

The

Inspectors' Report

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Notes from The Chair

By Brian Magaro

In the last *Notes from The Chair* I had wished everyone a winter of inspiration and personal enrichment. I truly hope that this has been the case with all of you. It has been for me and I am thankful for that.

The winter here in PA has been following the normal course of events for January and into February. Which on the days you have to cancel inspections because of bad weather you get the unscheduled time to catch-up. Like this morning to awake to another 4-6" of snow, turning to freezing rain, and while the truck is warming up a phone call from the producer to postpone the inspection till next week. So now you are getting *Notes from The Chair* as he looks out over new fallen snow, watching birds converging on the feeders and trying to digest all the great information that has been on the inspector forum lately.

The forum has certainly become a good communication source for inspectors. The questions, answers and overall information have been great. If you are not a member of the forum you may want to consider contacting Diane Cooner, forum moderator, at webgal@ioia.net for information and access.

The IOIA web site is also currently (constantly) being updated, upgraded and expanded. The inclusion of the inspector directory and the many ways for those seeking inspectors to locate them is very cool. The final touches are nearing completion. Another part of the web site that is in the very near "coming soon" stage is the "iTAP". This is the inspectors Technical Advisory Panel. The name may change. Here will be areas where inspectors can pose questions on a particular subject such as GMOs, boiler chemicals, water, etc and get a direct response from the "expert" moderator of the particular topic. Questions and answers will also be compiled for a future data base application. If you have expertise in a particular category and wish to become a moderator get in touch and let us know. IOIA is working hard to expand member services. If you have any questions or ideas please feel free to contact me at magarob@aol.com. (see Notes, p 4)

OTA Approves Organic Fiber Processing Standards; Joins with IOIA to Launch 1st Comprehensive Organic Fiber Processing Training

IOIA and the Organic Trade Association (OTA) will cosponsor the first Advanced Organic Inspector Training with a fiber processing focus (organic fiber is any fiber, such as cotton, wool, hemp, flax or silk, which is grown organically). Scheduled for April 16-17 at Texas Tech University's Int'l Textile Center in Lubbock, Texas, this training is open to experienced inspectors and other interested persons from the industry. Sandra Marquardt, OTA Fiber Council Coordinator, is assisting IOIA in development of the collaborative effort. The 2-day training includes presentations on fiber processing fundamentals, the new OTA organic fiber processing standards, and Organic Control Points for the fiber inspector. The training will also include field trips to organic fiber farms and processing and sales facilities. See the IOIA website for more information, applications, and agenda developments (details to be posted by late February).

The IOIA/OTA training will lead up to the public introduction of the organic fiber processing standards on May 4 at OTA's All Things Organic™ Conference and Trade Show in Chicago, IL (see www.atoexpo.com). There will be a special focus on organic fiber May 4 with a fashion show and three seminars focusing on producing organic products, marketing them, and the processing standards.

Organic fiber processing is a strong organic expansion area. Organic cotton has been certified for many years as a crop and the livestock for organic wool must be raised organically, but the organic fiber *processing* industry is much younger. OTA's "All Things Organic" conference and trade show in Austin, TX featured a *Wear Organic! Organic Fiber Fashion Show* in May 2003. Marquardt emceed the event and in "The Organic Report" July 2003 was quoted, "As organic food sales continue to soar, organic apparel is a natural extension for consumers who want to support sustainable environmental practices..." Cotton is the number 2 crop in the US for the most pesticides used. On the bright side, the U.S. is also #2 in production of organic cotton.

Taking a major step forward, the Organic Trade Association's (OTA's) Board of Directors adopted organic fiber processing standards in late January. Almost five years in the making, these standards cover all post-harvest processing, from storage of organic fiber at the gin or similar facility, to spinning, wet finishing and labeling.

The standards were developed by OTA after reviewing existing international standards and taking into account the requirements of OFPA and NOP regulations. A significant difference between the OTA fiber processing standards and those from other countries and organizations is the inclusion of an extremely detailed Materials List. OTA believes the standards will not only provide the basis for environmentally sustainable processing among companies in the organic fiber industry, but will also be of great interest to the conventional textile sector as it looks for ways to reduce environmental impacts of textile production. The new processing standards are available to OTA members and non-members through a licensing agreement. OTA members can receive (see Fiber, page 4)

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GMO's, Calendar,

...and More!

AGM Update

2004 IOIA Annual General Meeting Saturday, March 13, 2004

10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Lunch from 12-1:30 p.m.

Election of Board Members: 2:00 p.m.

Hotel Villa Zurquí, Heredia, Costa Rica

Dinner: 6:00 p.m.

Keynote address: 7:30-8:30 p.m.
by Jim Riddle "From Local to Global
- Growing the Organic Vision"

Evening activities: 'Salsa' music,
dance, organic refreshments.

IOIA will pay all lunch and dinner costs for IOIA voting members on March 13. Members are asked to pay a \$10 AGM registration fee for logistical purposes to get accurate counts for meals and snacks. If you would like to attend but are unable to pay this \$10, please contact the IOIA office. **IF YOU WILL BE EATING MEALS WITH IOIA, PLEASE CONTACT IOIA AT LEAST 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE AGM.**

Keynote: **James A. (Jim) Riddle** will speak about "what is happening in my neck of the woods, expand on reflections about the USDA program, and share international observations". Over the past 24 years, Jim has been an organic farmer, gardener, inspector, educator, policy analyst, author, and consumer. Jim serves as vice-chair of the National Organic Standards Board, which advises the USDA on organic agriculture policies and regulations. He also serves on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Organic Advisory Task Force, and was instrumental in the passage of Minnesota's landmark organic certification cost-share program. Jim holds degrees in biology and political science from Grinnell College, and works part time as an organic policy specialist for Rodale's website, newfarm.org. In 2003, Jim was appointed Endowed Chair of Agricultural Systems at the University of Minnesota. He was founding chair of IOIA and has helped train organic inspectors throughout the world.

Getting there: Hotel Villa Zurquí, Heredia, Costa Rica (near San Jose), + 506 268 8856 Directions: Carretera Braulio Carrillo, 150 m. Este de la Bomba-Gasolinera Zurquí. Email: hvzurqui@racsa.co.cr For transportation to and from Zurquí, taxi or shuttle service is available from San Jose Airport (advised to use only the official airport cabs: orange cabs called "Taxis Unidos"). Approximate cost for a solo ride is \$20 one-way. Cost for 2 or more is about \$10 each. Vans are available for 6-8 passengers, reducing the cost per person. Plan to have cash (US dollars or colones) for transportation to/from the airport. The lobby desk is open until 11 p.m. For late arrivals, a night person is on duty for assistance. If you would like to arrive early (before March 10) or stay later (later than the night of March 13), please make your reservations directly with the host facility. The cost for those extra nights is \$40 US per room, no tax; availability is limited. For more information about sightseeing options in the local area, please visit the IOIA website.

Currency: Colones are the standard currency in Costa Rica. Exchange rate is 422 colones per \$1 US (as of Feb.2) but this changes daily.

Agenda: The AGM discussion should be stimulating this year, based on current IOIA Forum topics. Some members are challenging IOIA to open its doors to a wider membership. Other members are challenging IOIA to take a stronger position in the industry to strengthen organic integrity. Discussion about how to fund the organization, decrease the size and/or number of basic trainings, increase advanced training opportunities, select future AGM locations, and increase IOIA's visibility at the national and international level will help set the tone and direction of IOIA's future. All members are invited to engage in discussion about the mission, vision, and direction of IOIA. We will also elect 3 Board members and 2 Alternate Board members and decide 2 potential Bylaws Amendments.

Voting: Please vote by mail if you do not plan to attend the AGM! Ballots were mailed to all paid up voting members on January 29. If you did not receive a ballot, please contact the IOIA office. IOIA needs to insure

that a quorum is present to transact business at the AGM. Returned mail ballots are likely to insure a quorum for issues on those ballots. However, a quorum is still needed to transact business other than those issues on the mail ballots. If you plan to attend, please help to insure that a quorum will be present by carrying the proxy of at least one other member who will not attend the Annual Meeting. Proxies cannot be used to vote on Board of Directors or Bylaws Amendments, since those issues are provided to all members in a mail ballot. No specific format is required for proxies. However, to be valid, the proxy must be written, state the member's name and the name of the person they designate to carry their proxy. **If you will not be attending the AGM, please send a proxy!**

And, in the spirit of the 2003 Vermont AGM, IOIA is taking nominations for the 2004

Inspector Asset of the Year.

Please contact the IOIA office with your nomination by **March 5.** Our 2003 winner was Emily Brown-Rosen of OMRI.



IOIA Board of Directors

Brian Magaro.....Chair
John Foster.....Vice Chair
Jack Reams.....Treasurer
Ann Baier.....Secretary
Dag Falck.....Member-At-Large
Luis Brenes.....Board Member
Garry Lean.....Board Member
Chris Kidwell.....Alternate
Doug Crabtree.....Alternate
Garth Kahl.....Alternate

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

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

Published quarterly on recycled paper.



Upcoming Trainings

Tokyo, JAPAN IOIA will co-sponsor Japanese language Basic Process Inspector Training **Feb 28-March 01** with the Japan Organic Inspectors Association (JOIA) to be held in Tokyo, JAPAN. The commuting course will use JAS as standard reference and be instructed in Japanese. JOIA will handle registration. For more information, contact JOIA at mutsumi.sakuyoshi@nifty.com or +81-422-56-6651 or +81-422-56-6651 (fax).

Naramata, BC, CANADA Certified Organic Association of British Columbia (COABC) and IOIA will co-sponsor Basic Farm Inspector Training (**February 24-27**) and Advanced Training (**March 1-2**). Trainings will be held in conjunction with the COABC conference held **February 28 and 29**, and training participants are encouraged to attend sessions at the conference. The Farm Inspector training will have a unique regional focus and use provincial COABC standards as primary reference while still covering the basic IOIA curriculum including organic farm inspection protocols, investigative skills, risk assessment, auditing farm yields, use of approved materials, report writing and on-farm processing. The Basic training will include a mock inspection to a local orchard, vineyard or greenhouse. Advanced Training will be responsive to needs of provincial inspectors and certifiers. Potential topics include inspector ISO compliance requirements, food safety, conducting label reviews, advanced auditing and understanding NOP requirements for Canadian exporters. Interested applicants please contact Kristen Kane at the COABC office (250) 260-4429 or office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca.

COSTA RICA IOIA will sponsor Advanced Organic Inspector Training on **March 11-12, 2004** in conjunction with the 2004 IOIA General Membership Meeting on March 13 at the Hotel Villas Zurqui near San Jose. Additional Spanish language training opportunities will be offered on the morning of March 14. Advanced training topics will include Organic Fiber Processing with Fred Ehler of Minnesota and Food Processing inspection issues (sanitation, chlorine, boiler additives, food contact surfaces) with David Gould. Both Ehler and Gould are organic inspectors. Ehler is an experienced inspector and IOIA member with a strong interest in fiber. He recently attended a weeklong seminar in 'Fiber Fundamentals' at the College of Textiles in NC State University. In Costa Rica, he will discuss the current state of the organic fiber industry, touch on existing standards, explain basic fiber processing steps, and focus on issues for the inspector. He will speak on similar topics at the IOIA/OTA Organic Fiber Processing training in Texas. Two concurrent sessions will accommodate Spanish speakers with further classroom training in advanced coffee audit trail and English speakers with a tour of an organic coffee processing facility. Most training sessions will be in English with Spanish translation or bilingual speakers. For information, contact the IOIA office. Eco-LOGICA and IOIA will cosponsor Spanish language Basic Organic Farm Inspection Training on March 15-18 at the same location. For more information about that training, please contact Geovanny Delgado at Eco-LOGICA at Apartado 132 2020, San Jose, COSTA RICA; ph: +506-280-6592; fax: +506-224-6676; Email ecologic@mail.powernet.co.cr; or visit www.eco-logica.com.

Make plans now! Airfare is still reasonable (hovering around \$500 US roundtrip from most major US cities, \$600-750USD from Canada), training costs are lower to entice members to make the trip. This promises to be a memorable AGM.

Fayetteville, Arkansas IOIA and the National Center for Appropriate Technology, managers of the ATTRA project-the national sustainable agriculture information service, will sponsor Basic Farm and Livestock Inspector trainings on **April 1-7, 2004** at the Mount Sequoyah Conference Center, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The Farm training is scheduled for April 1-4, followed by the Livestock training on April 5-7. Guest speakers include Ann Wells, DVM, of ATTRA on Livestock Health issues. ATTRA (Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas) is widely regarded as an excellent resource for organic producers in the US. Mount Sequoyah Conference Center is on 30 acres in the Ozark Mountains, on the highest point overlooking Fayetteville and Northwest Arkansas, minutes from downtown Fayetteville, 40 minutes from Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport, and an easy two-hour drive from Tulsa, OK or Springfield, MO. Fayetteville is known for its restored 19th century buildings downtown, its colorful entertainment (bistros, night clubs, and galleries plus The Walton Arts Center) on Dickson Street, and extraordinary city parks and recreation. Training Coordinators are Harriet Behar and Stanley Edwards. For information or application forms, contact the IOIA office or the IOIA website at www.ioia.net. Deadline to apply is February 27. For more information about the location, visit www.mountsequoyah.org, but please do not contact Mount Sequoyah directly for reservations.

Assiniboine Community College, Manitoba IOIA and Assiniboine Community College will cosponsor Basic Organic Livestock Inspector Training in late April. Interested applicants please contact Keith Proven at ACC. For more information, ph: (204) 725-8700 ext 6982; fax: 204-726-7012; Assiniboine Community College, 1430 Victoria Ave. East, Brandon, MB, CANADA R7A 2A9; or Email provenk@assiniboine.net.

Lubbock, Texas IOIA and the Organic Trade Association will cosponsor Advanced Organic Inspector Training (Fiber Processing focus), on **April 16-17**. This training, the first of its kind, is open both to experienced inspectors and interested persons from the organic industry and will include a tour of a fiber processing facility, field trips to see value-added cotton manufacturing, and an introduction to the new OTA Fiber Council standards.

For information or application forms, contact the IOIA office or the IOIA website at www.ioia.net. See lead story, page 1.

Notes, from page 1

As IOIA enters 2004 there are few areas about the organization that will not have major activity. These include the web site, membership services, training curriculum, and financial planning to name but a few. The IOIA support staff, the Board of Directors, IOIA committees and individual volunteers are committed to keeping IOIA a strong and respected industry resource. I wish to thank all of you who have volunteered time as individuals, committee members and Board members for your continued support and efforts given to IOIA. Where the biggest thanks needs to be directed is to the staff of IOIA and the executive director, Margaret. Without her dedication and that of the IOIA staff we would be in very big trouble. When you have a doubt about what you do, the association you are a member of, the consumer you ultimately are working for (to protect), take a moment to think about just how lucky you are to be who you are where you are doing what you do. Makes me feel good.

Well, back to reading email...Hope to see you at the AGM. 🍷

Third Time's the Charm?

by Margaret Scoles, ED

For the 3rd time in 2 years, IOIA redefined IOIA Inspector member status with Bylaws amendments. During the 2002 AGM, the Bylaws definition was tightened to include the requirement for formal inspector training. At the 2003 AGM, Inspector status was tightened much further to require a specified number of supervised inspections. The Membership Committee proposed a 3rd change later during 2003, softening the requirement for number of supervised inspections and providing an alternative for experienced inspectors without enough supervised inspections.

The results of the Bylaws Ballot are in. The new language removed all reference to Apprentice Inspectors and defined Inspector Members as follows:

2.1 Inspector Members: Membership is open to qualified and experienced inspectors in the field of production, processing, and/or trade. Criteria of acceptance are:

a. Training or experience in agriculture, processing and/or trade.

b. Experience in inspection of organic farming, food processing, and/or trade.

Minimum experience is documented in one of two manners:

1. Ten organic inspections performed, plus a letter from a certification agency attesting to completion of these inspections. **OR**

2. Five supervised inspections performed, plus a letter from a mentor inspector attesting to completion of these inspections.

The official results of the ballot, voted by mail (inspector and apprentice inspector members have voting rights), and counted by paid ballot counters on Jan. 6, 2004: For Amending the Bylaws: 70 Yes 5 No 1 Abstain

In addition, 11 "yes" votes were cast but could not be counted officially, due to loss of identity of the voting members or arrival after the official count was taken.

What does this mean for our members?

Several members who joined during 2003 were able to change from Supporting Individual members to Inspector Members. They'd joined with inspection experience but without enough supervised inspections to meet the Bylaws as amended at the 2003 AGM. Most are choosing the option of proof of inspection experience from certification agencies.

IOIA is more inviting to experienced inspectors. (At least one member had the experience of 100+ inspections but not enough supervised inspections to meet the bylaws). Some of the members who joined IOIA primarily to seek accreditation found themselves in the awkward position of meeting IOIA's Inspector Accreditation requirements but not Inspector Member status. 🍷

ED, from page 5

plan the budget for the next year, plan the Annual Meeting, and publish the annual Membership Directory. And that's all in addition to the everyday work like processing trainings, accreditations, and new members. This year was Phoebe's first to handle the Membership Directory on her own (we'd been contracting this job out for most recent years). This year we threw into the mix an extra mail ballot for the proposed bylaws change, a co-sponsorship for the Montana Organic

Conference, and the massive change to a 'real-time' Member database. We expected to be busy. But no one expected Phoebe's 11 year-old daughter, Tonya to be in serious auto accident in early December. A seriously fractured leg, two surgeries, and many stitches, took Phoebe out of the office for much of the month. She valiantly worked nights and weekends as much as possible, but things were tough at IOIA for a bit. In January, Phoebe resumed her regular schedule, Tonya went back to school on crutches, and we tackled the backlog.

One more surgery again this month and we are all nearly as good as new....but we have been running a bit late. We are doing our best.

See you at the AGM!

Fiber, from page 1

the license for free; non-members will be charged \$500. Under the agreement, companies will be licensed to use the standards in-house but prohibited from sharing them outside the company. Info on the standards is available on the OTA web site (www.ota.com). Or, contact Sandra Marquardt at smarquardt@ota.com.

OTA's Fiber Council (OFC) provides a forum for OTA members to address topics of interest to all types of businesses within the organic agricultural fiber industries, including cotton, hemp, wool, flax and others. Sectors represented include growers, brokers, designers, mills, manufacturers, and retailers. OFC develops and disseminates educational information about organic fibers to its members, to consumers via public relations and media outreach, and to other industry and trade groups via conference presentations and exhibitions. OFC also provides source and supply referrals all along the supply chain to improve the availability of organic fibers and develop new markets. OFC goals include:

- Educate consumers as well as the apparel and textile industry about organically grown agricultural fibers
- Unify the diverse sectors of the organic fiber industry to address industry-wide problems
- Promote increased sales and sustainability of the organic fiber industry
- Provide a strong and unified voice on legislative, regulatory and policy issues concerning organic fiber research and promotion

For more information including fiber facts visit the OTA website at www.ota.com A quick perusal of the impressive list of members of the OFC gives an idea of the breadth of this 'organic frontier' industry. 🍷

Notes from the ED

By Margaret Scoles

IOIA's New Database: The biggest news at IOIA is still in the works. Hopefully by the time you read this, you will be able to access the first-ever 'real-time' searchable IOIA member database from our website. Although the Annual Membership Directory will always be a 'snapshot' in time (accurate as possible for a day), the new database will allow immediate updating to allow new members immediate visibility and vastly improved accuracy and public access to IOIA members. You will be able to access your Training history including all grades and certificates earned and, eventually, will be able to print transcripts. For starters, we entered only the Trainings and whether you earned a Certificate. Data entry for training grades may take all year to complete. Some categories (accreditation status and training history) can only be changed by IOIA office staff. Other information, such as your academic background, address and Email info can be changed by you, the member. This multi-tasking database will generate mailing labels for newsletters, name badges for trainings, and do many other chores. We are finding this year's directory to be a tedious task, but the time savings for future years should be HUGE. The database will increase office efficiency without increasing support staff time, thus saving IOIA money. It will be on-line very soon, so please go to the website and check out your entry. The seed for this idea was planted first by **Drew Stuckey** and more recently by **Maarten Samsom**. Maarten requested money in the Membership Committee budget to create such a database. We all agreed that it would be great to have one, but it seemed out of reach and the database didn't make the budget. This year, thanks to a dedicated computer whiz who was willing to barter training fees for his services, we managed it for less than \$3000.

DSL at IOIA: The addition of a high speed internet connection was one of the best additions to the IOIA office during 2003. It is more efficient, convenient, and cheaper than a 2nd phone line.

IOIA Discount Subscriptions *The Organic Standard*, published by Grolink of Sweden, is an excellent, concise, cutting-edge, international organic publication. *The Non-GMO Source* (monthly newsletter): provides useful information and resources to help inspectors understand IP, non-GMO products from "seed to shelf", GMO contamination risks, non-GMO ingredient sources, and GM food issues and trends in food traceability. Subscribers through IOIA also receive the annual Non-GMO Sourcebook, the first directory of non-GMO and organic suppliers and service providers. Individual subscription rate to *The Non-GMO Source* is \$65 for a hard copy subscription without the IOIA discount.

*Email Organic Standard, forwarded from the IOIA office: \$5/year.

*Email The Non-GMO Source, direct from the publisher: \$25/year

*Hard Copy The Non-GMO Source, direct from the publisher: \$35/year

If you are interested in subscribing through the IOIA member discount to either publication, please contact the IOIA office immediately as we must notify the publishers during February. Samples of both newsletters were posted on the website a year ago for a free preview. To check them out there, go the IOIA homepage, Books & Goods section, and then click on "Non-GMO News" or "The Organic Standard" to view pdf versions of either publication.

Sorry, this offer is good **only** to Inspector Members, Apprentice Inspector Members, or Supporting Individuals who are truly individual members and not representatives of larger organizations.

Paypal: IOIA has made it easier for you to purchase IOIA resources and pay dues online. IOIA now has a PayPal Account, which allows you to make purchases with your credit card directly from the IOIA website. Notice of your purchases and payments come to IOIA by Email.

IFOAM STANDARDS: If you are interested in reviewing the first revision draft of the 2002 IFOAM Basic Standards, please contact the IOIA office. IOIA, as a member of IFOAM, has been invited to comment. The Draft can be forwarded to you electronically. A hard copy of the document will be included in the next issue of the IFOAM magazine, "Ecology and Farming" (June). Comments in electronic format are preferred. The 90 day comment period will end on August 15.

"All Things Organic" in Chicago, IL this year May 2-4: IOIA will staff a table again this year, as part of our promotional efforts. Previously held in Austin, this is the trade show's first year in Chicago. Info is available at www.atoexpo.com. If you are interested in volunteering or just plain inspector networking, please stop in at the IOIA exhibit.

IOIA collaborates on review of training materials: Funded by USDA Western Region SARE, a training later this month will serve technical service providers, accompanied by a manual titled "Organic Production: Principles, Practices, and Materials: A Compliance and Resource Guide for Western Region Agricultural Professionals".

Inspector Story: In a recent inspection, I asked the inspected party who was changing certification agencies if they had previous certification requirements. They said 'no' and I let it pass. But it turned out they did. What did I learn? I learned the importance of NOP 205.401(c), which says that the application must include the "The name(s) of any organic certifying agent(s) to which application has previously been made; the year(s) of application; the outcome of the application(s) submission, including when available, a copy of any notification of noncompliance or denial of certification issued to the applicant for certification; and a description of the actions taken by the applicant to correct the noncompliances noted..." Hint: Ask very pointed questions if you inspect someone who is switching certifiers. True, the applicant is in the wrong if not submitting a complete application, but it was me who went back for a 2nd inspection to make sure those previous non-compliances were all corrected. This NOP rule is a good one. It gives the inspector the right to insist on a complete application, even if the applicant has failed to submit it and even if the certification agency misses it.

Patience: Thank you all for it. December and January are historically 2 VERY busy months in the IOIA office. We collect most of the annual dues, gather Membership update info, complete the end-of-year financial reports, award the scholarships, (see ED, page 4)

OTA Down On EF/FF Seal

The National Organic Program has built a solid foundation upon which our industry can continue to grow. New markets and trading opportunities are opening up for the organic sector as consumers increasingly favor organic products. Unfortunately, the flip side of our collective success is the backlash from groups seeking to undermine the consumer confidence in organic.

You may be aware that the Center for Global Food Issues, a project of the Hudson Institute, is working with USDA to pilot an "Earth Friendly/Farm Friendly Seal of Approval" for dairy producers and processors. The "standards" behind the seal basically uphold the conventional farming and processing status quo. This new label is a blatant attempt to distract and confuse consumers, especially those who are our potential future customers - those interested in organic but not yet buyers.

All of us have spent years and countless resources to communicate that organic is an earth-friendly and farm-friendly production system. The creators of this new seal state: "This is the only science-based seal of approval which supports both farm economics and protects the environment without added costs to consumers." This is an outrageous effort to hijack the promise behind the USDA Organic seal and could have serious ramifications for all sectors of our industry. OTA is exploring all legal and regulatory actions available to stop this misleading label in its tracks.

OTA's Executive Director Katherine DiMatteo believes that in the coming year we will also see new attempts to weaken or co-opt organic standards by those who simply want to capitalize on the popularity of organic. In a recent meeting she had with Congressman Nathan Deal (who was the catalyst behind the effort to weaken organic feed requirements for livestock last year), he indicated that he would continue to pursue his agenda, and use his position to expose inconsistencies in the organic standards and the potential dangers of organic production. So while we won the battle of Section 771, we need to

remain vigilant and be prepared to stave off additional legislative attacks on the organic rule.

Source: OTA Annual Fund Drive Letter, Jan 2004

ATTRA Under the Ax

The U.S. President's 2004 budget proposes eliminating the highly-rated and effective Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas or ATTRA program. Currently funded at \$2.5 million, the program is the major source of sustainable and organic agriculture production and marketing information for farmers, extension agents, and other agricultural professionals. The proposed budget also would scale back funding for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program by 22 percent to \$13 million. The proposal would also reduce the research and extension program to help farmers transition to organic agriculture by 74 percent to just \$500,000.

Please visit the MSAWG website at www.msawg.org to find out what you can do about this, and to do everything you can to get involved in this year's presidential election so that we get someone in that office who is friendlier to farmers and to the environment.

Source: Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group

Canadian Regs Discussion Open to Public

Agriculture & Agri-Foods Canada has scheduled the following public consultation meetings to gain consensus on an organic regulation: Tuesday, Feb. 17, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wandylyn Inn and Convention Centre, Amherst, Nova Scotia (Contact Shawn Ingraham: 902-426-3439 or IngrahamS@agr.gc.ca); Friday, Feb. 27, 4-9 p.m., Naramata Centre, Narimara, British Columbia (in conjunction with BC's Organic Future 2004 Conference). Register at www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca or contact Tracey Innes (604-666-9353 or innest@agr.gc.ca); Wednesday, Feb. 25, in Edmonton, Alberta: venue not yet confirmed.

USDA sessions on CSP

USDA will host 10 listening sessions on its proposed rule to implement the Conservation Security Program. The first sessions was held Jan. 13 in Tempe, Arizona, and Roanoke, Virginia, with

others to follow in Texas, Washington, Michigan, Florida, Iowa, Maine, Mississippi, and Wisconsin. The proposed rule, published in the Jan. 2 Federal Register, and detailed information on the listening sessions are available on the NRCS web site (www.nrcs.usda.gov).

California Now Has SOP Status

California received official notice on February 6th, that its application to serve as a State Organic Program was approved by USDA.

This means that California will now be allowed to provide support and enforcement services to both the organic consumers of the state and to the more than 3000 registered organic producers.

The California Organic Products Advisory Committee met on February 10, and formed a sub-committee to immediately address the enforcement protocols. Ray Green, program director, also has plans to provide trainings to certifiers and inspectors on investigative reporting skills, due process, and the appeals process. He said that more attention will be paid to auditing the certifiers at the site of inspection to be sure both that operators are in compliance and that certifiers are doing their jobs.

OTA Issues Fact Sheet on Organic Beef

In response to the discovery of Mad Cow disease in the U.S., OTA has issued a press release reassuring consumers that certified organic beef is fully traceable, has passed rigorous inspections, and has never been fed any animal by-products in any form. See: <http://www.ota.com/news/press/124.html>. In addition, OTA posted a fact sheet concerning the production of organic beef (see: <http://www.ota.com/organic/foodsafety/OrganicBeef.html>).

Nati'l Organic Roadshow in Oz

Watch out for the coming National Organic Roadshow across Australia between February and April. Dates for these events have been listed in the December edition of the Organic Business and are also on the BFA website. The workshops are open to all interested parties across Australia from all sectors and will cover market and technical issues, including specific presentations, networking within the organic industry, strategic direction setting within the industry and more. These workshops will likely be the main organic event for your region for 2004 so please tell your friends and come along and be involved. Contact Suzi Moore media@bfa.com.au.

Harvey Suit Update

The civil suit brought against USDA by Arthur Harvey, was denied by the district court, and is now headed for the First Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston. Because the district court's review was rather shallow, Harvey is optimistic about the appeal, at least on six of the nine counts.

EPA Proposes Compost Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued a proposed rule for federal procurement of "recovered materials". The rule defines "compost" broadly and defines "organic fertilizer" inconsistently with National Organic Program rule requirements. For the proposed rule see: www.ota.com/m/committees/govaffairs/index.html.

OTA Calls Regs Burdensome

Proposed regulations that exempt 100% organic producers from 28 national marketing order programs are "overly burdensome" and would be difficult to comply with, according to a new detailed assessment by the OTA. In December, the OTA called the regulations 'a disaster', and asked and received USDA commitment to extend the public comment period to Feb. 2.

The OTA said that requiring producers to petition for the exemption is unnecessary and that an affidavit from an accredited certifier should be enough. OTA was also critical of language that would not allow handlers who do not do processing to exempt a producer. "It should not matter whether a handler involved in promotion assessments is also a producer," the OTA said. "The point is not who collects the assessment, the point is that no assessments should be made on 100% organic producers, whether by the board or through a handler."

Handlers should not be required to be 100% organic and the USDA should clarify the definitions of producer and handler.

In related news, the USDA is expected to announce in February exemptions to federal milk marketing orders as well as 15 other national promotion and research programs.

Exempting dairy farmers from the milk marketing orders that require a mandatory fee to be paid has more financial implications than the other programs. The nation's two largest organic milk producers have argued that organic dairy operations should be exempt because they do not benefit from advertising paid from the funds collected.

Source: Organic Business News, January 2004

NOP Loopholes Allow Mad Cow into Organics

Even though the organic sector has taken numerous precautions which minimize the risks of organic cattle being infected with BSE, it would be prudent to take a hard look at the NOP regulation to determine if there are likely entry points whereby BSE could be detected in organic cattle, according to Jim Riddle, NOSB secretary.

In a recent post to the IOIA Forum, Jim made the following comments:

"A review of the regulation reveals the following potential pathways whereby BSE could be detected on organic farms:

1) 205.236(a)(2) allows conventional dairy cows to be converted to organic production, either using the "one year" or "80/20" method of conversion. This allowance means that animals with BSE could be found on organic dairy farms. Such animals could never be slaughtered for organic meat, so the risk that organic meat would be contaminated is negligible, but the risk of bad publicity is significant.

2) The "two track" interpretation of 205.236(a)(2)(iii) increases the likelihood that BSE infected animals will be detected on organic dairy farms. Under the "two track" interpretation, dairies that converted to organic using the "one year" method may continually introduce non-organic replacement animals, while dairies who used the "80/20" method must use replacement animals which have been fed and managed organically from the last third of gestation. Farms which are allowed to continually introduce non-organic animals into the herd pose a significantly higher risk for detection of BSE than farms which manage all animals organically from the last third of gestation.

3) 205.236(a)(3) allows breeder stock from nonorganic operations to be used to produce organic offspring, provided that the breeder stock are "brought onto the

[organic] facility no later than the last third of gestation." Breeder stock, sourced from nonorganic farms, could be infected with BSE. It is suspected, but not proven, that BSE can be passed from mother to offspring, which is why USDA ordered the destruction of 450 calves, since one of the calves was the offspring of a BSE-positive cow. While it may not be practical to prohibit nonorganic breeder stock from producing organic offspring, we need to move in that direction. One way would be to clarify that, once breeder stock have been converted to organic production, they cannot be managed nonorganically and continue to produce organic offspring.

4) While 205.237(b)(4) prohibits the feeding of manure (e.g. poultry litter which may contain spilled feed with slaughter by-products) and 205.237(b)(5) prohibits feeding "mammalian or poultry by-products to mammals or poultry", there is no linkage to 205.604, which is the list of nonsynthetic substances prohibited in organic livestock production. The only item listed is strychnine. I realize that one needs to read and comply with both the rule text and the National List, but, in reality, many producers, inspectors, and certifiers turn directly to the National List to see what can and cannot be used. To clarify the prohibition of feeding manure and slaughter by-products, the NOP should consider amending 205.604 to show specific "nonsynthetic" feed ingredients and additives items as prohibited, similar to the prohibition of arsenic in both 205.206(f) and 205.602(b) of the crop sections.

5) Is the prohibition in 205.237(b)(5) limited to "slaughter by-products"? Taken literally, someone could feed slaughter products to organic animals. There is no definition of "slaughter by-products". Possibly there should be a clarification stating that the prohibition of slaughter by-products includes all slaughter products, not just waste materials.

6) The NOSB has recommended that ingredients and processing aids allowed by 205.605 and 606 for human consumption also be allowed in livestock feeds. If enacted, this could allow gelatin and animal derived enzymes (and possibly other animal products) to be used in livestock feed. If this recommendation is enacted, the NOP should specifically exclude such animal derivatives by placing them on 205.604 as prohibited for use in organic livestock production.

7) Likewise, the NOSB has recommended that all feed additives allowed by AAFCO be allowed under 205.603(d). AAFCO allows certain animal slaughter by-products to be used as feed additives. (see BSE, page 22)

2003 IOIA Annual Report

Submitted by Brian Magaro, IOIA Chair

IOIA's mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training, and to promote consistency and integrity in the organic certification process.

Training: IOIA and our team of Training Coordinators led IOIA inspector trainings around the world including Japan, Ecuador, Taiwan, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Vermont, Missouri, Maine, Wyoming, and Oregon with 433 persons trained. This included 74 experienced inspectors taking the advanced trainings. State programs in the US cosponsored two basic trainings. The number of trainings was consistent with the past few years. However, trends were fewer Basic Farm attendees and more emphasis on Livestock, Process, and Advanced trainings. IOIA responded to requests from the prairie provinces in Canada by providing regional advanced inspector training, customized to meet the needs of our members there.

This year, IOIA offered *Sampling for Residue Analysis* as part of Advanced Inspector Trainings, first in February with Primuslabs and next in April in Saskatchewan, partnering with Envirotest Laboratories of Canada. IOIA also offered the 2nd IOIA/ISEES Organic Aquaculture Inspector Training.

IOIA is a collaborator in a *Wild Farm Alliance project*, funded by an Organic Farming Research Foundation grant. This grant includes funds for development of organic inspector trainings on assessing biodiversity and wild habitat on farms.

IOIA formed the *Curriculum and Training Program Subcommittee*, a subcommittee of the Training Committee, during 2003 to spearhead the work of upgrading IOIA's basic training curriculum for greater consistency. IOIA will expand this work to other types of trainings. The *Regional Training Oversight Committee* was re-named to the more appropriate *Training Oversight Committee*.

The Board modified IOIA's goals to allow for customized and in-house trainings for the industry. The TC Pool Agreement (IOIA's contract with our Training Coordinators) was finalized and implemented during 2003.

Promoting Consistency and Integrity: For the 2nd year in a row, IOIA allocated funds for Promotion of IOIA. IOIA attended two major organic events in the US and Canada with our booth. 2003 was our first year to *cosponsor* the *Guelph Organic Conference* in Ontario. We attended "*All Things Organic*", the Organic Trade Association show in Texas in May, which included OTA's Annual Meeting, OCC, and other industry meetings. We testified at the NOSB hearing there. IOIA was also represented at the *Natural Products Expo* in Washington DC in September. Three Board members and our Executive Director participated in *Congressional Day*, and met with NOP Program director Richard Mathews. We invited Mr. Mathews to work more closely with IOIA on inspector training and explained our inspector accreditation process.

IOIA supports the *Canadian General Standards Board* work through the Canadian Committee budget.

IOIA continues to collaborate with certification agencies to *improve member services*. Some examples: OCIA held an inspector workshop in conjunction with the Vermont training. IOIA worked with Oregon Tilth to sponsor inspector trainings in Oregon in conjunction with the Tilth Annual Meeting.

On a regional note, IOIA *cosponsored the first-ever organic conference in Montana*.

IOIA *continues to support IFOAM, OMRI, and Co-op America* through membership dues.

It is important to acknowledge our successes as an organization and as a community. During 2003, IOIA rallied as individual members and as an organization to *successfully fight the infamous "Fieldale" rider*, which threatened to undermine organic integrity of the NOP rules by allowing non-organic chicken feed.

Issues and Concerns Relevant to Organic Inspectors: During 2003, membership services were expanded to include discount (at cost) subscriptions to electronic newsletters, *The Organic Standard* and *The Non-GMO Source*.

We created the first real-time electronic IOIA *membership database*, including a searchable feature to make our membership information readily available on-line, and continually upgrade the IOIA website. This year, a 'members only' section was added.

IOIA responded to an inspector request for *assistance in late payment* from a certification agency.

IOIA provides inspector 'transcripts' of all IOIA trainings for a nominal fee.

IOIA continually expands resource books available for purchase through IOIA and makes OMRI lists available to inspectors for a nominal fee.

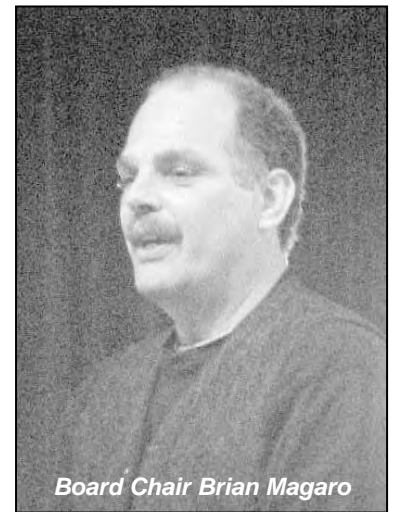
Finances: Financial health of our organization continues to be strong. The Finance Committee is developing IOIA's first *Business Plan*. Our budget exceeded \$200,000 for the first time in 2003, and income exceeded expectations by nearly \$20,000. However, the bottom line at the end of the year ended up about -\$5000, as income increases failed to offset additional expenses. Factors contributing to the negative bottom line for 2003 were low enrollment in early 2003 trainings and cancellation of 2 scheduled trainings in the northeast US, twice postponed training for a group from China, and many members delayed paying dues until 2004. The increase in income for regional trainings did not offset the cost of our new Regional Training Manager. Also, some 2003 projects had been unbudgeted or under-budgeted. These included a full Board retreat in October, bringing our new Regional Training Manager fully on line, and completion of the new database. IOIA switched all accounting to a CPA firm in 2003; this cost was more than budgeted. We believe that these expenditures will improve membership service and stability of the organization, reduce staff time and expense in the future, and allow us to expand our role in the industry and the services we offer both to our members and for sale.

2003 saw IOIA's *first membership dues increase since 1997*. The Board went to the membership with the results of an analysis of membership costs relative to dues and suggested a variety of options to pay the approximate cost of \$177 per inspector member. Inspector members were asked to pay individually for hard copy newsletters and membership directories and to contribute an assessment of \$2 per inspection and/or donate. Members responded with 24 paying the \$2 assessment, 34 paying for the membership directory, and 40 paying for the newsletter. Dues may increase again for 2005, in an attempt to more closely correlate the cost of membership to the dues that members pay, but this will only happen with further membership discussion. IOIA's membership as we

begin 2004 is lower than a year ago, for the 2nd consecutive year. It is too early to tell if this is a clear trend. 2003 was particularly unique. IOIA lost about the same percentage of members that we typically do. The dues increase was not cited as the reason for dropping membership among those who were contacted. Lower IOIA membership seems to be due primarily to less increase in membership during 2003. Historically, IOIA's largest increase in new members comes from Basic Farm inspector trainees and those trainings usually are the highest enrollment. In 2003, we sponsored two farm trainings with state programs (Missouri and Wyoming). The member retention rate for state trainings is lower than for IOIA-managed trainings with more independent inspectors. We had significantly lower enrollment in both IOIA managed farm trainings. Advanced, Livestock, and Process training attendees tend to be IOIA members, so a much lower new-member enrollment is associated with them. Also, bylaws changes during 2003 probably deterred some potential members from joining by making it more difficult to achieve Inspector status. At the AGM, Inspector status was tightened to require a specified number of supervised inspections. The Membership Committee proposed a 2nd change later during 2003 that softened the requirement for number of supervised inspections and provided an alternative for experienced inspectors.

Donations increased significantly in 2003, partly due to a fundraising project managed by Diane Cooner.

Using IOIA's new PayPal account, services and products can be *purchased directly from our website*. Jack Ream, Treasurer, and Margaret Scoles will present a detailed budget for 2004 at our AGM.



Board Chair Brian Magaro

Staff Margaret Scoles continues to serve full-time as Executive Director and Training Manager, with Phoebe Amsden as Office Assistant. Phoebe's hours increased during 2003 and will increase again in 2004. According to Margaret, the addition of a DSL (high speed) connection in the office to free up the overtaxed phone, fax, and Internet line was worth as much another part time assistant. A high point of her year was winning her 5th Outrageous Statement Award to maintain her lead as OSA record holder.

IOIA added *Regional Training Manager* Lisa Pierce during 2003 to manage IOIA trainings other than those directly managed out of the IOIA office. About 1/4 of IOIA's trainings are managed out of the IOIA office. The others rely on logistical support of cosponsors. Lisa traveled to Montana in February 2003 for in-house training and took on her position fully in June. IOIA recognizes and appreciates that Lisa's hours have **far exceeded the expected time** for her position.

Diane Cooner continues to do a super job as *Newsletter Editor* and *Website Manager*. Increasingly the website is IOIA's 'face' to the public. IOIA mails out fewer and fewer information packets, as inquiries are directed to the website and applications, forms, and info are available for direct download. Diane also moderates *The IOIA Forum* (inspector list serve). Diane continues her work to develop the technical advisory feature for the "Inspectors only" section of the website. She gave a presentation on this at the 2003 AGM.

Committees The **Membership** Committee, under new leadership with Chris Kidwell as Chair, proposed a new definition of Inspector Membership status. This proposed *bylaws amendment* passed at the end of the year, redefining inspector membership status for the 2nd time in 2003. Outgoing chair, Maarten Samson, is owed **a big thank you** for help with the arrangements for our annual meeting in Vermont. His work as **Nominations** Committee Chair is also acknowledged. The Membership Committee chair also chairs the Nominations Committee. The ballot for 2003 was charged with electing 5 Board members and the ballot was described by many members as 'the toughest election ever' because so many qualified candidates were listed.

The **Scholarship** Committee this year reviewed 7 applicants for our inspector scholarship and 2 applications for the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship. Congratulations to this year's Andrew Rutherford Scholarship winner, **Wendy Ziehl** of Saskatchewan, and this year's OCIS Scholarship, **Sandeep Bhargava** of India. **Elaine Ferry** attended the Vermont Process training on her scholarship during 2003. **Diana Alejo** of Argentina, the winner of the first OCIS scholarship, was unable to use her scholarship during the year due to travel costs but was given a 'rain check'. IOIA extends a special **'thank you' to Rochelle Eisen** for chairing the Scholarship Committee for at least 5 years. During 2003, the Scholarship Committee completed a massive overhaul of application and evaluation forms for this committee. Nancy Ludwig, winner of the scholarship for 2001, is the new committee Chair.

The **Ethics** Committee, chaired by Joyce Ford, had a quiet year with no formal inspector complaints.

The **Accreditation Committee**, with new Chair Jake Lewin, oversees the IOIA inspector accreditation program. The Accreditation Review Panel (ARP) reviewed 10 applications for crops, livestock and/or processing accreditation. Twenty-four IOIA members are accredited, which reflects the 2nd year's decline in the number. Changes included a new ARP Chair, Mike Wise. IOIA thanks **Chip Kraynyk**, outgoing Chair and a member of this committee from its beginning; **Linda Kaner**, outgoing Chair of the ARP serving since 1999 and a member since its beginning; and **John Foster**, Interim Chair, who was charged with finding a new chair and assisting the ARP. The **Latin American** Committee, chaired by Lidia Gaivironsky of Argentina, supported Latin America's hosting of the 2004 AGM in Costa Rica. This is our first AGM in Latin America since 1998.

The **Bylaws** Committee, chaired by Arthur Harvey, proposed a total of 9 Bylaws Amendments in 2003; all were adopted by the members. An additional Bylaws Change, proposed by petition, revised Inspector Members status and deleted the Apprentice Inspector Member category. It was also approved.

The **Communications** Committee title was expanded to the Communications and Marketing Committee, under new Chair Bob Howe. IOIA appreciates all volunteers. Poster sized committee reports were displayed for the first time at the 2003 AGM (a practice we agree is worth repeating every year). This list of committee activities is far from comprehensive. (see Annual, page 22)

2004 IOIA Scholarships Awarded

Wendy Ziehl is the winner of this year's Rutherford Scholarship. Wendy was raised on a mixed farm in southern Saskatchewan. She attended the University of Saskatchewan, receiving two degrees: a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with Honours, and a Master of Science. Wendy has extensive experience managing research projects related to grain processing. Her experience also includes implementing quality assurance programs in the food industry. After a number of years working for University of Saskatchewan and a private grain processing company, Wendy recently returned to rural Saskatchewan. She and her partner are in the early stages of becoming organic grain farmers. Wendy plans to attend IOIA organic inspector training in Arkansas this April and establish a career in rural Saskatchewan as an organic inspector.



The winner of the 2nd IOIA Organic Community Initiative Scholarship is **Sandeep Bhargava**, of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. Sandeep has more than 12 years experience in the food processing/organic agriculture sector.

He is presently working as an independent organic & food safety certification consultant, advisor and internal auditor for the Morarka Foundation, a non-profit in Jaipur. He also handles turnkey projects for the foundation, promoting organic agriculture with small and marginal farmers (approximately 10,000) and helping them in organic certification.

Sandeep has a Post graduate associate degree in fruits and vegetable technology (EqvInt.to M.Sc food technology); Postgraduate diploma in Management; Professionals software course; HACCP trained by SGS & CIEH; Registered Food safety Trainer by National Environmental Health Association, USA; and is a Registered Test Administrator for the National Registry of Food Safety Professionals., USA.

He attended Maharana Pratap University for Agriculture and Technology, has a Post Graduate Diploma In Organic Agriculture Management, and is Visiting faculty for Organic & food safety certification and Quality there.

Sandeep is making plans to attend inspector training in the US this year and is hoping to make arrangements to complete an apprenticeship while in the US. If you are interested in assisting or working with Sandeep, please read the message below and contact him at: sbhargava4@hotmail.com

“As I have received the IOIA scholarship for the year 2004 and wish to become an Organic Inspector, I wish to do two audits as Apprentice, either with the organic inspectors or a certification agency. Immediately after training, I am willing to do the apprenticeship. I will be highly Obligated If you kindly provide me an opportunity to work as apprentice in your Organization or Provide me a short term job. This training will directly benefit the small and marginal farmers in India. I am willing to attend the training preferably in summer or in April. I can change my programme as per the requirement of Mentor.”

Elaine Ferry Thanks IOIA

I want to take a minute of your time to express my gratitude for receiving the Rutherford Scholarship in 2003. I am indebted to the selection committee and the only way I can express my appreciation to the membership is to recount the experience and let you know what it has meant to me.

First, getting there. In the days prior to the conference, my part of West Virginia received a foot of snow, an ice storm and sixteen inches of snow. We had no power for 8 days. When I called the roads department the day before my flight, they stated it would be another week before they could get to us due to the downed trees everywhere. It took a community effort to get me to Vermont. My neighbor (a Paul Bunyan clone) walked the two miles from his place cutting out the downed trees. Halfway, my other neighbor “Shakey” joined him. Shakey is so named because of his Parkinson's. Together they cleared to my house, picked me up and we worked our way to the blacktop, three and a half miles from my house. Then my problem was snow height. Although my car is four wheel drive, it's a low riding sport sedan and I couldn't move because I was snowplowing. As we worked our way to the hard road, about 2 pm, we gained two more men to help move the logs. One of these I barely knew, but he got his two wheel tractor out and made his way up the hill to my place, installed a blade borrowed from the other guy and he and Paul Bunyan worked till dark clearing my 120 foot driveway (a euphemism). I drove my car to a neighbor's at the bottom of the hill and walked back, ecstatic that I would actually make the conference. A little sore though, some of those trees were 30 inches in diameter and these guys



cut them in 10-foot lengths to “save the boards”. Next day, I could not put on my socks. Shakey came and got my bags and me and drove me to my car. I drove my stick shift the 300 miles to the airport in tears, but I made it and it was well worth it. I took the Processing class with Luis and Stanley, instructors extraordinaire. The class was astounding, very thorough, with exceptional extra speakers brought in. The section on pest control was an eye opener and has been extremely useful on all my inspections, not just processing. Although I was already inspecting on-farm processors, this class was the determining factor in encouraging me to expand to processing facilities. Between processing inspections and a couple of consults I have done, it increased my income by 25%. This hasn't made me rich, but it certainly has eased the crunch, and I feel it has made me a much more aware inspector. Thank you for the opportunity!

Elaine Ferry was our 2003 Rutherford Scholarship Winner.

IOIA Scholarships Available for Organic Inspector Training

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

Both prospective and experienced inspectors are eligible to apply for the Rutherford Scholarship. It is awarded to an individual on the basis of need and potential as judged by the IOIA Scholarship Committee. Applicants can choose to attend any IOIA-sponsored training. The Scholarship pays for tuition, room and board but does not cover transportation or other expenses.

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

IOIA also offers the annual **Organic Community Initiative Scholarship**, which provides full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored basic organic

IOIA Accreditation News

New in 2003:

Brian Magaro, Livestock, Processing

Renewals:

Lizabet Dwyor: Crops, Livestock, Processing

Stanley Edwards: Crops, Livestock, Processing

Fred Ehler: Crops, Processing

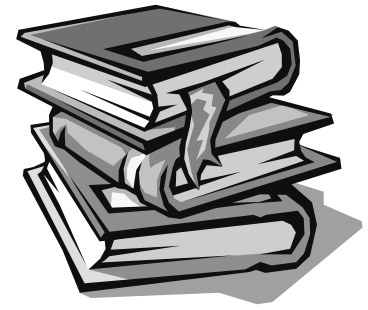
John Foster: Crops, Processing

Jim Fullmer: Crops

Janine Gibson: Crops, Livestock, Processing

Brian Magaro: Crops

Margaret Scoles: Crops, Livestock, Processing



IOIA offers Accreditation in 3 categories as a membership service available to IOIA Inspector Members with at least 2 years of inspection experience in the category. Contact the IOIA office for application forms. The IOIA Accreditation Program is also available on the website. **Next deadline: March 1**

IOIA says 'Thank you' to **Linda Kaner** for serving as Chair of the Accreditation Review Panel for 5 years! IOIA says 'Welcome' and 'Thank you' to our new ARP Chair, **Mike Wise!** The transition to new ARP Chair and Accreditation Committee Chair has been made, quite smoothly and harmoniously. We've revised and made the scoring forms more electronic so that the ARP can operate almost 100% by Email.

Current ARP members are:

Inspector Members: Mike Wise, Stephen Grealy, and Linda Kaner

Certifier Representative: John McKeon, CCOF

Consumer Representative: Ami Greenberg, Washington

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

For application materials and information on IOIA training programs, contact Margaret Scoles, IOIA Executive Director/Training Manager, IOIA, P.O. Box 6, Broadus, MT 59317-0006, Email ioia@ioia.net, or visit www.ioia.net to download application forms. The deadline for returning Scholarship applications is November 1. Scholarship recipients are notified by December 15.

Regional Training News

By Lisa Pierce

As the Regional Training Manager I am thankful and appreciative of the opportunities I have had this year to meet with many of you – Brian, Ann, Gary, Jack, Dag, John, and Luis of IOIA Board, Margaret and Phoebe, training coordinators, volunteers, members and members in waiting. I am struck with the

diversity of our group and the overriding sense of being 'connected' – of serving this larger entity called IOIA. It is an exciting time of many challenges and decisions to be made together. And part of what is so exciting is that I keep hearing very similar ideas expressed again and again from many different people. Somehow there is this communal sense of change and direction. That is the spirit that keeps me thinking and going. The expression of that spirit, however, is a little more mundane – a little more administrative. Currently there is a multitude of administrative changes in process and in search of time and funding. These include procedures to be included in revised Training Coordinator and Co-sponsor manuals, revised training checklists and Training Coordinator directory. IOIA regional inspector trainings completed since last issue include Farm and Process trainings in Gainesville, Florida cosponsored with QCS, and Basic Farm training in Japan cosponsored with JOIA. Upcoming regional trainings include Process training in Japan (Japanese language) also with JOIA, Basic Farm training in Costa Rica (Spanish language) cosponsored with Eco-LOGICA, Advanced and Basic Farm trainings in British Columbia cosponsored with COABC, and Livestock training (distance curriculum) in Manitoba cosponsored with Assiniboine Community College. ♪

Highlights from BoD Executive Committee Conference Call, December 17, 2003

(Note: Actual minutes will be finalized and approved on Feb. 19 and posted on the IOIA website.)

Present: Executive Committee members Ann Baier, Dag Falck, John Foster, Brian Magaro, Jack Reams.

IOIA Staff: Margaret Scoles.

Brian called the meeting to order at 8:05 pm EST.

Secretary's Report - Approval of Minutes from Oct. 18-20, 2003

Treasurer's Report - Jack and Margaret commented on the financial reports and the proposed 2004 budget sent out ahead of this Board meeting.

Draft Budget for 2004 - Discussion: The Board would like support of the Membership for their draft budget, and proposes to present different scenarios for balancing the budget at the AGM. We are interested in engaging the membership in discussion in order to gain better understanding of their priorities. Jack and Margaret will be prepared to present the proposed deficit budget at the AGM. They will also prepare for discussion three fleshed out alternative scenarios for a balanced budget, including: a) Increased membership dues; b) Increased training income; c) Reduced expenses.

Adjustment to proposed budget: Staff Raises

Discussion: The Board discussed an incremental raise each year for the Executive Director. An incremental raise is also planned for Phoebe, and is already reflected in the draft budget. Motion: The salary of the Executive Director shall be increased by \$1200 for the year 2004. Endorse: All

Committees: No committee reports available for this meeting. Committee Reports are being published in the December newsletter.

Scholarship Committee Chair Discussion: The Board thanked Rochelle Eisen for her long dedicated service and a job well done as chair of the scholarship committee. Nancy Ludwig has been recommended to be the new chair. It was noted that three of the four members are past scholarship winners. Motion: Appoint Nancy Ludwig as Chair of the Scholarship Committee. Endorse: All

Canadian Committee Discussion: Dag is the Liaison to this committee. The current co-chairs, Rochelle Eisen and Jim Hudson, are resigning. The Board asked Dag whether he would be willing to serve as interim chair. John encouraged this scenario based on his recent experience of stepping in as interim chair of the Accreditation Committee. He reflected on how useful it was for him to have even interim experience in order to better understand the committee, and also because he was motivated to see things move forward and identify someone (other than a Board member) that would actively fulfill the role of chair so that the committee will function well. Dag agreed to serve as interim chair of the Canadian Committee. Dag will contact the outgoing committee chairs for the Canadian Committee and, with the Board's support, offer to serve as the interim chair of this committee.

Training Committee Janine Gibson has notified the committee that she will be resigning from her position as chair of the Training Committee. It is not yet clear who will be the replacement.

2003 Bylaws Amendment Ballot: Discussion: In order to have a quorum, 68 people must vote and the deadline for receiving ballots is December 20, 2003.

2004 AGM

AGM dates are as follows:

March 11-12: Advanced Training

March 13: AGM

March 14: All day Board of Director's Meeting.

a. Ballot and Nominations Committees Discussion: As required by IOIA Bylaws, the nominations committee needs to provide a list of candidates for every vacancy on the Board at least 60 days before the election per Article 5 (3) (b) of the Bylaws. (This date is January 11, 2004 in anticipation of the March 13 AGM). The complete list of candidates will be posted on website and sent out by email, including short biographies of the candidates, and then sent out with by mail with the proposed bylaws amendment that must be sent out with the mailing at least 45 days before the AGM. Chris Kidwell has sent out an email to the committee, requesting that we recommend candidates. We would like nominees to be aware that if they are elected as a full Board member (not an Alternate), half their travel expenses to the AGM will be paid by IOIA. They will be expected to participate in the all-day Board meeting that will be held at the location of the AGM on March 14, 2004. A Ballot Committee of three members will be appointed from those attending the AGM in Costa Rica.

b. Cost to Members for the Annual Meeting The Board approved a nominal registration fee for members attending the AGM. The main purpose of this is to create an accurate list of attenders who will be eating meals. IOIA will pay for lunch and dinner for all members attending (a cost of approximately \$25 per person).

c. BOD meeting; Confirm attendance/participants/dates The EC agreed to support Diane Cooner's attendance and participation in the AGM in the amount of up to \$700. Her participation at the meeting may include such roles as newsletter reporter, photographer, presenter (website orientation refresher, report on the Fundraising Committee, etc.) and Ballot Committee.

Set date of next BOD Meeting (set after the call for Feb. 19, 8 PM EST)

Brian **adjourned** the meeting at 10:56 PM EST.

Future agenda topics: Accreditation, RTOC, Certifier's Advisory Council, Training Cancellation Policy, Procedures (Personnel, Accreditation) and Policy Manuals. 📌

Committee Reports

Accreditation: Chair Jake Lewin, jake@sasquatch.com 831-469-3964, Liaison John Foster 503-474-2824, john@onlinemac.com Members: Linda Kaner, John Foster, Alex Hanley, Arthur Harvey, Chip Kraynyk, Margaret Scoles. The Accreditation Review Panel (ARP) has met and cleared the accreditation work backlog. With this out of the way, the accreditation committee and the ARP can begin working with the board to improve both the process and value of the accreditation program. Contact Jake with your input.

Business Plan: Ad Hoc, Chair: Jack Reams, marlene_reams@telus.net 604-858-9815. Liaison Brian Magaro, 717-732-7940, magarob@aol.com

A business plan has been developed as an internal document for presentation to the annual meeting. It contains proposals to enhance the marketing of IOIA and its potential to new and old members alike. The plan also includes working with the Communications & Marketing Committee to enhance IOIA's role in becoming an expanded educational facilitator to meet the needs of varied, distinct audiences in the organic industry.

Bylaws: Chair, Arthur Harvey, 207-388-2860, arthurharvey@yahoo.com Liaison Garry Lean, 705-887-5230 garrylean@sympatico.ca Only one formal proposal has come before the bylaws committee during the past year: We approved the amendment proposed by the Membership Committee that was recently voted on and passed by the membership (see page 4).

Canadian Committee: Interim Chair Dag Falck, dfalck@junction.net, 250-379-2614. Dag has agreed to serve as Interim Chair for this committee until a new Chair is found. **Canadian Inspectors, if any of you would like the opportunity to aid communication between Canadian inspector members, and to help represent IOIA in the Canadian Organic sector as Chair of the IOIA Canadian Committee, please contact Dag.** At meetings held during the Guelph Conference, Janine Gibson represented the CC at a sector Strategy Meeting Jan 25th and supported the development of a Canadian Organic Coalition which could have a subcommittee overseeing the Organic Regulation and Standard Maintenance. She also attended a further Strategy discussion the afternoon of the 25th in which she supported proposed coalition members lobbying the Federal

Government to ensure the new Agricultural Policy Framework has funding earmarked for regional organic initiatives that meet the APF's environmental targets. To this end the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada has new resources on approaches to federal lobbying to ensure the APF does not ignore how the organic sector and our practices meet many of the APF goals for environmental sustainability. Janine encourages Canadian members to visit the OACC website and review the resource documents available there that complement our Canadian National Organic Strategic Plan and how we as inspectors and educators can help achieve its conversion to organic targets.

Communications & Marketing: Chair Bob Howe, earthorganic@aol.com 845-657-9592. Liaison Brian Magaro (see Business Plan). This committee has a revamped name. Needs members with time to work on committee issues.

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

Editorial Review: Chair Joe Montecalvo, montecalvo@aol.com 805-772-3574, Liaison Dag Falck (see Canadian Committee). No report submitted.

Ethics: Chair Joyce Ford, jford@hbc.com Liaison: Brian Magaro (see Business Plan). Chair Joyce reports no changes and no complaints.

Finance: Chair/Liaison: Jack Reams, see Business Plan. Business Plan Committee to be rolled into the Finance Committee. No report submitted.

Fundraising: Chair Diane Cooner, 707-869-3017, amani@sonic.net Liaison Jack Reams, see Business Plan. Diane continues to explore member-driven ways to improve assn. income. Will be actively seeking potential funders for various IOIA programs.

Latin American: Chair Lidia Gaivironsky, 5411)4 503-3106, gaivi@sion.com Liaison Luis Brenes, lbrenes@racsa.co.cr +506-226-1681. Lidia continues to answer messages from Latinamerican people, to translate press releases, to send resources for the website. Support requested in the 2004 budget to assist participation of Latin American members in IOIA AGM and Advanced training.

Membership: Chair Chris Kidwell 530-628-4560, ckidwell@tcoek12.org, Liaison John Foster (see Accreditation). The Nominations Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Membership Committee, has assembled a slate of candidates for the board of directors and the alternate board member positions open for the 2004 election. There are three BOD seats and two alternate seats up for election. An effort is made to

have two candidates for each board and alternate seat. Election information was mailed to all members in late January.

Scholarship: Chair Rochelle Eisen, 250-494-7980, rare@telus.net Liaison Ann Baier, see TOC. Thanks to Rochelle Eisen for many many years of service leading this committee. The reins have been successfully handed over to Nancy Ludwig, who will now chair this committee. Scholarships were recently awarded to two individuals, see article on page 10.

Training: Chair Janine Gibson, 204-434-6018, Janine@mb.sympatico.ca Liaison Ann Baier, see TOC. The Curriculum and Program Sub Committee (CAPS) of the Training Committee met in Oregon for three days of intensive work along with a follow up conference call in February. Active in Oregon were Lisa Piece, John Foster, Harriet Behar, Margaret Scoles, Ann Baier, John Burns and Janine Gibson. Stan Edwards sent his regrets and Joe Montecalvo was welcomed as a guest.

The workshop was an opportunity for CAPS committee members to meet face to face and 1) formulate a framework for designing, writing, and editing curriculum and 2) establish working groups. Seven members attended Day One: several programmatic issues were discussed and 'learner centered' approach to curriculum design was reviewed. Days 2 and 3 consisted of expanding the vision of IOIA training programs and further exploration of criteria for assessing course material to be used in IOIA copyrighted courses. Working as a group, four members of CAPS committee analyzed the initial IOIA Crop Inspection presentations developed by John Burns, as well as discussion of the benefits of Harriet's much more liberal use of pictures and reduced Power Point slides.

The minutes included a skeletal outline of the topics discussed during the workshop. Following the minutes is 'Action-Reflection-Action: Framework for Designing, Writing, and Editing IOIA Curriculum' based on compilation of notes taken by Ann Baier, Margaret Scoles, and Lisa Pierce.

The CAPS Sub-Committee has invited another member of the General Training Committee to participate if there is interest, though the smaller group is felt to be more workable. Janine has also called for a new Training Committee Chair and invites her replacement to step up to the plate in facilitating communication on training issues. If you are interested please contact Ann Baier at farmorganic@aol.com 831-426-2052.

Training Oversight Committee: Chair Harriet Behar, harrieta@mwt.net Liaison Ann Baier, ahbaier@aol.com 831-426-2052. Ongoing, approving trainings and TC's. The RTOC has dropped the 'R' in their name and is now simply the TOC. They continue to be busy reviewing regional training proposals, making suggestions and approving trainings as put forth by Lisa after TOC input. Training Coordinators for these trainings have also been discussed and approved. All of their work is done via email. See listing of upcoming IOIA regional trainings on page 3. ☛

Florida Training Report

By Rick Martinez & Marty Mesh

An IOIA Processor Inspector Training was held in Gainesville Fl. January 15th thru 18th cosponsored by Florida Organic Growers (FOG) / Quality Certification Services (QCS). There were a total of 18 participants, 6 of which were from Canada who endured the bone chilling 60 F – 70 F degree weather. Trainers for the event were Rick Martinez, IOIA trainer, and Marty Mesh, executive director of QCS. Presentations were also given by QCS staffers Angela Caudle and Laura Kennedy.

The mock inspection was made at Golden Flake Snack Foods potato chip line. It provided a quite interesting opportunity for the participants see how potato chips are made as well as the challenges related to organic processing of this quite addictive product. Bet you can't eat just one. Our thanks go out to the staff at Golden Flakes for subjecting themselves to this torture for the sake of higher education.

Our thanks also go out to the staff of QCS for all of their support before, during and after the training. And last but not least we must thank the attendees for enduring the many hours of boring classroom sessions and the dull sense of humor of the trainers, a true test of their metal.

Most outrageous statement award honors go to Marty Mesh for the following: When some asked, after 30 minutes, how much was left of the ethics presentation, Marty replied,

"There can't be much left, there's not that much ethical stuff to talk about". *(that's Florida for you!)*

A close second place finish was Rick with the following: "Do you understand the phrase 'cover your ass'?" *(see? Proves our point)*

The message to the students from the two training coordinators? Don't worry about being ethical and cover your ass!! First place award was a brand new IOIA baseball cap. Second place award was diddlysquat. Congratulations Marty and Rick.

A Great Wagging of Fingers Is hereby awarded to John Foster and John O'Malley Burns for not getting articles to me about the Oregon training for a second issue in a row! You are both on notice that you each owe me an article about the Farm and Process training in Wilsonville. This public reprimand was approved by The Boss. *(Dear Readers, please expect to see articles on these two trainings in our Spring issue! – Ed)*



Checkin' out the chad, um, uh..., that is, the Chip factory, in Florida



Instead You Get This

Thought you would want to know about this e-mail virus that I just heard about today. It seems to affect owners and users of both PC's & Macs. Even the most advanced programs from Norton or McAfee cannot take care of this one. It appears to mainly affect owners who were born prior to 1960.

Symptoms:

1. Causes you to send the same e-mail twice.
2. Causes you to send a blank e-mail.
3. Causes you to send e-mail to the wrong person.
4. Causes you to send it back to the person who sent it to you.
5. Causes you to forget to attach the attachment.
6. Causes you to hit "SEND" before you've finished.
7. Causes you to hit "DELETE" instead of "SEND."
8. Causes you to hit "SEND" when you should "DELETE."

It is called the "C-NILE VIRUS." ☹

Can The Certified Organic Label Be Trusted?

By Larry Lack

After more than five years of doing inspections, I am asking other inspectors to consider what I think are critical questions about the integrity of the certification process as practiced by some certifiers. In my effort to be "the eyes and ears of the organic consumer" I've had to conclude that in some cases the "certified organic" label is not a reliable or trustworthy assurance that the products it identifies as organic are actually produced according to certifier standards.

In part I think this situation stems from conflicts of interest which, from what I've observed, are not uncommon in organics. In countries other than the United States, certifiers that are not regulated by the NOP may still allow inspected parties to certify one another. Certified operators may participate in or strongly influence certification decisions about other producers or processors with whom they do business. In some instances the degree of financial interdependence between and among these producers and processors is considerable and creates pressure to certify operations that may not meet certifier standards.

The NOP does not address another even more difficult problem, that of de facto conflict of interest between some for-profit certifiers and those they certify. This occurs as a result of the reputation these certifiers cultivate for "going easy" on the operations they inspect, often couched in terms of being "reasonable" and "client-friendly". For-profit certifiers are compensated based on the number of operations they certify, and some of them compete for and "earn" producer loyalty by overlooking violations of their standards or minimizing the importance of noncompliances that come to their attention.

For these and other reasons, in my opinion some certified operations do not in fact meet the standards that their certifiers supposedly require. I think these improper certifications are a serious problem. They endanger the reputation of the large majority of producers who do meet certifier standards, and they break faith with

consumers who put their trust in the "certified organic" label and the ethical system of certification they assume it reflects.

I think most certifiers and their chapters practice exemplary ethics in all aspects of their work. But it is disturbing to find that very questionable and even flatly fraudulent certifications are not uncommon. Too many operations that were clearly out of compliance when I've inspected them have subsequently been granted certification without anything having been done to address or remedy the noncompliances that I (and/or previous inspectors of these operations) have brought to the attention of certifiers in our reports.

Like all inspectors I normally defer to certifiers to use my reports and other information to arrive at final decisions about which producers and processors should be certified. But in some situations I think this deference to certifiers needs to be limited. I don't think we should simply walk away from situations in which our observations about whether standards have been met are completely ignored by certifiers. When this happens with one of my inspections I can't help asking myself "what's the point of doing this work when critical information I provide to certifiers is not acted on or even acknowledged by them?"

Other inspectors have made known their concerns that certain certifiers tend to overlook serious noncompliances and appear to be certifying noncompliant operations. Based on their observations and my own, I think the certification of noncompliant producers is a substantial problem that needs to be addressed because it could seriously damage everything that we in the organic movement have worked so hard to create and nurture. In this connection I know that many of you will recall how a single case of conflict of interest and corruption in the certification process nearly destroyed a major certifier several years ago.

I think transparent certifier policies and a conscientious effort to achieve transparency in business practices can encourage, if not assure, integrity in the application of certifier standards. But unfortunately transparency is not an outstanding characteristic of most organic certifiers. Most certifiers do little or nothing to encourage the public to

understand how they make certification decisions. If certifiers made their standards readily available to the public and made it known that they welcome enquiries about how their standards are applied and enforced, I think that many if not most cases of unearned or inadequately documented certification would tend to be eliminated.

I know that the USDA's NOP, which governs all U.S. certifiers and many certifiers in other countries, has an accreditation process that is supposed to reduce or eliminate conflict of interest and address other ethical problems among NOP accredited certifiers. The NOP's rules make it more difficult for certified parties to directly influence decisions about their own certification. But the NOP does not address the problem of certifiers that attract business by overlooking or minimizing noncompliances, nor does it require increased transparency from certifiers regarding how they conduct business and prevent inspected parties from influencing certification decisions.

Since the NOP only came into force in 2002, it may be too early to pass judgment on its effectiveness as an ethics watchdog. But what I know of USDA's record and its current leadership gives me little confidence that this money-dominated agency will avoid the fate of other government regulatory agencies, nearly all of which are thoroughly dominated by the special interests they were created to regulate.

In my view NOP oversight is no substitute for self regulation by the organic community through open discussion. "Organic light" certifiers whose "wink-wink" business practices compromise organic core values and ideals should be challenged and forced to change their ways or quit calling themselves organic.

I hope inspectors will find their voice and speak out about the problems I've touched on in these comments. Inspectors are well-positioned to understand how careless or unscrupulous certifiers, large or small, can tarnish the good name of organics which is largely responsible for its phenomenal growth and commercial success. IOIA could coordinate inspector efforts to ensure that certifiers document how compliance issues identified in inspection reports are resolved. Inspectors should also consider how cooperation and networking with consumer groups and publications such as Consumer Reports could add clout to inspector demands for increased transparency and accountability on the part of certifiers.

Inspectors should not be shy about suggesting changes and improve- (see Label, page 22)

Records Show No BSE Tests in Washington State

Federal agriculture officials did not test any commercial cattle for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, a.k.a. mad cow disease) through the first seven months of 2003 in Washington state -- where the first U.S. case of the disease was detected on December 23, 2003 -- according to records obtained by United Press International.

The U.S.D.A.'s records of mad cow screenings, conducted on 35,000 animals between 2001 to 2003, also reveal no animals were tested for the past two years at Vern's Moses Lake Meats, the Washington slaughterhouse where the mad cow case was first detected.

In addition, no mad cow tests were conducted during the two-year period at any of the six federally registered slaughterhouses in Washington state. This includes Washington's biggest slaughterhouse, Washington Beef in Toppenish -- the 17th largest in the country, which slaughters 290,000 head per year -- and two facilities in Pasco that belong to Tyson, the largest beef slaughtering company in the U.S. Nearly every test conducted in Washington over the two-year period was on animals from Midway Meats in Centralia, the packing plant where Vern's Moses sent the infected cow carcass. The meat was distributed to several states where some people apparently consumed it, raising concerns about the possibility of contracting the human equivalent of mad cow, an always fatal, brain-wasting condition known as variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

The USDA said the meat posed little risk to consumers because the most infectious parts -- the brain and spinal cord -- had been removed.

The testing records, obtained by UPI under the Freedom of Information Act, which the USDA delayed releasing for six months, also show a number of other gaps in the agency's national surveillance strategy for mad cow disease, including:

-- Tests were conducted at fewer than 100 of the 700 plants known to slaughter cattle.

-- Some of the biggest slaughterhouses were not tested at all.

-- Cows from the top four beef producing states, which account for nearly 70 percent of all cattle slaughtered each year in the United States, only accounted for 11 percent of all the animals screened.

-- Though dairy cattle are considered the most likely to develop mad cow, some of the top dairy slaughtering plants were sampled only a few times or not at all.

-- The test tally for 2003 includes more than 1,000 animals ages 24 months or less, which would not test positive for the disease on the test used by the USDA even if they were infected. Many of these animals displayed signs that could indicate mad cow disease, including being downers or unable to stand, and symptoms suggesting a possible brain disorder.

"I can't believe that," Felicia Nestor, food safety program director of the whistleblower organization the Government Accountability Project (GAP), in Washington, D.C., said of the USDA's lack of testing in Washington.

Nestor questioned why the USDA would not implement more testing after the finding of a case of mad cow in Alberta, Canada, in May of 2003, in a close border state such as Washington. The records show that after May and through July, however, no commercial cows in Washington state were tested.

"It's right near Alberta ... and everybody knows a lot of cattle cross over the border from Canada into the United States," Nestor told UPI. Approximately 1.7 million Canadian cattle entered the United States in 2002.

GAP has followed the mad cow surveillance program closely for several years and has released statements from current USDA inspectors, who said the surveillance system is not administered uniformly across the country. In some cases, the inspectors said, the plant personnel -- not USDA veterinarians -- are in charge of selecting which animals go for testing.

USDA spokesman Jim Rogers said some states, such as Washington, may not get tested during some periods of the year because the agency's system is based on sampling from eight regions of the country rather than each state.

Asked if the agency tries to sample from all slaughterhouses, Rogers said, "Not necessarily." Some plants do not take downer cattle so the USDA will not conduct much, if any, testing at these

facilities because the agency wants to target the high-risk animals, he said.

In addition, Rogers said, the samples taken each year by the USDA are adequate to detect mad cow if it is present at the rate of one-in-a-million animals. "As long as they take the required number of samples, they're OK," he said.

Nestor argued the failure to screen any animals for a two-year period at Vern's in Moses Lake, Wash., where a Holstein cow tested positive for mad cow on Dec. 22, raises questions about the ability of the mad cow surveillance program to focus on cows most vulnerable to the disease. Vern's Moses Lake is known for slaughtering older and injured dairy cows, which are considered the cattle most at risk of developing mad cow disease.

Many of the top dairy slaughtering plants around the country either do not appear in the testing records at all or are listed only a couple of times. Dairy cattle often are given feed supplemented with animal protein to enable them to produce the vast quantities of milk required in today's mass dairy operations. Ranchers in the United Kingdom incorporated cattle tissue into their cow feed because it was a cheap source of protein. This is thought to have contributed to the spread of the mad cow epidemic that hit the country in the 1980s because some of the cattle turned into feed were infected.

Although that practice has been banned in the U.S., the ban did not go into effect until 1997 and several feed firms have been and are still in violation. Because cows infected with mad cow disease can take as long as six years before they show symptoms, this raises the possibility that animals infected before or after the feed ban were processed at slaughterhouses such as Vern's Moses Lake, yet were never tested or detected by USDA's surveillance program.

On January 26, 2004, Health & Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced several new public health measures, to be implemented by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), to strengthen significantly the multiple existing firewalls that protect Americans from exposure to the agent thought to cause mad cow disease and that help prevent the spread of BSE in U.S. cattle. Specifically, HHS intends to ban from human food (including dietary supplements), and cosmetics a wide range of bovine-derived material so that the same safeguards that protect Americans from exposure to the agent of BSE through meat

products regulated by USDA also apply to food products that FDA regulates. FDA will also prohibit certain currently allowed feeding and manufacturing practices involving feed for cattle and other ruminant animals. These additional measures will further strengthen FDA's 1997 "animal feed" rule.

To implement these new protections, FDA will publish two interim final rules that will take effect immediately upon publication, although there will be an opportunity for public comment after publication.

The first interim final rule will ban the following materials from FDA-regulated human food, (including dietary supplements) and cosmetics:

-- Any material from "downer" cattle. ("Downer" cattle are animals that cannot walk.)

-- Any material from "dead" cattle. ("Dead" cattle are cattle that die on the farm (i.e. before reaching the slaughter plant);

-- Specified Risk Materials (SRMs) that are known to harbor the highest concentrations of the infectious agent for BSE, such as the brain, skull, eyes, and spinal cord of cattle 30 months or older, and a portion of the small intestine and tonsils from all cattle, regardless of their age or health; and

--The product known as mechanically separated beef, a product which may contain SRMs. Meat obtained by Advanced Meat Recovery (an automated system for cutting meat from bones), may be used since USDA regulations do not allow the presence of SRMs in this product.

The second interim final rule is designed to lower even further the risk that cattle will be purposefully or inadvertently fed prohibited protein. It was the feeding of such protein to cattle that was the route of disease transmission that led to the BSE epidemic in United Kingdom cattle in the 1980's and 1990's.

This interim final rule will implement four specific changes in FDA's present animal feed rule. First, the rule will eliminate the present exemption in the feed rule that allows mammalian blood and blood products to be fed to other ruminants as a protein source. Recent scientific evidence suggests

that blood can carry some infectivity for BSE.

Second, the rule will also ban the use of "poultry litter" as a feed ingredient for ruminant animals. Poultry litter consists of bedding, spilled feed, feathers, and fecal matter that are collected from living quarters where poultry is raised. This material is then used in cattle feed in some areas of the country where cattle and large poultry raising operations are located near each other. Poultry feed may legally contain protein that is prohibited in ruminant feed, such as bovine meat and bone meal. The concern is that spillage of poultry feed in the chicken house occurs and that poultry feed (which may contain protein prohibited in ruminant feed) is then collected as part of the "poultry litter" and added to ruminant feed.

Third, the rule will ban the use of "plate waste" as a feed ingredient for ruminants. Plate waste consists of uneaten meat and other meat scraps that are currently collected from some large restaurant operations and rendered into meat and bone meal for animal feed. The use of "plate waste" confounds FDA's ability to analyze ruminant feeds for the presence of prohibited proteins, compromising the Agency's ability to fully enforce the animal feed rule.

Fourth, the rule will further minimize the possibility of cross-contamination of ruminant and non-ruminant animal feed by requiring equipment, facilities or production lines to be dedicated to non-ruminant animal feeds if they use protein that is prohibited in ruminant feed. Currently, some equipment, facilities and production lines process or handle prohibited and non-prohibited materials and make both ruminant and non-ruminant feed -- a practice which could lead to cross-contamination.

To accompany these new measures FDA will in 2004 step up its inspections of feed mills and renderers. FDA will itself conduct 2,800 inspections and will continue to work with state agencies to fund 3,100 contract inspections of feed mill and renderers and other firms that handle animal feed and feed ingredients. Through partnerships with states, FDA will also receive data on 700 additional inspections, for a total of 3,800 state contract and partnership inspections in 2004 alone, including annual inspections of 100 percent of all known renderers and feed mills that process products

This is yet another example where science cannot save us from an industrial food or agroecosystem. If ever there was a case for the precautionary principle, exposure to BSE and other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies is #1 on the list.

Michelle Gale-Sinex, as posted on the SANET

containing materials prohibited in ruminant feed.

In response to the Dec. 23 finding of a BSE positive cow in Washington state, FDA inspected and traced products at 22 facilities related to that positive cow or products from the cow, including feed mills, farms, dairy farms, calf feeder lots, slaughter houses, meat processors, transfer stations, and shipping terminals. FDA also conducted inspections at the rendering facilities that handled materials from the positive cow, and they were found to be fully in compliance with FDA's feed rule.

To further strengthen protections, FDA/HHS intends to work with Congress to consider proposals to assure that these important protective measures will be implemented as effectively as possible.

FDA is also continuing its efforts to assist in the development of better BSE science, to achieve the same or greater confidence in BSE protection at a lower cost. For example, to enhance the ability of our public health system to detect prohibited materials in animal feed, FDA will continue to support the development and evaluation of diagnostic tests to identify prohibited materials. These tests would offer a quick and reliable method of testing animal feeds for prohibited materials and for testing other products for contamination with the agent thought to cause BSE.

FDA has publicly discussed many of the measures with stakeholders in workshops, videoconferences, and public meetings. In addition, FDA published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in November 2002 (available online at www.fda.gov/OHRMS/DOCKETS/98fr/110602c.htm concerning possible changes to the animal feed rule.

Comprehensive information about FDA's work on BSE and links to other related websites are available at <http://www.fda.gov>.

Link to expert panel report on BSE:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/bse/US_BSE_Report.pdf

Sources: Steve Mitchell, United Press International Medical Correspondent. E-mail sciencemail@upi.com
Thanks to Jim Riddle for posting this on the IOIA Forum;
<http://releases.usnewswire.com/GetRelease.asp?id=138-01262004>

Resources

The new **Organic Certification (USDA) mailing list** is now up and running; subscription is open to the public as are its message archives.

The focus of this forum will be USDA Organic Certification, exclusively.

The list name is: organic-certification
Homepage for this list is:
<http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/organic-certification>

Posting ID is: organic-certification@lists.ibiblio.org

List message archives exist at:
<http://lists.ibiblio.org/pipermail/organic-certification/>

AGRICOLA Upgraded The National Agricultural Library (NAL) has released a significant upgrade to its Web-based AGRICOLA catalog of records for the materials in its collection. The new version of AGRICOLA provides improved access--many new search and retrieval capabilities, with daily updates--to over 4 million bibliographic records, the world's largest compilation of agricultural information.

Other features of NAL's new AGRICOLA catalog include:

- * Users may search the catalog of books, journals and non-print items; search the catalog of article records for the journals indexed; or search the two catalog databases combined.

- * Users may choose either to display results of searches, or to e-mail the search-results to themselves.

- * Hotlinks enable users to obtain the full text of resources, where available electronically.

Access to the new AGRICOLA online public catalog is through www.agricola.nal.usda.gov. Users

visiting the former AGRICOLA98 address will be automatically redirected to the new location.

The National Agricultural Library, located in Beltsville, Md., is part of the Agricultural Research Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific research agency. NAL is one of four U.S. national libraries, and is known for an expert staff, extensive AGRICOLA bibliographic database, leadership in information services and technology applications, and strong collections in agriculture and related sciences.

BSE Archival Info For the best accounts of what happened in Wisconsin, Britain, and elsewhere from the 1960s through mid-1990s around spongiform encephalopathies (mink, sheep, cow, and other) see this book, which you can read on-line for free (or download), PR Watch site: <http://www.prwatch.org>
Click on the icon of the book cover, /Mad Cow USA/.

Who Owns What Great informational graphic and information on corporate ownership in the Organic Sector:
www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/services/corporate-ownership.html

Energy-Efficient Grass-Based Meat and Veal Production and Marketing Manual (54 pgs), Center for Agricultural Development & Entrepreneurship, (607) 431-6034; khodne@cadefarms.org, <http://www.cadefarms.org/publications.htm>

Organic Agriculture Symposium 2003, proceedings from ASA-CSSA-SSSA Annual Meetings held November 2003, <http://www.misa.umn.edu> (see forum section); for free CD, contact Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota, (612) 625-8235; misamail@umn.edu.

Organic Agriculture Worldwide 2004, 88-pg directory of members and associates, from International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, 16 Euro (nonmembers) from IFOAM Head Office, headoffice@ifoam.org; http://www.ifoam.org/neu_index.html

Designing a Clean Energy Future: A Resource Manual, 100-pg workbook with 30 case studies, from Minnesota Project, University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, and Minnesota Dept. of Commerce, <http://www.mnproject.org>; print copy is free from MDC's Energy Information Center, (651) 296-5175.

An Assessment of the Environmental Impacts of Organic Farming, 80-page report commissioned by UK's Dept. for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, available online from Elm Farm Research Centre, contact lead author Mark Shepherd, ADAS Consulting, mark.shepherd@adas.co.uk or [@efrc.com](http://elmfarm</p></div><div data-bbox=)

http://www.efrc.com/updates_main.htm

Breaking New Ground: Carbon Management at the Farm Scale, 15-pg project report, http://www.cfra.org/pdf/carbon_management_report.pdf; print copy is \$5 from Center for Rural Affairs, PO Box 136, Lyons, NE 68038; (402) 687-2100.

Enhanced Nutrient Content of Grass-Fed Beef: Justification for Health Label Claim, 11-pg review paper from California State University-Chico and University of California Cooperative Extension researchers, available from Grassfed beef educational website, <http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/grsfdbeef>; or contact Glenn Nader, UC Cooperative Extension, (530) 822-7515; ganader@ucdavis.edu.

Organic agriculture policy statement (Sept. 2003 draft) from National Association of State Depts. of Agriculture, contact NASDA, 1156 15th St. NW, Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 296-9680
http://www.nasda.org/nasda/nasda/Calendar/NASDA2003_reports/policies/18.pdf

Support Alternatives Journal Alternatives Journal is launching a Sustainability Initiative. It is the only Canadian environmental journal with a mandate to link the work of advocates, academics and professionals and to cover both ecological and social justice issues. *Alternatives* is reaching out to the grassroots to build its subscriber base to a sustainable level, which means that it will be less reliant on outside funding, and the environmental message will reach more people than ever. To find out how you can help, visit <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca>

New On-line Irrigation Calculator An irrigation schedule calculator is now available on-line, free of charge, courtesy of Gaia College Inc. You can find the calculator at http://www.organic-landcare.com/irrigation_calculator.php

Please send your comments and suggestions on how the calculator can be improved, or adapted to a particular crop or application.

The LC Science Tracer Bullet on Sustainable Agriculture (a research guide to help get the reader on target) is 20 pages and includes references from books, journals, dissertations; as well as sources from the Internet and Organizations such as Organic Ag Info and SARE (SAN). It is not intended to be a comprehensive bibliography. It is available

on-line via the Library of Congress Science Reference Service:

<http://www.loc.gov/r/scitech/tracer-bullets/sustainable-agtb.html>

If you are interested in receiving a hard copy contact jehar@loc.gov

New organic books from CABI

Publishing:

Organic Agriculture: Sustainability, Markets and Policies. Info:

<http://www.organic-research.com/Books/bookdetail.asp?isbn0851997406>

Organic Fruit Growing More info:

<http://www.organic-research.com/Books/bookdetail.asp?isbn085199640X>

Animal Health and Welfare in

Organic Agriculture More info:

http://www.cabi-publishing.org/bookshop/book_detail.asp?isbn085199668X

New Book Posits Organic Replicates

What It Set Out to Oppose Thirty years after the birth of organic agriculture in California, the industry looks more than ever like the agribusiness model it set out to oppose, asserts Julie Guthman, assistant professor of community studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and the author of the forthcoming book *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004). www.ucpress.edu

Biological Farmers of Australia has released *its Organic Food and Farming Report Australia for 2003*. A key issue highlighted by the report is that growth in demand (20-25%) continues to outstrip supply (10-15%), and will likely continue to do so for some years to come. The vision for the industry is to have 10% of farmers in Australia producing organically by 2020. <http://www.organic-research.com/news/database/newsarticle.asp?id2485>

More from freerangegraphics.com

The same folks that brought us *The Matrix* have another great online cartoon about how Kraft is experimenting with our health, www.krafty.org/flash/



APHIS Seeks GMO Comments

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the USDA intends to prepare an environmental impact statement in connection with potential changes to the regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms. This notice identifies potential issues and alternatives that will be studied in the environmental impact statement and requests public comment to further delineate the scope of the issues and alternatives. Deadline for comments is March 23, 2004.

You may submit comments by postal mail/commercial delivery or by e-mail. If you use postal mail/commercial delivery, please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 03-031-2, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 03-031-2. If you use e-mail, address your comment to regulations@aphis.usda.gov. Your comment must be contained in the body of your message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and "Docket No. 03-031-2" on the subject line. For further info, contact Ms. Stephanie Stephens, APHIS, (301) 734-4836.

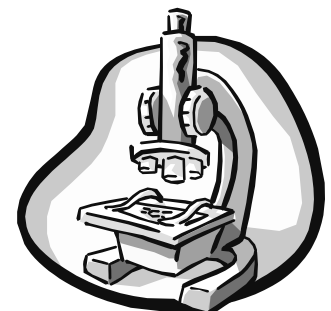
GM Contamination, from page 21

licensed to hand out "organic" labels in the United Kingdom, claims that it can trace every ingredient in products it certifies back to farms that have been

declared GM-free. The organisation sets the upper limit for GM material in organic foods at 0.1%, as it is technically difficult to measure contamination at levels below this. "This research shows we need to do more," says a Soil Association spokeswoman. Murphy predicts that it will become even more difficult in the future for the organic food industry to keep its products GM-free. Almost all the soya from the United States and Argentina, two of the world's major producers, is transgenic. The world's third largest soya producer - Brazil - legalised GM varieties of the crop last September. In many countries, GM-free crops are often mixed with transgenic varieties after harvesting. And batches of soya seed sold as non-GM can contain 1-2% from transgenic varieties. "In another year the problem will be ten times worse," says Murphy. <http://www.nature.com/nsu/040202/040202-15.htm>

Clark Comments on Schmeiser Case

For an interesting commentary on the Schmeiser vs. Monsanto case currently being considered by the Canadian Supreme Court, check out the CropChoice website, <http://www.cropchoice.com/leadstry.asp?recid=2370>



GMO NEWS**AgCanada Ends Testing of GE Wheat**

Agriculture Canada is abandoning a long-running project involving GE wheat it developed in partnership with biotech giant Monsanto, amid doubts about how well the product would sell. Regulatory authorities continue to assess the risks and benefits of Roundup Ready wheat, but the AgCan decision suggests that scientific hopes for the first strain of biotech wheat may be dimming.

Jim Bole of AgCan said the department will make no further investment in the crop it has developed with Monsanto since 1997. "We're no longer developing Roundup Ready wheat with Monsanto." Asked if the department's decision reflects concern about whether Canada's wheat customers would accept the new strain of wheat, Bole replied: "Yes, I think it does."

The Canadian Wheat Board has said most of its customers don't want the new strain and last year it asked Monsanto to withdraw its application for regulatory approval.

Bole went on to say that the biotech revolution in agriculture has not lived up to expectations.

"I'm afraid it was oversold. We expected to be growing crops at this time with many traits that would be of great value to consumers and producers.

"But the regulatory area has been much more stringent than anyone anticipated and market acceptance hasn't been as positive as we would have anticipated."

<http://www.canoe.ca/NationalTicker/CANOE-wire.Genetic-Wheat.html>

Mendo County GE Fight

A consortium of the world's largest producers of GE crop products has pumped \$150,000 into a campaign to defeat a Mendocino County, California, ballot measure that would be the first in the nation to ban such products. It is the largest contribution ever funneled into a Mendocino County campaign, county election officials said.

The donation by CropLife America, a Washington-based industry lobbying group representing Monsanto, Dow

and DuPont corporations, among others, so far is the only financial support reported by a citizen committee opposing Measure H on the March 2 ballot. CropLife's \$150,000 contribution dwarfs the \$18,000 raised so far by local supporters of Measure H. With a month left before the election, the anti-Measure H group is positioned to spend at least \$3 per registered voter on direct mail and local radio and newspaper ads to convince them the ballot initiative is a "dangerous precedent." As of Jan. 2, there were 46,480 registered voters in Mendocino County.

In 2002, CropLife contributed \$3.7 million to a successful statewide campaign in Oregon to defeat a measure that would have required the labeling of foods produced from GE crops. Mendocino's Measure H does not require labeling.

Measure H, if approved in the March 2 election, would ban the "propagation, cultivation, raising and growing" of GE crops.

Monsanto, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroScience, DuPont and other agricultural biotech companies contend that genetically engineered crops are safe and subject to adequate regulatory review.

Critics, however, cite a report released Jan. 20 by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences that found it may be difficult to completely prevent GE plants and animals from having unintended environmental and public health effects.

The Press Democrat, January 2004

GM Crops Increase Pesticide Use

A new report from Dr. Charles Benbrook, director of the Northwest Science and Environmental Policy Center, Idaho, concludes that the 550 million acres of GM corn, soybeans and cotton planted in the US since 1996 has increased pesticide use (herbicides and insecticides) by about 50 million pounds.

The report is the first comprehensive study of the impact of all major commercial GM crops on pesticide use in the US over the first eight years of commercial use, 1996-2003. Most studies to date have only focused on the first three years of GM crop adoption (1996-1998), and no study has estimated impacts in 2002 and 2003.

Benbrook draws on official US Department of Agriculture (USDA) data on pesticide use by crop and state to calculate the overall impact of GM crops on the volume of pesticides applied on corn, soybean and cotton. These three crops account for nearly all the area planted to GM crops in the US. The analysis focuses on herbicide tolerant (HT) corn, soybeans and cotton; and corn and cotton genetically engineered to produce the natural insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt).

Benbrook calculates the difference between the average pounds of pesticides applied on acres planted to GM crops, compared to the pounds applied to otherwise similar conventional crops. In their first three years of commercial sale (1996-1998), GM crops reduced pesticide use by about 25.4 million pounds, but in the last three years (2001-2003), over 73 million more pounds of pesticides were applied on GM acres.

This 22% jump was caused by a major price reduction in glyphosate, the need to control more difficult weeds, and the emergence of resistance and/or lessened sensitivity in weed species that were once fully controlled by one glyphosate application. So for HT soybeans, the difference in average herbicide pounds applied per acre between GM and conventional crops shifted from a reduction of 0.36 pounds per acre in 1996 to an increase of 0.47 pounds per acre in 2003.

In short, over the last eight years, HT crops have increased pesticide use an estimated 70.2 million pounds, while Bt transgenic varieties have reduced pesticide use an estimated 19.6 million pounds. Thus, total pesticide use has risen some 50.6 million pounds over the eight-year period. <http://www.biotech-info.net/>

Growing Public Unease over GM

The UK Government has been warned of "widespread unease" over "incremental" steps being taken towards the introduction of GM crops in the UK. Liberal Democrats told the Commons such a "momentous and irreversible" decision was supported by only 2% of the public.

Ministers are considering reports and advice on farm scale evaluations and are due to set out conclusions "shortly."

European Union governments were given 90 days from late January to decide on lifting their five-year-old moratorium on GM foods. If they do not act by then, the European Commission will be able to make the decision itself.

Evening Standard, Thurs Feb 5th 2004

http://www.femail.co.uk/pages/standard/article.html?in_article_id=207451&in_page_id=169

USDA'S Biotech Update Raises Concerns

Today's announcement of plans to update the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) biotech regulations is a welcome admission that the agency's status quo is insufficient. While offering some improvements, the vision outlined by USDA raises several troubling issues. The National Research Council (NRC) issued a report on Tuesday warning USDA of the inadequacy of current biological confinement of genetically engineered organisms. Just two days later, instead of implementing NRC's recommendations to control the spread of unapproved varieties of biotech crops, the department is considering the exact opposite approach--tolerating failure.

USDA indicated that it might allow low-level contamination of food crops by unapproved biotech varieties to enter the U.S. food supply. The agency claims it will only grant exemptions from regulation when low-level contamination occurs in spite of good agricultural practices. But good agricultural practices should not result in violations of federal regulations and the contamination of the food supply. Lowering the bar to accommodate sloppy compliance with regulation is unacceptable and has no place in any plan to strengthen USDA regulation of biotech crops.

Another serious concern raised by today's announcement is USDA's decision to not improve regulation of already approved biotech crops. With their 2002 report on transgenic plants, the National Research Council cautioned that post-commercialization monitoring should be used to validate deregulation decisions, a recommendation that has yet to be implemented. USDA's unfortunate and unwise decision is in conflict with the NRC recommendations.

Updating USDA biotech regulations is a significant undertaking for which U.S. PIRG commends the Agency. We look forward to working with USDA to improve their current regulations, and will participate in the planned public hearings and meetings that the USDA announced would be a part of this effort. It is essential that while USDA makes this effort to take steps forward to strengthen their

regulations, the agency does not simultaneously take steps back.

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OZ Senate Moves to Protect Farmers from GM

A motion was passed by the Australian Senate on December 8, 2003, "That the Senate: (a) notes that on 14 October the WA Farmers Federation Grains Council passed a resolution recommending to the Primary Industries Ministerial Council that: (i) the Gene Technology Grains Committee (GTGC) be restructured to provide proportionate representation of both GM and non-GM growers; (ii) no costs or liabilities be imposed on a sector of industry without the involvement and approval from that industry; (iii) no sector of agricultural industry be faced with unmanageable problems; (iv) prior to the introduction of GM crops, the GTGC must demonstrate widespread accurate and unbiased industry education of the canola stewardship principles and protocols and proof of widespread acceptance; (v) research be undertaken to gauge market tolerance levels prior to acceptance of 1% of adventitious presence being acceptable; and (vi) legislative changes be implemented to ensure management plans have legal status for compliance, not the voluntary status proposed, to ensure the GM industry is responsible for the containment of their GM product; And (b) calls on the Agriculture Minister and Health Minister to ensure that these

resolutions are debated at the next relevant Ministerial Council in recognition of the widespread concern in the grains industry about the introduction of GM crops and the cost implications for farmers." More: http://www.non-gm-farmers.com/news_details.asp?ID=904

However, Despite Senate Motion, Regulator Approves RR™ Canola

On 19 December, the Office of Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) licenced Monsanto's Roundup herbicide tolerant canola for release throughout Australia - anywhere, anytime, on any scale, by anyone, and permanently. The licence does not require further reporting (other than seed sales), monitoring, review or assessment. The timing is not accidental, as explained by John Hepburn, Genetic Engineering Campaigner, Greenpeace Australia Pacific. "This time last year, the GTGC was busy releasing their co-existence framework - 2 days before Christmas. This year, we're expecting the OGTR to approve Monsanto's GE canola - 4 days before Christmas. Some things never change. The spin from the biotech companies and their minions is as predictable as ever." http://www.non-gm-farmers.com/news_details.asp?ID=936

Organic Food Contaminated with GM

The publication *Nature* reports that a wide range of 'organic' food products on sale in the United Kingdom contain GM ingredients, according to a study due to be published in April. The revelation has prompted organisations that certify food as organic and GM-free, such as the Soil Association, to hurriedly review their procedures. Transgenic soya was found in ten of 25 organic or health food products tested by Mark Partridge and Denis Murphy, biotechnology researchers at the University of Glamorgan in Pontypridd, Wales. Eight of the ten were labelled either as 'organic', which should indicate the absence of transgenic ingredients under Soil Association rules, or explicitly as 'GM-free'. The study, which confirms previous tests by national food standards agencies in Ireland and the UK, implies that a wide range of foodstuffs probably contain traces of GM material. Soya is a very popular ingredient, both in organic and non-organic foods. Over 60% of processed food in a typical supermarket contains soya extracts, including vegetarian sausages and soya mince.

The results could damage the credibility of organic products. The Soil Association, which employs some of the most rigorous tests used by the 16 organisations (See GM, page 19)

Annual, from page 18

IOIA BOARD

In 2003 IOIA had the toughest Board of Director election year ever. IOIA was seeing the greatest number of Board members leaving in a single election (replacing 5 Board members out of 7). Four of these outgoing Board members represented a combined total of at least 29 years of IOIA Board experience. Harriet Behar- Chair, who could tackle almost any challenge in half the time it would take two normal people to do the same task. Stanley Edwards- Vice Chair gave the board that gentle touch and strength through calm and decisive thought. Janine Gibson- Secretary (extraordinaire) and a very talented woman, served IOIA with passion and dedication in (probably) the most difficult Board position. Chip Kraynyk – At Large (and ex-Chair) always made sure that the Board left no stone unturned and maintained his strong alternative perspective in evaluation of issues and IOIA development. One member resigned due to personal commitments. The newly elected Board is now the most international Board IOIA has ever had; a minority of the current Board are from the US. This has developed a wider range of influence and an international strengthening for IOIA. The secretary position was filled by Ann Baier, who stepped up to the plate and has done a terrific job. Ann and fellow Board member Dag Falck developed a great new system for formatting minutes. Three board members are up for reelection this year and have expressed their desire to continue to serve IOIA. These include Jack Reams- Treasurer, Garry Lean and myself. Jack has and continues to be a very leveled headed Canadian who along with Margaret keeps the Board well advised and directed where monies are concerned. Garry who filled a half term position (1 year) for the resigning board member is serving the board with dedication and offers his talents in assisting IOIA with his strong background in education and common sense. One of IOIA's 2003 accomplishments, an organizational flow chart for IOIA, was Garry's work. The remaining board members, John Foster- Vice Chair, Ann Baier- Secretary, Dag Falck- At Large, and

Luis Brenes continue to give many hours of personal time to IOIA.

In October 2003 the Board held a full board retreat at the IOIA office in Broadus, Montana to assist in solidifying the Board with so much new blood. It was also time to evaluate (revisit) the current and future of IOIA based on the work that was done during the Board retreat in LaVeta in 2000. 🍷

Label, from page 19

ments in the certification process. Confidentiality, in my opinion, does not apply to certifiers--it applies to certified (or inspected) parties. Considerations of confidentiality should not inhibit full discussion of certifier policies and actions on our forum and with others in the organic community as long as the confidentiality of specific producers and processors is respected.

When we try to dodge tough problems and controversial subjects we may avoid some personal risks, but we fail in our duty to invigorate and improve the organic movement that benefits all of us. Inspectors should be leaders in a continuous effort to improve organics and help it grow by educating one another and the public about the kind of agriculture--and the kind of world--we want to leave for future generations.

I'll close with what I hope may be a practical suggestion. To assure both the stability and the integrity of organics I think we need independent national or regional boards to resolve disputes between certifiers and inspectors. These boards should be structured to reflect/represent certifiers, inspectors and consumers. They should be empowered to examine ethical complaints about either certifiers or inspectors. In addition they might serve as a forum for hearing appeals of certification decisions brought by inspected parties.

I won't speculate as to how the members of these boards could be chosen, or what their scope of action should be. I do think that creating appeals or arbitration bodies with open proceedings and the authority to hear and resolve ethical complaints could help make the "inner workings" of organics--including the certification process--more comprehensible to organic consumers and the general public.

For most people organics is something of a mystery, and I think some certifiers and other big players prefer it that way. Perhaps part of the reason that we're

facing (or refusing to face) ethical challenges is that for too many of us too many subjects are taboo. Questions such as "What is the role of democracy in organics?" and "Who's in charge in the organic world?" should be deliberately asked and thoughtfully answered. Presently inspectors and traditional family farmers have some limited influence, but almost no power. Big retailers, inspected parties with deep pockets and certifiers hold most of the cards, and in my opinion this needs to change. Healthy food and unhealthy social structures controlled by money and elites are a bad mix. We can do better. 🍷

BSE, from page 7

We must explicitly prohibit such materials from being used in organic production by placing them on 205.604." Riddle has asked the NOSB and NOP to address these issues. 🍷

In Memorium: Betsy Lydon

With deep sadness we are circulating the news that Betsy Lydon passed away February 9th, after a long, hard-fought battle with breast cancer. Betsy had an incredible inner spirit and fought off her cancer as long as she could by embracing life to its fullest at every moment. Betsy was a passionate advocate for sustainable agriculture and was, according to Wendy Gordon, the heart that propelled Mothers & Others for a Livable Planet in New York forward. She gave incredible energy to the National Organic Standards Board, the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, Greener Fields, Just Food, and Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems Funders group as its coordinator several years ago, from which we all benefit.


She is survived by her husband, Jeff, and their two amazing teenagers, Gardner and Lucy. There will not be a service immediately but, as Betsy wished, a party in celebration of her life sometime later this spring.

May our work be strengthened by her example and her memory.

The National Campaign will be creating a web page in celebration Betsy's life and the incredible contributions she made to so many efforts and so many lives. Please send them your thoughts if you'd like to have them posted.

For more information, contact the National Campaign For Sustainable Agriculture, e-mail: kathy@sustainableagriculture.net <http://www.sustainableagriculture.net/> 🍷

Balance Sheet – IOIA – As of December 31, 2003

Assets:		Liabilities & Equity:	
Current Assets		Equity	
Checking/Savings		Opening Fund Balance	442.57
CD Savings	10,000.00	Retained Funds	49,929.20
Montana Checking	13,985.90	Net Income	-5105.61
Montana PayPal	4.04	Total Equity	45,266.16
Total Checking/Savings	38,032.20	Total Liabilities & Equity	45,266.16
Accounts Receivable			
Accounts Receivable	-654.99		
Total Accounts Receivable	-654.99		
Other Current Assets			
Inventory Asset	5139.23		
Petty Cash	102.83		
Undeposited Funds	2646.89		
Total Other Current Assets	7888.95		
Total Current Assets	45,266.16		
Total Assets	45,266.16		



I am interested in the following:

IOIA Membership Application (includes quarterly newsletter and member directory)

Please specify category – all funds payable in US \$ - All dues are annual

- Inspector - \$100
- Supporting Individual - \$75
- Business/Organization \$100
- Certifying Agency - \$250
- Patron - \$500
- Sustainer - \$1000

- The Inspectors' Report – 1 year subscription (4 issues) \$30
- 2004 IOIA Membership Directory - \$25
- IFOAM/IOIA International Organic Inspection Manual:
 - \$45 members
 - \$60 non-members

INDEPENDENT ORGANIC INSPECTORS ASSOCIATION

Please Type or Print Clearly

MAIL TO IOIA, PO Box 6, BROADUS, MT 59317-0006 USA

IOIA HAS SEVERAL PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE. ORDER HERE OR THROUGH OUR WEBSITE.

- Building Soils for Better Crops (2nd Edition), by Fred Magdoff and Harold Van Es. 240 pp. \$20
- COG Organic Field Crop Handbook, 2nd Edition, Expanded and Rewritten. Published by Canadian Organic Growers. An invaluable resource. While preserving the best of the now out-of-print and no longer available first edition, this edition is updated to include info on GMO's, E. coli issues in manure, and many additions to the crop section. 222 pages, spiral bound, \$30.00.
- Food Plant Sanitation and Safety, by Dr. Joe Montecalvo, 184 pp, \$50.00
- Introductory Food Science, Dr. Joe Montecalvo, 187 pp, \$50.00
- Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 2nd Edition, published by Sust. Ag Network, \$18.00
- Organic Dairy Farming, published by Kickapoo Organic Resource Network, 87 pp, \$8.00
- Organic Livestock Handbook, published by Canadian Organic Growers. Edited by Anne Macey, 179 pp, spiral bound, \$25.00
- Organic Tree Fruit Management, published by COABC, 240 pages, \$30.00
- Steel in the Field, published by Sustainable Ag Network, 128 pages, \$16.00
- Introduction to Certified Organic Farming. Published by REAP CANADA, 200 pg. \$25.00
- OCC/IOIA Forms Templates \$35 members \$50 non-members Comes with disk (Word 7.0)

IOIA Caps - \$20.00 – Please specify color 1st choice _____ 2nd Choice _____
[black, navy, royal blue, forest green, white, khaki/forest, maroon/black]

IOIA Tees - \$20.00 – Please specify size L XL XXL

IOIA Sew-On Patch - \$7.00 OR 3/\$20 OR 5/\$30

See our Caps and Tees in the *Books & Goods* section of our website, www.ioia.net

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Business Address _____

Business Phone _____ Home phone _____ Fax _____

Check Enclosed – Total Amount \$ _____

Visa Mastercard Account # _____

Signature _____ Exp. Date _____

2004 Calendar

February 24-25 "Organic Agriculture Principles and Practices: Workshops for PNW Ag Professionals," organized and sponsored by Washington State University CSANR, Oregon State Univ. Ext., Organic Materials Review Institute, and Oregon Tilth, in Wilsonville, OR; contact David Granatstein, (509) 663-8181 x222; granats@wsu.edu; or Alex Stone, OSU, (541) 737-5461; stonea@bcc.orst.edu <http://csanr.wsu.edu/whatsnew/OrganicAgWorshop2004.htm>.

February 26th-28 The 15th annual Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference will be held at the La Crosse Center. Info: www.mosesorganic.org/umofc/umofc.htm

Feb 24 - March 2 Certified Organic Association of British Columbia (COABC) and IOIA will co-sponsor Basic Farm Inspector Training (February 24-27) and Advanced Training (March 1-2). Trainings will be held in conjunction with the COABC conference held February 28 and 29. For info contact Kristen Kane at COABC, office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca (250) 260-4429.

February 27-28 Northeast Grasstravaganza 2004, grazing conference hosted by Central New York RC&D for producers, consumers, and agricultural professionals, being held in conjunction with Northeast Pasture Research & Extension Consortium (Feb. 26), in Binghamton, NY; info: for Grasstravaganza, contact (607) 724-9268 or (607) 334-3231, ext.4; socnyred@norwich.net or broomesoil@juno.com; for Feb. 26 Consortium, contact Edward Rayburn, (304) 293-6131; www.syrmeetings.com/grass/grass2004.pdf.

February 27-29 "BC's Organic Future 2004: COABC Annual General Meeting and Conference," in Naramata, British Columbia; contact Rebecca Kneen, (250) 675-4122; gael@ramshorn.bc.ca; or Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia, office@certifiedorganic.bc.ca; <http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/AGM2004/index.htm>.

Feb 28 - March 1 IOIA will co-sponsor Japanese language Basic Process Inspector Training with the Japan Organic Inspectors

Association (JOIA) to be held in Tokyo, JAPAN. For more info, contact JOIA at mutsumi.sakuyoshi@nifty.com or +81-422-56-6651 or +81-422-56-6651 (fax).

Feb 29-March 2 National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture Annual Meeting, in or near Washington, DC; contact NCSA, (845) 744-8448; www.SustainableAgriculture.net. Campaign@sustainableagriculture.net;

March 2 7th Annual Northwest (Pennsylvania) Grazing Conference, in DuBois, PA; contact Ken Hendrickson, Headwaters RC&D Council, (814) 375-1272.

March 3 Colorado Organic Conference and Trade Show, Brighton, CO 303-637-8100 or www.adamscountyextension.org

March 5 - 7 Natural Products Expo East, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California. www.expowest.com

March 5-8 National Farmers Union 102nd Anniversary Convention, in Billings, MT; contact NFU, 11900 E. Cornell Ave., Aurora, CO 80014-3194; <http://www.nfu.org>.

March 10-11 "Maize and Biodiversity Symposium: The Effects of Transgenic Corn in Mexico," open to public, academia, and government, in Oaxaca, Mexico; contact Esther Maria Carrillo, North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, emcarrillo@ccemtl.org or info@cecmil.org; www.cec.org/maize/symposium/index.cfm?varlan3Denglish.

March 13 EcoLOGICA invites IOIA to Costa Rica for our 2004 Annual General Membership Meeting. IOIA accepts! The event will include Advanced training in both Spanish and English. See page 3 for details.

March 20-21 Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Annual Conference, in Johnstown, OH; contact Gwen Uetrecht, OEFFA, (614) 421-2022; oeffa@oeffa.com; <http://www.oeffa.com>.

March 29-31 First World Congress on Organic Food: Meeting the Challenges of

Safety and Quality for Fruits, Vegetables, and Grains. Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA. The First World Congress on Organic Food will compare possible risks of fruits, vegetables and grains produced by organic versus conventional methods. The Congress is co-sponsored by the National Food Safety & Toxicology Center, the USDA, and the Int'l Assn. for Food Protection. For more info Contact: mitzelf3@cvm.msu.edu <http://www.foodsafe.msu.edu/Organics/>.

April 1 - 7 IOIA Basic Farm and Livestock Inspector trainings, Fayetteville, Arkansas. See page 3 for details. **Deadline to apply is February 27.**

April 16 - 17 IOIA Advanced Organic Inspector Training (Fiber Processing focus), co-sponsored with the Organic Trade Association, Lubbock, Texas. See page 1 for details.

April 28 - 30 The National Organic Standards Board meeting, Best Western Hotel, Chicago, IL. Buckingham Meeting Room, (312) 787-3100.

Late April Basic Organic Livestock Inspector Training, co-sponsored by IOIA and Assiniboine Community College, Manitoba. Includes distance education and an on-site practicum. Interested applicants please contact Terry Waddell at ACC For info, ph: (204) 725-8700 ext 7116; fax: 204-726-7012; waddell@assiniboine.net.

May 2-4 All Things Organic Conference and Trade Show, in Chicago, IL; contact Organic Trade Association, (413) 774-7511; info@ota.com.

June 24-25 "Agriculture as a Producer and Consumer of Energy," conference organized by Farm Foundation and USDA's Office of Energy Policy and New Uses, in Arlington, VA; contact Steve Halbrook, Farm Foundation, (630) 571-9393; steve@farmfoundation.org; or Joe Outlaw, (979) 845-3062; joutlaw@tamu.edu; <http://www.farmfoundation.org/projects/03-35AgAsEnergyProducerAndConsumer.htm>.

Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!



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