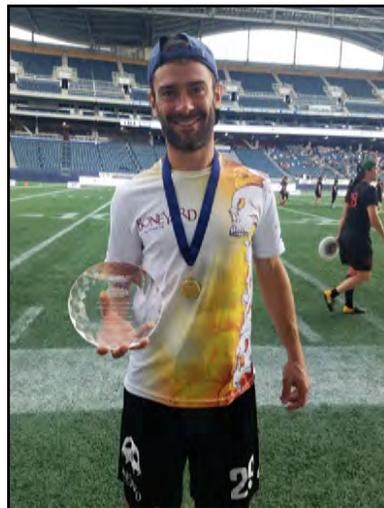
## Meet Your Board Members

### Ryan Sitler

Based in Asheville, NC, I am an active inspector member that averages about 125 organic crop and processing/ handling inspections each year while also working as an auditor for other certification programs focused on sustainability, agriculture, and social welfare.

I'd particularly like to assist the BOD in continued development and improvement of the Inspector Accreditation and Peer Review programs. I see these as very valuable to inspectors, certifiers, and the NOP. In the coming five years I'd love to see the growth of IOIA's presence both domestically and abroad. While focusing on the growth of the membership base and industry connections that we have around the world, I think it is important

for IOIA to stay adaptable to the ongoing changes in our industry. As a BOD member, I envision one of my most important tasks as being the continual evaluation of our programs and systems to ensure that we are providing the highest quality services to our members and other clientele as cost effectively as possible. Achieving this will also require the development of new programs or collaboration with other organizations to help us best meet our goals as an organization.



Ryan Sitler, holding the Crystal Frisbie, at WFDF\*, 2018 World Masters Ultimate Club Championship, Winnipeg, Manitoba, CAN.

His team - Boneyard from Raleigh, NC and the greater Mid-Atlantic and Southeast region - won the championship!

*A shout out to Stuart McMillan for his kindness in having me stay at his house.*

A link to the event page - <https://wmucc2018.gems.pro/>

\*World Flying Disc Federation, aka frisbie

## End Notes

### National Organic Standards Board - Fall 2018 Meeting

When: October 24 - 26, 2018

Where: The InterContinental Saint Paul Riverfront Hotel

Discussion Items: Substances petitioned for addition to or deletion from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, substances due to sunset from the National List in 2020 and other topics impacting the organic industry. All materials related to the meeting will be posted to the [Fall 2018 NOSB Meeting webpage](#) as they become available.

The NOSB invites public comment on agenda topics in-person at the meeting in Saint Paul, or during one of the webinars leading up to the meeting. Oral comment registration will open when the NOSB proposals are posted. Written comments on agenda items are also welcomed.

**Deadlines:** Written comments and requests for a speaking time must be received by **11:59 p.m. October 4, 2018**. Speaker slots are limited and are filled on a first-come basis.

#### Public comment webinars:

**October 16 and 18, 2018.**

Webinar details and links will be posted to the [Fall 2018 NOSB Meeting webpage](#).

### Minutes, from page 17

#### Agenda Item #10 - Anti-fraud Technology:

Discussions with OTA and NOP: When the program is up and running perhaps IOIA could assist in the management of the program. Electronic system for cross-checks and tracking through audit trails. We all need to be at the table: Inspectors, certifiers, farmers, NOP, etc. Keep on agenda and call a meeting soon; recruit Committee Members.

### [GMO Labeling Proposed Rule Fails to Ensure Meaningful Standard](#)

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) supports marketplace transparency regarding whether products have been produced with genetically engineered crops and technologies. However, we have grave concerns about USDA's recently proposed rule on GMO labeling, which we believe fails to ensure a robust, meaningful, and value-neutral labeling standard that will provide confidence to producers and consumers alike.



**Can't be bad with a happy face, right?... USDA proposed bioengineered labels.**

Read the full article [here](#)

### Monsanto ordered to pay \$289m in cancer case

Monsanto suffered a major blow with a jury ruling that the company was liable for a terminally ill man's cancer, awarding him \$289m in damages.

Dwayne Johnson, a 46-year-old former groundskeeper, won a huge victory in the landmark case on August 10, with the jury determining that Monsanto's Roundup weed-killer caused his cancer and that the corporation failed to warn him of the health hazards from exposure. The jury further found that Monsanto "acted with malice or oppression".

Johnson's lawyers argued over the course of a month-long trial in San Francisco that Monsanto had "fought

science" for years and targeted academics who spoke up about possible health risks of the herbicide product. Johnson was the first person to take the agrochemical corporation to trial over allegations that the chemical sold under the brand Roundup causes cancer.

In the extraordinary verdict, which Monsanto said it intends to appeal, the jury ruled that the company was responsible for "negligent failure" and knew or should have known that its product was "dangerous".

"We were finally able to show the jury the secret, internal Monsanto documents proving that Monsanto has known for decades that ... Roundup could cause cancer," Johnson's lawyer Brent Wisner said in a statement. The verdict, he added, sent a "message to Monsanto that its years of deception regarding Roundup is over and that they should put consumer safety first over profits".

Monsanto has long argued that Roundup is safe and not linked to cancer and presented studies during trial that countered the research and testimony submitted by Johnson's team. The herbicide is registered in 130 countries and approved for use on more than 100 crops, but in 2015, the World Health Organization's international agency for research on cancer (IARC) classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans", triggering a wave of legal and legislative challenges.

Another Roundup cancer trial is scheduled to begin in the fall in St Louis, Missouri. According to Johnson's lawyers, Monsanto is facing more than 4,000 similar cases across the US.

*Sam Levin, Patrick Greenfield, Sat 11 Aug 2018. The Guardian Online, AP*



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## Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!

### 2018 - 2019 Calendar

**September 10 - 14** IOIA Crop Inspection Training, South Burlington, Vermont

**September 12** Organic Trade Assn. Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD.

**September 12 - 15** Natural Products Expo East, Baltimore, MD.

**September 15** IOIA Advanced Organic Inspector Training, Vermont

**September 17 - 21** IOIA Livestock Inspection Training, South Burlington, Vermont

**September 20-22** IOIA/OEFFA Advanced Organic Inspector Training, Mt. Sterling, Ohio

**September 23 & 24** IOIA/KDA Field Training for Organic Inspectors - Crops Course, Frankfort, Kentucky

**September 27 & 28** IOIA Field Training as a structured apprenticeship Live-stock Course, Frankfort, Kentucky

**September 25 - 28** IOIA/JOIA Organic Farm Inspection Training, Tokyo, Japan

**October 24 - 26** NOSB Fall Meeting, Intercontinental St. Paul Riverfront Hotel, St. Paul, MN. See page 19.

**October 29 - November 1** IOIA Crop Inspection training, Farmington, Minnesota

**November 1 - 3** Organic Connections Conference & Trade Show, Prairieland Park, Saskatoon, SK. <http://www.organicconnections.ca/>

**November 5 - 9** IOIA Processing Inspection training, Farmington, MN

**January 23 - 26, 2019** EcoFarm Conference, Asilomar, CA

**January 24 - 27** Guelph Conference, Guelph, Ontario Canada

**February 2019** IFOAM North America Annual Meeting, location TBA

**February 15 & 16** New Mexico Organic Farming Conference, Albuquerque, NM [www.nmofc.org](http://www.nmofc.org)  
Contact: [sagefaulkner@yahoo.com](mailto:sagefaulkner@yahoo.com)

**February 28 - March 1** IOIA Advanced Training in Huatulco, Oaxaca, Mexico

**March 2** IOIA Annual General Meeting, Huatulco, Oaxaca, Mexico

**May 2019** IOIA Crop and Livestock training in Marin County, California

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*Please see pages 2 & 3 for the current list of  
IOIA on-site trainings and webinars*