

IOIA THE Inspectors' Report

International Organic Inspectors Association

VOLUME 22 — NUMBER 3 — SUMMER 2013

IOIA to Host 2-day NOP Training and IOIA Annual Meeting in Costa Rica

IOIA will be hosting a 2-day Spanish language training by the USDA National Organic Program for NOP-accredited certification agencies March 18-19, 2014. IOIA will manage logistics and training will be provided by the NOP. The training is open to certifiers, inspectors, and government agency personnel. Translation to English will not be provided. A modest registration fee will be charged to cover meals and snacks. The IOIA advanced inspector training will follow on March 20-21 and the Annual Membership Meeting March 22. Field trips to area agriculture including pineapple production are scheduled for March 24. Registration forms for both training events will be posted on the IOIA website. Advanced Training will be in English language; agenda topics are under development. Eco-LOGICA, a NOP-accredited certification agency in Costa Rica, is organizing Spanish language advanced training to run concurrently with the IOIA



English language advanced training on March 20-21. Venue for all events is Tilajari Hotel Resort & Conference Center (<http://www.tilajari.com>) on the banks of the San Carlos River, less than 30 minutes from the Arenal Volcano. Amenities and attractions: Free Wi-Fi, three swimming pools, sauna, Jacuzzi, private forest, lounge, large grounds, and wildlife. Location is about 1.5 to 2 hours from the San Jose airport. IOIA will work with Tilajari to help organize airport shuttles if needed. Other options are Costa Rica's official orange airport cabs - \$150 per ride- 4 passengers max or Airport minivan \$180 - 9 - 12 passengers with luggage. Rooms must be booked directly with the hotel under the IOIA room block two months in advance.

Dr. Winfried Fuchshofen, Executive Director and co-founder of the Fair Trade Sustainability Alliance (FairTSA), will speak on **"The Fair Trade Landscape and the Role of the Fair Trade Sustainability Alliance"** on Friday evening, March 21. **See NOP Training, page 6**

Notes from the Chair

By Ib Hagsten

Most of us are very busy inspecting now, as we are right in the middle of the farm growing / inspection season (May through September) when there are crops to inspect (either for cash or livestock).

What a privilege we have – (1) getting to be outdoors looking at growing crops, biological diversity, bright-eyed birds or cows, and (2) sitting at the kitchen table with the farmer (and often most of the family) learning about their operation, frustrations, and dreams – while we are paid for our attention and time.

What a privilege I have, as chair of the organization – (A) getting to work with an exemplary board, and (B) learning so much about the IOIA staff and their skill sets.

1. Let me share how the individual skills and prior experiences are being utilized by each BOD member to help you further the cause of IOIA and the benefits of organics. **Stuart McMillan**, as vice chair, is representing **See Notes, page 22**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

IOIA welcomes the following new
Supporting Individuals:

Daphne Amory - Napa, CA.
dtamory@gmail.com

Emily Orr - Boulder, CO.
emilyo@aodmilk.com

Doug McCormack - Yalaha, FL.
amccormack86@yahoo.com

Mica Wempe - Rutledge, MO.
mica.apple.wood@gmail.com

Mona Granfors - Chilliwack, British
Columbia
mmgran23@gmail.com

Rob Grudzien - Truckee, CA.
rgrudzien@gmail.com

Paul Growaski - Chicago Park, Ca.
paul@dinnerbellfarm.com

IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

IB HAGSTEN, PHD
— CHAIR —
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The Inspectors' Report is the newsletter of the International Organic Inspectors Association. IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization. Our mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training and to promote integrity and consistency in the organic certification process.
Editor: Diane Cooner webgal@ioia.net
Deadlines: Feb 1, May 1, Aug 1 & Nov 1.
Published quarterly on recycled paper.

IOIA 2013 Survey

IOIA wants to ensure that our members are getting what they want out of their membership organization. It has been over five years since the last survey was conducted. Members' responses to the 2007 survey provided the IOIA board with essential information. Member input enhanced IOIA's Training Institute including the addition of our webinar program. This survey explores whether IOIA should become more involved in food safety training, considers converting the hard copy newsletter to digital format or add digital newsletters, probes the reasons for under-utilization of the IOIA Inspector Accreditation program, and explores how IOIA can implement Social Media in a useful way.

The information gathered in the survey will:

- Help IOIA develop and strengthen its services and resources,
- provide an opportunity for all inspectors to express their needs,
- assist the Board in developing policy and direction and
- provide members with professional information about their peers.

Results of this survey will be shared in the inspector members' section of the website, in the newsletter (summary only), and at the next AGM.

We value your opinion and thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

The link has been distributed to the IOIA inspector member list via email. The link is also available from the "Inspectors Only" section of the website. If you have difficulty accessing the Survey, please contact IOIA for a copy.

Everyone who completed the survey before the deadline date of August 14 was entered in an early bird drawing to win an IOIA cap. Maheswar Ghimire of Nepal was the lucky winner. Everyone who completes the survey before the **deadline date of September 1** will be entered in a second drawing to win a cap.



IOIA Welcomes First Supporting Sustainer Member

WhiteWave Foods of Broomfield, Colorado has become IOIA's first Sustainer Member. A long-time supporter of IOIA, Horizon Organic has been a supporting business member since 1997 and WhiteWave Foods a member in the same category since 2003. WhiteWave Foods owns the Horizon Organic® brand.

The WhiteWave Foods Company is a leading consumer packaged food and beverage company that manufactures, markets, distributes, and sells branded plant-based foods and beverages, coffee creamers and beverages, and premium dairy products throughout North America and Europe. For more about WhiteWave, visit <http://www.whitewave.com>, or www.horizondairy.com.

IOIA On-site Training Schedule

Okcheon, Korea - Four Processing Courses, September and October 2013 IOIA and KOIA will cosponsor four 4.5 day Basic Organic Processing Inspection Trainings using the Korea Organic Regulation (EFAPA) as a reference. All four Processing courses will be held in Okcheon, Korea: September 2-6, September 23-27 and October 28-November 1, 2013. Language of the course is Korean. For enquiries, please contact Sukhyun Jung: Ph: +82-10-4001-3110 Fax: +82-2-6008-9791 e-mail: annajsh@hanmail.net

Loveland, Colorado - Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training, September 9 – 13 IOIA and Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) will cosponsor Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training at the Sunrise Ranch near Loveland, Colorado.

Binghamton, New York - Basic Organic Crop, Livestock and Processing Inspection Training; and Advanced Training, October 21 – November 1 IOIA and **NOFA-New York Certified Organic (NYCO)** will cosponsor Basic Organic Crop, Livestock, Processing Inspection Trainings and Advanced Inspector Training at the Binghamton Riverwalk Hotel & Conference Center. Crop and Processing Inspection courses will run concurrently October 21-25, followed by Livestock training October 28-November 1. Advanced Training is scheduled October 28-29. The Agricultural Justice Project (AJP) will conduct 3 days of training for inspectors on Oct 30-Nov 1 at the same location, following the advanced course.

The **Advanced Training** will include an Inspector Workshop on Audit Trail and Audit Balance; Tricky Materials on 205.605; and a special presentation by **Steve Ross**, Assessment Services Supervisor, USDA, AMS, LPS, Quality Assessment Division. In more familiar lingo, Ross might be called an “NOP auditor”. Ross has been in his current position since 1997 and has witnessed hundreds of organic inspections in his work. He worked for 20 years prior in the USDA Meat Grading and Certification Branch. Ross was invited to share on the topic of common mistakes and strengths the NOP auditors see during the accreditation witness inspections. This session could be very helpful to improving inspector competencies and would be a topic of interest to all inspectors, whether US or Canadian.

Bob Howe, veteran inspector, is the Trainer for the course and will be presenting on Restaurant and Retail Inspections. **Patricia Kane**, Coordinator of the Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA) will join with **Margaret Scoles** to provide an update on the **Sound and Sensible Initiative** and create a discussion forum on what this means for inspectors. Other topics under development are the NOP update, Nanotechnology in food, and Inspector Professionalism. For a draft agenda or application form, please see the IOIA website, www.ioia.net.

Each 4 ½ -day basic course follows IOIA’s curriculum requirements and includes three days of in-classroom instruction, one day with a field trip to a certified organic operation that focuses on inspection and reporting, a graded written assignment (inspection report), and one-half day for testing. The **Basic Organic Crop Inspection** training includes instruction on the organic standards, working with organic system plans; how to inspect organic farms; audit trail requirements; risk assessment; investigative skills; report writing; approved input materials; assessing natural resource management; inspector conduct, confidentiality, and ethics; understanding the difference between inspecting and consulting; and effective communication. The **Basic Organic Livestock Inspection** Training includes classroom instruction on organic livestock standards; livestock materials; risk assessment; audit trail requirements; report writing; inspector conduct, confidentiality, and ethics; understanding the difference between inspecting and consulting; effective communication; and organic inspection procedures for meat and dairy animals; fiber-bearing animals; and poultry (meat and eggs). The **Basic Organic Processing Inspection** Training includes instruction on the organic standards; working with organic system plans; how to inspect organic processing operations; risk assessment; investigative skills; report writing; approved materials and ingredients; evaluating product labels; organic quality management; organic control points; audit control and auditing; assessing structural pest management, and facility sanitation; inspector conduct, confidentiality, and ethics; understanding the difference between inspecting and consulting; and effective communication. The course includes a pre-course webinar “*Organic Food Processing Basics*” with organic inspector, **Joseph Montecalvo, Ph.D.**, Food Scientist at Cal Poly State U. All courses are based on the USDA National Organic Program regulations.

To register to attend the AJP training or get information about the standards, trainings, and technical assistance to prepare for certification, please contact AJP at agjusticeproject@gmail.com or call 919-809-7332. For more information about NOFA-NY or NOFA-NY Certified Organic, please visit www.nofany.org.

Costa Rica - Basic Organic Farm Inspection Training, November 25 - 29. IOIA and Eco-LOGICA will cosponsor a 4.5 day Basic Organic Farm Inspection training using USDA National Organic Standards as a reference. The course will be held at ICAES, Coronado in Costa Rica. Instruction will be conducted in Spanish. Please contact Sue Wei at ph.: (506) 4010-0232 or (506) 2297-6676, fax: (506) 2235-1638 or e-mail: swei@eco-logica.com ☺

IOIA Webinar Training ScheduleTo register, please go to http://ioia.net/schedule_list.html**100 Level Webinars:****September 17 and 20. USDA NOP Processing Standards**

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.(PDT). Two, 3 hour sessions. Trainer: Stanley Edwards.

September 25 and October 2. Canada Organic Regime Livestock Standards

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

October 4 and 11. Canada Organic Regime Crop Standards

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

November 14 and 21. USDA NOP Livestock Standards

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

November 19 and 26. Canada Organic Regime Processing Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (PST). Two, 3 hour sessions. IOIA Trainer: Kelly A. Monaghan.

26 de Febrero y 5 de Marzo, 2014. Norma para Producción Orgánica USDA NOP 16:00 – 19:00 pm UTC. Dos sesiones de 3 horas. Presentador: Luis E. Brenes.**200 Level Webinars :****October 3. IOIA/OMRI Processing Input Materials**

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.(PDT). One, 3 hour session. Presenter: Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador.

October 9. IOIA/OMRI Crop Input Materials

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.(PDT). One, 3 hour session. Presenter: Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador.

November 13. Verifying Compliance to NOP Pasture Rule

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.(PST). One, 3 hour session. Presenter: Sarah Flack.

December (date TBD). IOIA/OMRI Processing Input Materials

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.(PDT). One, 3 hour session. Presenter: Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador.

January 14 and 16, 2014. Residue Sampling and Responding to Test Results

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (PST). Two, 2 hour sessions. Presenter: Nathaniel Lewis.

January 28 and 30, 2014. Livestock Feed Audits

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (PST). Two, 2 hour sessions. Presenter: Sarah Flack.

300 Level Webinars:**November 25. Inspecting Organic Wineries** 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.(PST). One, 2 hour session. Presenter: Pam Sullivan.**December 5. Maple Syrup Inspection** 7:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.(PST). One, 3 hour session. IOIA Trainer: Monique Scholz.*Garry Lean, Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador and Sarah Flack are three of IOIA's regular webinar instructors.***Webinars under Development:**

- 200 level – Audit Trail/Audit Balance – Crop
- 200 level - Audit Trail/Audit Balance – Livestock
- 200 level - Audit Trail/Audit Balance – Processing
- 200 level – Sanitation & Pest Control in Processing Plants
- 200 level – Multi-ingredient Processing
- 200 level – Unannounced Inspections
- 200 level – International Standards
- 200 level – Operating an Organic Inspection Business

Watch upcoming IOIA newsletters and this page for details as these and other trainings develop.

IOIA Training Institute Webinars: Developing a Premier Training Center for Organic Inspection

By Jonda Crosby

Training Services Director

IOIA, long known for our excellence in delivering in-person, on-site organic inspection training, expanded opportunities for organic inspectors, reviewers and organic agency personnel by adding an entire new branch to IOIA's Training Institute: Webinars.

IOIA's webinar educational series is divided into three tiers; 100, 200 and 300 levels. Our target audience for the webinar program is our membership. The cost for the webinars vary from \$175 to \$350 but there is a discount for IOIA members. Since January of 2013 IOIA has offered 13 webinars and we have 11 scheduled for this fall.

By the end of 2013 we will have developed and offered all of the 100 level webinar courses for crop, processing and livestock standards for both COR and NOP. We have begun offering the 200 level courses this spring and will continue developing an entire slate of them for 2014. For those of you that are experienced inspectors and agency staff we have started to schedule the first of the 300 level webinars for November and December 2013.

In 2014 we will also begin offering the basic webinar courses in Spanish language as we expand our trainings to more audiences.

IOIA Trainers are selected based on their expertise in the webinar topic and for their inspection experience. We have also employed the expertise of specialized

inspector/agency presenters to cover specific inspection topics like the Pasture Rule, Input Materials Review, Grower Group and Residue Sampling. IOIA trainers represent 100's of years of experience in organic inspection and are respected worldwide.

IOIA's webinar courses are comprised of 3 components: pre-course self-study, the webinar, and post webinar evaluation. The webinar components include; in-class discussion, examples, exercises and the opportunity for questions and answers. The course concludes with an exam.

So... how are the webinars going?

The following quotes represent some of the evaluation feedback we have received from webinar participants.



"I would suggest more calculation exercises before being tested/graded on the subject(s)." (Solution: We added mid course exercises so participants could practice between the webinar presentations.)

"Despite vague guidance from the NOP and a couple of different sets of recommendations from the NOSB to work with, the webinar trainer provided a clear path for inspectors when they are asked to work with a community grower group. He consistently and correctly advised inspectors that they are reviewing the group, not just the grower, when conducting onsite inspections. His tips for handling cultural and logistical issues was particularly helpful and would make any first-time CGG inspector more

comfortable and confident."

"The Residue Sampling webinar test was based on analyzing test results but a few more exercises on using the resources for determining the responses and actions would have been more helpful for answering test questions." (Solution: This has been changed in the January 2014 Residue Sampling course.)

"I am very appreciative to have been able to take this class myself, and also grateful to have it as a resource for training our staff. I thought the instructor was solid and I very much liked the functionality of the webinar platform. I don't know if you cap the number of

attendees and, if so, at what number, but I'd hate to see it go any higher than what we had, which I'd say was just about right (not too many, not too few)." (Solution: We have capped the webinar participant number at 20 - but have found 12-15 is

ideal in terms of participation.)

"Offering some specialized training on in/out audits and other calculations such as determining the percentage of organic ingredients in a product would be VERY helpful." (Solution: Audit Trail/Balance Webinar Training planned for early winter 2014.)

For up to date information on webinar training opportunities go to IOIA's Training Institute website at: www.ioia.net/schedule.html

If you have questions or suggestions for future webinar topics please contact us in Broadus, or me in Helena at 406-227-9161 or jcrosby@mt.net

NOP, from page 1

This session will be open to all advanced training participants and any inspector members arriving for the AGM. Since 2007 the Fair Trade landscape has changed dramatically. Up to that time, the Fair Trade Labeling Organization (FLO) with about 20 country members dominated the Fair Trade landscape. The advent of certifier-owned Fair Trade programs such as Fair for Life by IMO, Organic & Fair by Ecocert, and the EcoSocial label by IBD, among others, created competition in the field for the first time. The split between FLO and TransFair USA (now Fair Trade USA) in 2011 added another twist. Dr. Fuchshofen will present the aforementioned programs in detail and discuss the role of, the only Fair Trade standard holder open for all certifiers. About the presenter: After 20 years of research and consulting experience in the organic field, he co-created FairTSA in 2009.

Although airfare to Costa Rica will typically run a little higher for US and Canadian members than travel within US and Canada, this can be easily offset by the lower cost of lodging and meals within Costa Rica. Maximum daily meal and lodging cost will be around \$100/day/person for private rooms and less for those willing to share rooms. Rooms (single or double) at Tilajari are \$62.15 (full buffet breakfast and all taxes included.)



Tilajari Resort is located near the famous Arenal volcano.

Costa Rica, known for its warm hospitality for both Spanish and non-Spanish speakers, is also famous for its beaches, eco-tourism, biodiversity, and volcanoes. Members visiting Costa Rica for the first time are encouraged to plan a few days for sightseeing before or after the event and to bring their families. From San Jose, the capital city, many tour choices are operated as one-day-excursions.



A lush tropical landscape, party casita and pool are waiting for you at Tilajari Resort!

Visitors enjoy an array of activities, from mountain biking, golfing, and deep-sea fishing to snorkeling, rafting, and diving. The lure for most visitors will be the national park system--are Manuel Antonio, with its beautiful beaches; Braulio Carrillo, with its rainforest beside a highway; Tortuguero, a watery, forested world teeming with wildlife; Irazú, where on a clear day you can see both the Caribbean and the Pacific; and Poás, where you can peer into a steaming volcanic crater. Weather is typically pleasant in March, spring-like and fairly warm with sunny days, no rain, no mosquitos, and cool evenings.



Incredibly beautiful Manuel Antonio National Park

Expect the experience of a life-time, plan to get a passport if you don't already have one, check with the appropriate authorities in your departure country for passport and any vaccination requirements, and **mark your calendars!**

MARCH 18 - 24, 2014

Notes from the ED

by Margaret Scoles

The Organic Standard: While reading the June issue, I found myself wondering why more IOIA inspector members don't take advantage of this excellent, cutting edge publication. Each year, IOIA pays a subscription fee that allows a group subscription for inspector members. For only \$15, members can receive this excellent monthly digital publication, forwarded from the IOIA office. Yet only about 1/8 of our members choose this membership benefit.

The Organic Standard (TOS) was born in 2001 in Sweden, just one year before IOIA staffed a booth at the IFOAM General Assembly in Victoria, British Columbia. A conversation at that booth hatched the idea of the group rate benefit.

I read with interest the lead article by Eva Mattson of Grolink, entitled "Train the Inspectors – but train the *right* inspectors." I found it down-to-earth, refreshingly candid, sound, and sensible. A few quotes -- "Experienced inspectors have some kind of radar and automatic internal risk assessment that makes them able to search for non-conformities. Nothing is more dangerous to a cheater than a senior organic inspector with a lot of experience and who still likes the job and is curious and investigative". Wow! Clearly written by someone with an appreciation for a seasoned inspector who still has passion for the job. And "Obviously inspector training is crucial. With only a few hundred of inspectors in the EU it is surprising that there is not more exchange of knowledge and experience between the inspectors of different CBs, and more shared trainings". Why is there no IOIA in Europe? And why is IOIA not more active in Europe? Perhaps we should be. One of our most important functions as an organization is the opportunity for networking, information and idea exchange, and a unified voice. There is no European corollary to IOIA. And finally, "Both

Inspections are a fundamental step in the control process. Critical to a successful inspection is the human factor: the inspectors and what knowledge they bring to it. Despite their importance, inspections and the inspectors are rarely given consideration in discussions on regulations and standards.

The Organic Standard, issue 146.
June 2013 www.organicstandard.com

certification bodies and individual inspectors should invest in training and development, and forget the university degree!" I read on to an excellent article by IOIA inspector member Grace Gershuny of Vermont, on the topic of "Sound and Sensible certification...and not a moment too soon". She cited the IOIA white paper on Sound and Sensible. She noted how the CCOF memo "Opportunities for the Organic Program - Practices not Paperwork" and IOIA's white paper were complementary as they included the perspectives of certifiers and inspectors. I read on to a riveting article on IRM-Organic, training on the state of the art, risk-based inspections. I learned that IRM-ORGANIC will be doing an on-line survey of organic inspectors in the EU, asking questions on fraud prevention risk-based inspections.

While reading the July issue (#147), I was startled to read about a change in ownership of the publication. The first issue of TOS was published in April 2001 and published monthly since then. Whew. IOIA's 20+ page newsletter is only quarterly but it comes with remarkable and sometimes breathtaking regularity. I'm pounding the keyboard on a Saturday writing this, in awe and admiration of a monthly publication. Writers and editors produced TOS under the direction of Grolink AB, an international organic consultancy based in Sweden. Grolink AB and the current editor, Nuria Alonso, reached

an agreement to transfer ownership of TOS. Peter Lustig, Grolink President stated in TOS, "We are confident that Nuria Alonso and the contributors to TOS will continue producing a high quality journal." Nuria has been a contributor to TOS since 2002, and Commissioning Editor since 2008. She lives in Spain with her husband and their child in a village on the Mediterranean coast. In addition to her role with TOS, she is a Lecturer in the Organic Agriculture Master Science Programme at the University of Barcelona, where she teaches inspection and international standards for organic production.

In an interview by Gunnar Rundgren, Nuria says 'The certification system will collapse if we don't make it simpler. We need less bureaucracy. Some politicians say they want to make it simpler, but when they do something, it normally adds more bureaucratic procedures. We need to focus on what is important. The qualification of people, especially for inspection, is very important.' Now, that's sound and sensible!

As you renew membership dues for 2014, I encourage you to consider participating in this eye to the organic world. And yes, it does actually have articles that are useful to inspectors in the US as well as everywhere else in the world. In fact, where do you read anything that represents the inspector perspective as well, other than right here in IOIA's newsletter? ☺

SECTOR NEWS

Comment period for FSMA extended

The deadline for comments on the Food Safety Modernization Act regulations has been extended from Sept. 16 to **Nov. 15, 2013**. The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition has launched a **new webpage** with information and talking points for writing comments on this regulation that will impact all aspects of food production in the United States.

FDA releases draft guidance on Egg Safety Rule, outdoor access

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued the long-awaited draft guidance to assist egg producers who utilize outdoor access areas and must comply with FDA's 2009 rule regarding **Prevention of Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) in Shell Eggs**.

The draft guidance includes questions and answers about how to apply the egg safety rule in the outdoor access area.

The draft guidance was published in the *Federal Register* on July 24.

Electronic or written comments can be submitted before the comment period ends September 24.

This draft guidance supports continued growth in the organic egg sector by clarifying that:

1. Open outdoor areas aren't part of the poultry "house" and are therefore exempt from requirements specific to poultry "houses."
2. Covering the entire open outdoor area with netting isn't a requirement. Other effective wild animal deterrents, such as noise cannons, may be used instead.
3. Vaccinating birds against Salmonella Enteritidis isn't a substitute for meeting the specified egg safety requirements.

View FDA Draft Guidance - Outdoor Access Public Comments
<http://tinyurl.com/nyqu9zt>

Visit <http://www.regulations.gov/#!home> and search for "FDA-2000-N-0190."

View FDA Egg Guidance Documents + Regulatory Information <http://tinyurl.com/lo2kuv8>

Mexico has a new National Council of Organic Production

Under the 12th edition of the fair Exporgánicos, Exporestaurantes and Pescamar, held on 26 to 28 June 2013, the National Council of Organic Production (CNPO) was reconstituted. Representatives were from the Ministry of Agriculture and other ministries such as Economy, Environment and Health, as well as other national institutions dealing with the agriculture market development and the information service, several academic institutions, the Federal Control for Consumer (PROFECO) and the organic sector represented by national organizations of producers, processors and traders and certification agencies. Four working groups were formed within the Council: Mexican Control System of Organic Products, Organic Information System, Trade Promotion System and Council Expert Group for the Evaluation of Inputs and Substances. At this new stage, the Council will oversee:

- The implementation of an information system capable of providing accurate data on the production, distribution, size and number of producers. In this regard, Mexico is estimated to have about 170,000 organic producers, mainly small scale, managing a total of 512,246 hectares.
- Operation of the Permanent Trade Promotion System, which will focus on the promotion and distribution of organic products in Mexico and abroad.
- Approval by the Federal Regulatory Improvement Commission (COFE-

MER) of the National Labeling of Organic Products, to be applied to the promotion and export of organic production.

- The harmonisation and accessibility of organic production standards at national and international level.

According to official sources, the National Organic Production Council has been meeting since 2007. Since then and to date it has held eight regular meetings whose minutes are available on the website of the Council, as well as other documents and information. caescobar@CaErclooNs eExsoco.boargr
Sources: www.scangpaor.oprag.g.moxb.mx from TOS #147

Scuse appointed Acting Deputy Ag Secretary

The White House has named **Michael Scuse** as Acting Deputy Agriculture Secretary to replace Kathleen Merrigan, who resigned earlier this year. Darci Vetter will fill Scuse's former post as Undersecretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services. Vetter is from an organic farm family in Nebraska. The Vettters received the [2011 MOSES Farmers of the Year](#) award.

Website explains organic check-off program

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) has launched a new website, www.unitedformoreorganic.org, in anticipation of a possible USDA referendum to decide if organic producers would like to institute a check-off to fund a research and promotion program. This website also offers a chance to provide feedback on the basic plan for a check-off program, how it might be managed, and how the money might be allocated. NorthEast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) is providing information on the pitfalls of this possible check-off on its [website](#). Both the US Senate and House versions of the Farm Bill included the authorization for a referendum on an organic

check-off. If Congress is able to pass a farm bill, this wording may be included.

New NOP Instructions to Certifiers

The NOP has added two new instructions for organic certifying agents to the Program Handbook:

- [NOP 2025: Internal program review requirements](#)
- [NOP 2027: Personnel performance evaluations](#)

These documents clarify the NOP's expectations in these two areas as part of the ongoing 'Sound and Sensible' initiative.

IFOAM North America Office Established

With a view to increasing its outreach in North America and offer IFOAM members a local support structure, David Gould, Value Chain Facilitator, has taken on the role of IFOAM North America representative. You can contact David through the e-mail address d.gould@ifoam.org

Monsanto withdraws all pending approval requests in EU

Monsanto announced on July 17 that it will withdraw all pending approval requests to grow new types of genetically engineered (GE) crops in the European Union due to the lack of commercial prospects for their cultivation. Instead, the company will focus on growing its conventional seeds business in the EU and in securing EU approvals to import its GE crop varieties widely grown in the United States and South America.

2013 Organic Leadership Awards honorees announced

Selected from a record-breaking 26 nominations, the Organic Trade Association's 2013 Organic Leadership Awards will be presented to a pas-

sionate couple who have dedicated their lives to organic for almost three decades, a professional farmer who has advanced practices for growing organic tree fruit, and two emerging leaders on a mission to create meaningful opportunities for military veterans in organic. Awardees, nominated by their peers and chosen unanimously by OTA's Board of Directors, are:

- **Arran and Ratana Stephens, Nature's Path Foods**, The Growing Organic Industry Award
- **Kyle Mathison, Stemilt Growers**, The Organic Farmer of the Year Award
- **Karen and Colin Archipley, Archi's Acres/VSAT**, The Rising Star Award.

These leaders will be recognized September 25 at OTA's Annual Awards Celebration during Natural Products Expo East at the Baltimore Museum of Industry.

IFOAM Organic Leadership Course in Latin America

The IFOAM Organic Leadership Course is now coming to Latin America, scheduled to take place in Mexico and Costa Rica, starting with the first residential session in Mexico on 17 November, 2013. This course will be presented in Spanish. Please go to <http://www.ifoam.org/en/organic-leadership-courses/olc-lat-in-america-201314> to download the course brochure and application.

Representatives Introduce Pollinator Protection Bill

On July 16, Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) introduced the [Saving America's Pollinators Act of 2013](#), which aims to reverse steep declines in bee populations by temporarily suspending the use of certain pesticides. According to Rep. Blumenauer's [press release](#), the bill "suspends certain uses of neonicotinoids, a particular type of pesticide that is

suspected to play a role in the bee die-offs happening in Oregon and in bee declines around the world, until the Environmental Protection Agency reviews these chemicals and makes a new determination about their proper application and safe use."

EPA Offers Bee Advisory Label

To protect bees and other pollinators, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has developed new pesticide labels that prohibit use of some neonicotinoid pesticide products where bees are present.

The new labels will have a [bee advisory box](#) and bee hazard icon with information on routes of exposure and spray drift precautions.

The August 16 announcement affects products containing three neonicotinoids: imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin and thiamethoxam. Neonicotinoids are extremely toxic to bees, even in very small amounts. The pesticides are water-soluble and persist in the environment for years. In April, the European Commission adopted a proposal to restrict the use of these same three pesticides for a period of two years. The restriction came in response to a report by the European Food Safety Authority that identified "high acute risks" for bees from exposure to pesticide dust in corn, cereals and sunflowers and to residues in pollen and nectar in crops like oilseed rape and sunflower.

In May, the USDA and EPA released a report on honey bee health, showing scientific consensus that there are a complex set of stressors associated with honey bee declines that have lasted for years, including loss of habitat, parasites and disease, genetics, poor nutrition and pesticide exposure. But environmental groups say while these efforts are good as far as they go, much more is needed to truly protect bees. Full story at <http://tinyurl.com/n95ccrg>



Expo in Mexico

By Garth Kahl

From June 26-28, I had the privilege and good fortune to represent IOIA at the 12th annual Expo Orgánicos tradeshow in Mexico City. This event, the largest organic tradeshow in the country, is organized by the Mexican government and free to exhibitors. The purpose of the fair is to promote the organic sector for both Mexican and export markets, facilitate networking among various actors, and promote interest in organic foods on the part of consumers. To this end the Expo was held concurrently with a restaurant equipment and culinary show in the same building, so many of the attendees of those events would come and discover organic options as well.

In practice Expo Orgánicos is *the* place to be for anyone involved in organics in Mexico, and this year was no exception. Virtually all of the foreign and domestic certifiers working in Mexico, with the exception of CCOF, had booths at the event and had sent their senior staff to attend for one or more days. The result was an amazing opportunity for IOIA to network with all the certifiers at the same time as well as an opportunity for the certifiers to meet among themselves. Needless to say it was a schmooze fest extraordinaire!

The attendance of IOIA at the event was enthusiastically received by the certifiers, who were universally excited to see us there. Representatives from virtually all of them personally passed by the booth to thank IOIA for attending and to tell me how happy they were to see us back in Mexico again. In the past 10 years, only two IOIA trainings have taken place in Mexico. Both were cosponsored by single certifiers. It has been 10 years since other IOIA trainings with open registration occurred. Most of the inspectors trained have either left the sector or are now heading the offices of the various national and international certifiers. The result is a widely acknowledged lack of quality inspectors entering the field. While most certifiers attempt to fill this gap with in-house trainings, all the certifier representatives I talked with universally acknowledged that they would like to see multiple IOIA trainings in Mexico in the coming months. It is truly heartening to hear the respect and admiration that all these people have for IOIA and the quality trainings we provide.

On the first day of the event we were honored by a visit from MC. Aurora Josefina Lobato García, and Lidia Barrios, who are two long-time administrators of the Mexican organic program, housed within the animal, plant and food safety branch (SENASICA) of the Secretariat of Agriculture (SAGARPA). Aurora and Lidia are both acquaintances of mine from years back and old university friends of inspector/member Ing. Ernesto de la Rosa, who was single-handedly staffing the OTCO booth next to ours and lending a hand at the IOIA booth as time allowed. Together with Ernesto, I asked Lidia and Aurora the perennial questions about when we might see the final version of the Mexican Organic Law released and implemented...to which they responded with the perennial answer "in a few more months...we hope...we are working hard on it." Right on the heels of that Aurora broached the idea of an IOIA training in Mexico City, hosted by SENASICA and aimed at their staff of agronomists! If this comes to pass, it would truly be a great honor and opportunity for IOIA to initiate a relationship with the Secretariat of Agriculture!

Friday morning, the last day of the event, witnessed an unprecedented meeting between all of the certifiers present, including BCS, IMO Control, Certimex, OCIA, OTCO, Mayacert, MetroCert/ICEA. I was honored to be asked to attend this meeting on behalf of IOIA. Among the topics discussed were the need for better coordination between all the certifiers with respect to sharing information about sanctioned operators, and a united response to government plans to spray thousands of hectares of coffee with a urea-based product as part of the campaign to combat coffee rust. Most exciting from our perspective was the proposal, vigorously promoted by Ing. de la Rosa and veteran Inspector/Member Homero Blas, that the combined certifiers host at least one basic IOIA training in the coming months!

I left the event headed into a long two weeks of the normal inspection road trip, tired but full of optimism and enthusiasm, truly feeling honored to be part of such a great and well-respected organization.

There's a lot of work to be done in the coming weeks, building upon the contacts made in Mexico City, but it seems certain that IOIA will be coming back to Mexico in a big way in the coming months. ☺



Garth Kahl staffs IOIA's new Spanish language display. His enthusiasm resulted in two training events being scheduled in Mexico before the end of 2013.

The OCIS Needs Your Help!

by Margaret Weigelt,
IOIA Scholarship Committee Chair
and IOIA Board member

In 2007, the Scholarship Committee started the Organic Community Initiative Scholarship **Travel Fund**. When IOIA members heard at the AGM how many OCIS award members couldn't use their scholarships because of lack of travel funds, they responded with generous donations to start the fund. IOIA created a special account to segregate donations made for this purpose.

In the last 5 years, we've given out almost all the money we've received. OCIS Travel Funds have supported participation by recipients from Nepal, China, and Mexico. Right now, the Fund could use some help.

When **Josué Sámano** received the OCIS Scholarship for 2013, he received a donation to help support his airfare to travel from Mexico to training in Costa Rica. On July 29, 2013, the IOIA office received this note from Josué:

*Hi Margaret,
I already received the fly ticket support, and I really appreciate very much the support in all this process to get my first Basic Farm Inspector Training, I'm very grateful for the labor of IOIA and you people by supporting young fellows to get ahead.*

*Thanks again and best regards,
Josué Sámano Monroy*

We have created a special link on the IOIA website for the OCIS Travel Fund, please help with a donation today! It is easy if you just follow the 'Donate to IOIA' link from any

page, that will take you to our donation page, look for **OCIS Travel Fund**.



Judge Dismisses Suit Against Lunquist

Lunquist Legal Fund sent out the following message on August 12 regarding Rosberg v Lunquist et al:

Great good news! We received the court's order fully granting our motion for summary judgment and dismissing the lawsuit. The order also set a hearing date to consider our motion to recover attorney's fees -- August 26th, 2013 at 2:00pm in the Lancaster County District Court, Courtroom #36. There is still an opportunity for the plaintiff to appeal the decision for 30 days after the final order is given (still to come). The court order can be found by clicking [here](#).

Jack Knight Fund

IOIA member Jack Knight was involved in a very bad auto accident back in February of this year while on his way to inspection work. There were three vehicles parked in the middle of six lanes, stopped to pick up furniture that had spilled off of the first vehicle. No one had flashers on and he ran into them. His car burst into flame, Jack ended up getting pulled out a broken window as the doors were pinched shut, and suffered 8 broken ribs, a dislocated collarbone and shattered right femur. His right leg was rebuilt using a lot of metal. Jack is still rehabbing, living with friends, and generally trying to get thru mental trauma, depression, and cognitive gaps as a result of the experience. He is hoping to be able to start working again after December. IOIA has received numerous queries on how they could assist Jack Knight after they became aware through the Forum of his accident. As many of those queries came from outside the US, where members would find it harder to send money, IOIA asked Diane Cooner, IOIA Forum Moderator and Website Manager, to assist Jack in setting up a website where he could accept donations. These donations do not go through IOIA, so you can't consider them tax deductible. However, we do encourage you to help Jack if you can. He is a long-time IOIA inspector member who has experienced a real challenge. You can find Jack on Facebook under Jack Knight, Postville Iowa, where he has a link to PayPal that accepts donations. Best wishes to Jack for a speedy and complete recovery!

In Memoriam

Roger London of New Westminster, British Columbia, IOIA Inspector Member since 1999, passed away in July. He took his first inspector training in 1994 in British Columbia. He inspected for several different international and provincial certifiers and served on certification committees. His academic credentials, B.Sc. (UBC) - Horticulture Diploma and (BCIT) - Food Technology were an asset to his work. His colleagues will remember him as a kind and gentle spirit, always helpful to other inspectors and respectful of the clients he inspected.

Photo taken at the Advanced Training and AGM in Montreal, 2009.



CANADIAN ORGANIC NEWS

Organic Week opportunities

Canada's biggest annual organic celebration and national marketing event is fast approaching. Organic Week will be held Sept. 21-28. Coordinated by Canadian Organic Growers, Canadian Organic Trade Assn and the Canadian Health Food Association, Organic Week has become the best way to reach organic consumers, media and policy makers in Canada. Visit the [Organic Week website](#) for more information.

CFIA overhauls food inspection

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has concluded consultations on an improved [food inspection model](#), and has posted the final document to the Agency's external website. The model, built by stakeholders, proposes a single and consistent approach to food inspection across all regulated food commodities—whether imported, exported or prepared domestically for sale across provincial borders or internationally.

CFIA Modernization initiative

CFIA has created an e-mail notification system to alert subscribers on its significant modernization of the current regulatory system. These include the CFIA's new food regulations, inspection approaches and labeling. The notification system will be CFIA's main method of distributing information about the various modernization initiatives and future opportunities for feedback. You can subscribe by selecting "Modernization initiatives" [on the agency's website](#).

New President at CFIA

Effective August 12, Bruce Archibald will replace George Da Pont as President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Archibald has a Ph.D., Environmental Toxicology (with distinction), a Master of Science, Physi-

ology/Biochemistry, and a Bachelor of Science, Agriculture (Honours) from the University of Guelph. He has most recently been president of the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. Archibald is not



expected to change the modernization processes currently underway within the CFIA. George Da Pont is moving to a new position as deputy health minister.

Manitoba proclaims Organic Agricultural Products Act

Manitoba on May 4 adopted its Organic Agricultural Products Act (OAPA), becoming the first Canadian province to pass a law that mirrors the federal regulations, relying on the same system of federally accredited Certification Bodies to ensure that organic operators comply with organic standards. OAPA, which went into force July 1, applies to all food products grown, processed and sold in Manitoba that make an organic claim. It closes the provincial gap in the national network of organic laws, and will assure Manitobans that all food labeled "organic" is subject to the same regulatory requirements, no matter where it is produced.

OMRI Canada Pilot Program

Applications for the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) Canada Pilot Program are now available on the OMRI website. OMRI is accepting applications for review to Canada Organic Regime (COR) standards, exclusively for products already OMRI Listed® to USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards. The fee for the OMRI Canada review service will be \$215 U.S., renewable annually.

"We are looking forward to offering current OMRI Listed suppliers the first chance to include their products on the new *OMRI Canada Products List@*," says Program Director Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador. "OMRI is fortunate to have so many knowledgeable and supportive customers to help

us launch this new program. A Pilot Program for suppliers already familiar with our application forms and process will ensure that we're off to a good start."

To assist applicants in understanding COR standards and determining whether their products are likely to comply, OMRI has developed a table comparing the U.S. and Canadian organic regulations as they apply to inputs. Download the [comparison table](#) here. A list of [frequently asked questions](#) is also available for product suppliers interested in applying for review to Canadian standards. Later this year, OMRI plans to accept applications from new applicants, and for products that are not currently OMRI Listed. In preparation for the new program, the organization has assembled a team of experts to serve as the Review Panel for products reviewed to Canadian standards. OMRI is honored to welcome Rochelle Eisen, Garry Lean and Kelly Monaghan (all IOIA members) as founding members of the OMRI Canada Review Panel. Visit www.omri.org/omri-canada/review-panel to learn more about these new Review Panel Members. OMRI appreciates the commitment of these knowledgeable experts toward making final product listing decisions in the OMRI Canada Review Program.

New Org Ag Research Site Opens

On May 3, the Research and Development Institute for the Agri-Environment (IRDA) opened the Organic Agriculture Innovation Platform (OAIP). Located on 90 hectares (222 acres) at St-Bruno-de-Montarville, Quebec, the new center is the biggest organic ag research site in Canada.

OAIP has received \$13.1 million in funding from various agencies and departments of the provincial and federal governments and brings together 34 partners, who have access to the site's high-tech capacity to carry out crucial R&D related to organic crop production.

Appeals court binds Monsanto to promise not to sue organic farmers

A three-judge panel at the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled on June 10, 2013 that a group of organic and otherwise non-GMO farmer and seed company plaintiffs are not entitled to bring a lawsuit to protect themselves from Monsanto's transgenic seed patents "because Monsanto has made binding assurances that it will not 'take legal action against growers whose crops might inadvertently contain traces of Monsanto biotech genes (because, for example, some transgenic seed or pollen blew onto the grower's land).'"

In the case *Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association et al. v. Monsanto*, the Court of Appeals judges affirmed the Southern District of New York's previous decision that the plaintiffs did not present a sufficient controversy to warrant adjudication by the courts. However, it did so only because Monsanto made repeated commitments during the lawsuit to not sue farmers with "trace amounts" of contamination of crops containing their patented genes.

Plaintiffs' attorney, Dan Ravicher of the Public Patent Foundation (PUBPAT), views the decision as a partial victory. "Before this suit, the Organic Seed plaintiffs were forced to take expensive precautions and avoid full use of their land in order to not be falsely accused of patent infringement by Monsanto," said Ravicher. "The decision today means that the farmers did have the right to bring the suit to protect themselves, but now that Monsanto has bound itself to not suing the plaintiffs, the Court of Appeals believes the suit should not move forward."

The plaintiff farmers and seed companies began their legal battle in March

of 2011, when they filed a complaint against agricultural giant Monsanto asking for a declaration that Monsanto's patents on genetically engineered seed were invalid or unenforceable. The plaintiffs were compelled to file the suit because Monsanto's patented seed can contaminate neighboring fields through various means including wind and insects, and the owners of those fields, such as plaintiffs, can then be sued by Monsanto for patent infringement.

The Organic Seed plaintiffs' complaint detailed Monsanto's abusive business and litigation tactics that have put several farmers and independent seed companies out of business. They also detailed Monsanto's history of ruthless patent enforcement, going so far as investigating as many as 500 farmers each year for patent infringement by trespassing onto their land. The plaintiffs further detailed the harms caused to society by Monsanto's GMO seed, including the proliferation of herbicide-resistant "superweeds" and environmental pollution. The plaintiffs set forth in their legal filings how the patents were legally deficient in several ways including that the covered technology has no beneficial social use and that the dozens of patents issued to Monsanto have illegally extended and entrenched its monopoly.

"Even though we're disappointed with the Court's ruling not to hear our case, we're encouraged by the court's determination that Monsanto does not have the right to sue farmers for trace contamination," said Maine organic seed farmer Jim Gerritsen, president of lead plaintiff Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association. "However, the farmers went to court seeking justice not only about contamination, but also the larger question of the validity of Monsanto's patents. Justice has not been served."

While the court is relying on Monsan-

to's promise not to sue farmers for unintentional contamination, a growing number of America's farmers and consumers are concerned about genetic contamination of our food supply by Monsanto's transgenic crops. While this lawsuit seeks to protect contaminated farmers from being accused of infringing Monsanto's patents, the decision allows farmers who are contaminated to sue Monsanto and Monsanto's customers for the harm caused by that contamination without fear of a retaliation patent infringement claim against them by Monsanto.

"[This] ruling may give farmers a toe-hold in courts regarding the unwanted contamination of their crops, but it does not protect our food supply from the continued proliferation of Monsanto's flawed technology," said Dave Murphy, founder and executive director of Food Democracy Now!, a co-plaintiff in the lawsuit. "The real threat of continued contamination of our nation's food supply was only highlighted last week when Monsanto's unapproved GMO wheat was discovered in an Oregon farmer's field more than 10 years after it was legally planted in that state."

The discovery of GMO contamination sent shockwaves through the Western wheat growers community and resulted in Japan and South Korea temporarily halting the acceptance of American wheat imports.

Despite the Court of Appeals' Decision, the plaintiffs still have the right to ask the Supreme Court to review the Court of Appeals decision and ultimately reinstate the case. Ravicher said the Organic Seed plaintiffs are considering doing so.

The full decision can be found at - <http://tinyurl.com/lpsd52>

This article was originally published by Food Democracy Now on June 10, 2013.

INITIATIVES TO WATCH

More from our ED Margaret Scoles

Food Safety What does it mean for IOIA and organic inspectors?

IOIA is exploring a collaborative opportunity to provide training in Food Safety for organic inspectors and others. This could provide useful cross-training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and HACCP and additional work opportunities for organic inspectors. The program is a 5-step program including a) training for producers or processors, b) developing and implementing food safety plans, c) internal self-audits, d) audits by a 2nd or 3rd party independent verification auditor and, e) external 3rd party certificated audit. IOIA would work with a small group of trainers, who would then be available to train independent verification auditors. IOIA would benefit from more training opportunities. IOIA has explored this idea through the Membership Survey, and the responses have come back quite positive, with a serious side note not to let this endeavor sidetrack IOIA's mission.

Sound and Sensible IOIA has been participating in the Sound & Sensible Working Group of the Accredited Certifiers Association. I had the pleasure and honor of chairing the Inspection Subgroup, assisted by IOIA BOD Chair Ib Hagsten. Our working subgroup included three certifiers, one consultant, and two inspectors. Other Subgroups were: Materials, Noncompliance, and OSP Updates. We met at the larger group and as subgroups. We worked in subgroups through the summer, proposed drafts, chewed them up, and spit them out. Finally we sent drafts to Patricia Kane, ACA Coordinator, who meshed them into one document and sent them out to the full ACA for input, and on to Mac Stone, NOSB Chair. It was validating to see how much impact the IOIA white paper had on this work. Others often drew from the white paper or referred to it. The topic will be addressed

Organic Trade Association Marks Official Launch of On-line Global Organic Trade Guide with New Market Data Section and Real-Time Map Tool

Celebrates New Era of Global Organic Trade, More than \$100 Billion by 2015

The Global Organic Trade Guide, (www.globalorganictrade.com), the world's first user-friendly website designed to help U.S. organic producers and handlers export organic products, was officially launched June 18 by the Organic Trade Association (OTA). It features a new [Market Data](#) section and the only [map tool](#) to communicate global organic trade information in real time.

"This guide is the first and only resource to provide user-friendly access to comprehensive international organic trade information," said Christine Bushway, OTA's Executive Director. "As the global organic market heads towards the \$100 billion mark projected for 2015, this guide will be essential for success."

Features of the guide include:

- [Real-time Map Tool](#) – Click on any country to find out about its organic regulations, agreements with the U.S., certifiers, government agency contacts, import requirements and more.
- [Export Tools](#) – Review up-to-date federal export information from the USDA National Organic Program, and Foreign Agricultural Service, OTA and National Organic Initiative; and examine in-depth export information and contacts for every U.S. state.
- [Import Tools](#) – Get import information and contacts specific to the European Union, Canada, Japan and Taiwan.
- [Market Data](#) – Find the latest news, market reports and trade show information for global organic trade.

"The Guide is a one-stop resource for any organic farm, ranch, or value-added manufacturer of organic products that wants to find out how to export their products worldwide," said Laura Batcha, OTA's Executive Vice President. "This guide complements the existing export programs and activities developed by OTA to grow U.S. organic exports."

Funded by the USDA's Foreign Affairs Service (FAS), the website is administered by the OTA's Organic Export Program, which brings the U.S. organic industry to developing world markets through international promotions, exporter education, business to business connections, and trade negotiations.

at the NOSB meeting in Kentucky in October, where IOIA plans to be represented by Ib. Ultimately the goal is that changes will be implemented in the form of guidance or regulatory or policy changes by NOP; by the NOP and ACA in training topics that emerge; and by the organic certification/inspection community in sharing what we know and have learned. Want to see how it all ends up? Come to the advanced training in New

York, where Pat Kane and I will give the latest developments and inspectors will have a chance to discuss the oft overlooked inspector perspective on this issue.

Expo East – Interested in volunteering to help staff the IOIA booth in exchange for a free badge to the show? Let me know. Joe Whalen, IOIA Office Admin, and I will be in Baltimore. We'd love to have help. ☺

Livestock Training July 28-August 2, 2013, Clovis, New Mexico

by Michael Diaz

In the heart of New Mexico's dairy land, Clovis was chosen for a recent IOIA Basic Livestock Training. Clovis is located in the New Mexico portion of the Llano Estacado, in the eastern part of the state, near Texas.



IOIA Basic Organic Livestock Training, with participants from UT, OR, OK, SC, CO, NM, KY, CA, and BC. Garry Lean, Trainer, center.

A largely agricultural community it is also noted for its role in early rock music history. The town achieved some local fame in the 1950s being home to the Norman Petty Recording Studio, founded by early pop musician Norman Petty. Early rock acts such as Buddy Holly & The Crickets and other pop music artists were known to record there. The Crickets trademark #1 song; "That'll Be The Day" was recorded in Clovis. Like most of east-central New Mexico and west Texas, the vicinity plays host to significant agriculture activities, including peanut and cotton farming and cattle ranching for both meat and dairy production.

The Classroom and accommodations were located at La Quinta Suites in Clovis. Rib Crib, a local eatery, catered lunch. The Training was led by Garry Lean, who provided his wealth of livestock information and experiences to the group. The group's interactive activities during the training included break out sessions into smaller groups, a livestock material input Bingo with chocolate prizes as needed energy for the remainder of the day's studies and homework. Garry's stories and experiences in organic livestock inspection from Canada and

the US, gave an insight to the variety of operations we may encounter as inspectors. The field trip was to a large Organic Dairy, outside of Clovis.



Left to Right are Steve Compton, Ryan Merck (both from Clemson University in SC) and Michael Diaz, New Mexico.

The small group of 12 participants made for lots of great questions and one-one training from Garry. The trainees ranged from of a large number of state certifiers and a few independent inspectors from around the country and one from Canada. As a state certifier myself, it was a wonderful opportunity to talk to other state certifiers about how their state's Organic certification programs work. The group was an awesome group of fun loving people with a passion for organic integrity, good organic food and drink. Too bad Clovis was not able to provide us with some organic food. ☺

How Will the New FDA Salmonella Regulations Impact Organic Egg Producers?

by Kyla Smith,
Pennsylvania Certified Organic

In 2009 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published the final rule *Prevention of Salmonella Enteritidis in Shell Eggs During Production, Storage and Transportation* (“Egg Safety rule”). With the passage of this regulation, many organic stakeholders were (and may still be) wondering what impact this will have on their operation at the production level as well as throughout the organic certification process.

The FDA recently followed up with a draft guidance document, *Questions and Answers Regarding the Final Rule, Prevention of Salmonella Enteritidis in Shell Eggs During Production, Storage and Transportation (Layers with Outdoor Access)*, which is currently open for public comment until September 24, 2013. This draft guidance further explains concerns regarding the management of production systems that provide laying hens with access to the outdoors, such as in certified organic production systems. Once finalized, this publication will hopefully provide more clarification to producers, inspectors and certifiers on these requirements and how they align with the USDA National Organic Program regulations.

Neither the regulations nor the draft guidance should impact an operation’s ability to comply with the organic regulations. Organic operations will be subject to inspection from the FDA, in addition to their annual organic inspection. However, the Egg Safety rule does not mandate the frequency of inspection.

Producers may need to adjust some of their practices to meet the requirements explained in greater detail

below. It is safe to assume that the biggest change and challenge will likely be the increased records required to be kept on file, as we all know that most producers are not too fond of recordkeeping.

All operations that produce shell eggs (egg of a domesticated chicken)¹ from a farm with more than 3,000 laying hens, unless that farm sells all of its eggs directly to the consumer or does not produce shell eggs for the table market, are subject to this regulation. As of July 9, 2012 all farms with more than 3,000 laying hens had to comply.

“Farms” as defined by the FDA are all poultry houses and grounds immediately surrounding the poultry houses covered under a single biosecurity program.²

It is important to note that this is a risk reduction program—not a *Salmonella* free program. Food safety has been front-page news over the last decade. The FDA reports 79,000 cases of foodborne illness and 30 deaths each year due to the consumption of eggs contaminated with *Salmonella* Enteritidis.

Salmonella Enteritidis is a group of bacteria commonly found in the digestive tract of animals, especially birds and reptiles. Eggs can become contaminated on the farm because a laying hen can become infected with SE and pass the bacteria into the egg before it is laid. If the egg is not refrigerated, the bacteria can grow inside the uncracked, whole egg. Human illnesses are usually associated with ingesting food or drink contaminated with *Salmonella* and are characterized by diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, headache, nausea and vomiting.

In 2009 researchers from the University of Georgia’s Center for Food Safety (UGCFS) conducted a study to deter-

1 21 CFR 118.3
2 21 CFR 118.3

mine the prevalence of *Salmonella* on USDA-certified organic broiler chicken farms and conventional broiler farms. They discovered that conventional chickens are nearly 700 percent more likely to develop *Salmonella* than organic chickens, which has huge implications in food safety.

Their findings also showed:

- 38.8 percent of conventional birds were infected with *Salmonella*, while only 5.6 percent of organic birds were infected.
- 27.5 percent of conventional feed samples were contaminated with *Salmonella*; only 5 percent of organic feed samples were contaminated.
- 39.7 percent of *Salmonella* isolates from conventional birds were resistant to six antibiotics; 0 percent of isolates from organic chickens were resistant to these six.

In addition, there have been several studies comparing eggs from caged production systems to eggs from cage-free systems (including organic farms) that also found a reduced presence of *Salmonella* among eggs from cage-free birds.³

The Egg Safety rule⁴ is broken down into 6 major parts: *Salmonella* Enteritidis (SE) Prevention Plan, Environmental Testing, Egg Testing, Registration, Recordkeeping, and Enforcement and Compliance.

SE Prevention Plan

Operators must have a SE prevention plan specific to each farm where they produce eggs that includes, at a minimum, the following measures:

3 *The Humane Society of the United States Calls on Iowa’s Egg Industry to Phase Out Cage Confinement of Hens, Strengthen Food Safety*, www.humanesociety.org
4 21 CFR Part 118

1. Pullets: must be procured from or raised under SE monitored conditions, including chicks procured from a) SE monitored breeder flocks that meet National Poultry Improvement Plan's standards⁵ which tests the breeder flocks for SE negative, b) environmental testing program (pullet environment is tested when pullets are 14 to 16 weeks of age) or c) cleaning and disinfection program.

2. Biosecurity: must take steps to ensure that there is no introduction or transfer of SE into or among the poultry houses, including at a minimum limiting visitors, protecting against cross contamination of equipment and/or people moving between poultry houses, preventing wild bird, cats and other animals from entering poultry houses, and not allowing employees to keep birds at home.

3. Rodents, flies and other pest control measures: must monitor rodents by appropriate monitoring method (visual, glueboard, mechanical trap), monitor flies by appropriate method (spot cards, Scudder grills, sticky traps) and remove debris within a poultry house, along with removal of vegetation and debris outside of a poultry house.

4. Cleaning and disinfection: if an environmental test or egg test was positive, must remove all visible manure, dry clean to remove dust, feathers and old feed and disinfect with spray aerosol, fumigation or other appropriate disinfection method.

5. Refrigeration: 36 hours after laying eggs must be in a cooler at 45° F (clock starts at the end of the egg collecting shift).

Environmental and Egg Testing

The pullet environment must be tested when the birds are between 14-16 weeks of age, if raising pullets. If the operation is not raising pullets, the operation must obtain this document

⁵ 9 CFR 145.23(d)

tation to be kept on file.

For pullets, if the test is negative, no additional testing is required until they are between 40-45 weeks of age. If the test is positive, egg testing must begin within 2 weeks of the start of egg laying.

The layer environment must be tested when the birds are between 40-45 weeks of age. If the operation engages in the practice of molting, the flock must also be tested 4-6 weeks after flock is at 50% production after the molt.

For layers, if the test is negative and the birds do not undergo inducing molting, additional testing within that poultry house is not required. If the test is positive, the operation must adjust the SE plan to ensure all measures are being properly implemented and begin egg testing, unless eggs are diverted to treatment⁶.

The official environmental sampling and testing method incorporated by reference (§§ 118.7 and 118.8) in the final rule is a drag-swab sampling method. Egg sampling and testing includes collecting a minimum of 1,000 intact eggs representative of a day's production. Four tests must occur on the flock in the positive poultry house at 2-week intervals. If all four tests are negative, then further testing is not required. If any of the tests are positive, then the eggs must be diverted to treatment until the results from four tests are negative. In addition, if testing results in a positive and then later the negative testing requirements are met, as described above, a monthly egg test is required for the life of that flock. So long as these monthly egg test results remain nega-

⁶ Treatment, as defined by the FDA, is a technology or process that achieves at least a 5-log destruction of SE for all shell eggs, or the processing of egg products in accordance with the Egg Products Inspection Act.

tive, eggs may continue to be supplied to the table market. If any of these monthly egg test results are positive for SE, then the eggs must be diverted to treatment for the life of the flock or until the results from four consecutive tests are negative. Diverted eggs may be sent to a breaker, in-shell pasteurized, hard cooked or any other alternative process that achieves at least a 5-log reduction in SE. All diverted eggs must clearly be labeled with the following statement: "Federal law requires that these eggs must be treated to achieve at least a 5-log destruction of Salmonella Enteritidis or processed as egg products in accordance with the Egg Products Inspection Act, 21 CFR 118.6(f)."

Eggs may be diverted to treatment any time a positive result from an environmental or egg test is received in lieu of continued testing. If the operation chooses to divert eggs instead of the testing protocol, eggs must be diverted for the life of the flock.

Registration

All shell egg producers are required to register with the FDA within 30 days of becoming an egg producer or if an existing egg producer then by the applicable effective date of this regulation. Therefore, existing egg producers that are covered under this regulation should be registered by FDA, as the regulation is effective in its entirety.

Recordingkeeping

Operations must keep the following records: a written SE prevention plan, documentation that pullets were raised under SE monitored conditions and records demonstrating compliance with biosecurity measures, rodent and other pest control measures, cleaning and disinfection, refrigeration, environmental and egg sampling procedures, results of SE testing, diversion of eggs, if applicable, eggs at a particular farm being given treatment, and SE prevention plan modi-

fications and corrective action taken. All records must include the name of producer and the location of the farm, date and time of the activity, and the signature or initials of the person creating the record.

Enforcement and Compliance

The FDA established administrative enforcement procedures under the Public Health Service Act. If violations are found, the FDA may issue an order for diversion or destruction. Specific labeling and sale requirements of shell eggs under order are outlined in the regulations. The regulations do include the opportunity for an operation to appeal.

You may find the following resources available through the FDA website at (www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/Eggs) helpful as you navigate these new regulatory waters:

- Final Rule
- Guidance Documents for Industry including draft guidance open for public comment until 9/24/13
- Press Releases
- Egg Rule at a Glance
- Consumer Update
- Testing Methodology
- Egg Safety Inspections

If you'd like to submit electronic or written comments on the draft guidance, *Questions and Answers Regarding the Final Rule, Prevention of Salmonella Enteritidis in Shell Eggs During Production, Storage and Transportation (Layers with Outdoor Access)* – Docket: FDA-2000-N-0190, you may do so until September 24, 2013. Submit electronic comments to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Submit written comments to the Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers

The Importance of Water Management for Flock Health and Pest Control

by Tony Fleming

It is generally well understood that damp or wet conditions promote both disease and its vectors, such as insects and rodents. Many viruses and bacteria require a near-constant supply of moisture and a certain temperature range to multiply and conclude their life cycles: many common microbes that trigger disease cannot survive for long outside of a moist environment, whether that environment is an egg or a human body. Likewise, mosquitoes, some fly species, and rodents commonly breed in or utilize moist areas.

These principles apply to the broader poultry-house environment: poultry that frequently congregate (and defecate) in damp areas could reasonably be expected to be at greater risk of exposure to SE and other diseases, as well as to the pest vectors that carry them. This isn't just theoretical: in my experience, there seemed to be a definite correlation between wetter sites and greater prevalence of common poultry diseases and flock mortality. I clearly remember one operation with dozens of sites that I inspected several times, and each year I saw the same pattern: one group of sites located on flat terrain in or near a former (now drained) wetland invariably experienced some 50% greater mortality than the others. Drainage also can affect outdoor access: another site frequently kept the birds inside because conditions in the pen were "muddy" according to the outdoor access log. It turned out the outside pen was on the north side of the house, the house had nonexistent gutters, and the ground sloped towards the house. Of course it was always muddy!

Thus, one of the things organic poultry inspectors should always pay close attention to is site drainage and water management, which is often at the root of other problems. Where is the site situated in relation to local terrain? At the bottom of a bowl-shaped slope? Or on a knoll? Is the site well graded so that water runs off away from the house and, especially, the outdoor access area? Is the soil heavy and poorly permeable, or is it light and well drained? Are there any shallow depressions present in the outdoor pens that hold standing water, whether natural or (more commonly) excavated by the birds? Are gutters present? Observing how moisture behaves at a site is often the key to anticipating, recognizing, and understanding other potential problems the flock may be susceptible to.

Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852. All comments should be identified with the docket number listed above. ~

Kyla Smith is the Certification Program Director at Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), a certification agency that certifies about 700 operations in the mid-Atlantic region. She's worked with PCO for the past 10 years in various roles including Organic Inspector (for all scopes), Certification Specialist and most recently Policy Director. As Certification Program Director, Kyla oversees the certification team's implementation of the certification review process from receipt of application through issuance of certification. In addition, Kyla coordinates the PCO Certification Committee, a PCO membership based committee that meets yearly to evaluate all of PCO's conflict of interest files to ensure proper procedures were followed by PCO certification staff during the review process. Kyla is a member of the Accredited Certifiers Association Board. She received her Masters degree in Transformative Leadership and Social Change from the Maryland University of Integrative Health (formerly Tai Sophia Institute).

Board of Directors Meetings – Minutes Highlights

Note: Full minutes are posted in the Inspectors Section of the IOIA website.

IOIA BOD Meeting April 25, 2013 – Conference Call

Present: Ib Hagsten, Isidor Yu, Pam Sullivan, Margaret Weigelt, Garth Kahl, ED Margaret Scoles. Stuart McMillan joined the call 7:12 PM; Bill Stoneman joined the call 7:14 PM. Secretary: Margaret Weigelt.

Report from the Chair: Ib Hagsten described his experience presenting his Sound and Sensible remarks at a pre-NOSB meeting in Portland on Sunday and during the NOSB meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Pam Sullivan referred BOD to the six narrative summaries described in Treasurer's Report: Quarterly Reports; Bank Statements and Reconciliation; New Bookkeeper; IRS return; HRA; Vanguard account. Pam recommended we move money (\$20,000) from a really low-yielding account to a different bank that offers a higher yield of about 1%. Bill Stoneman made motion to make the change. Garth Kahl seconded. Garth Kahl moved to accept both the treasurer's report and the financial report. Isidor Yu seconded. None opposed. Motion carried. Compliments and commendations were made to Pam from Margaret S and Ib for her quick and competent handling of the financials.

Food Safety/GAP Audits for Organic Inspectors: Margaret Scoles asked whether we want to go ahead with this project. She said this training would give inspectors another source of income and IOIA another project but should this be an IOIA priority? To determine whether this should be given priority the consensus/agreement was to invite a 30-minute presentation for the May 30th BOD meeting after which we could ask questions.

IOIA Fundraising Strategy: Margaret S - This BOD has enthusiasm for fundraising. Do we need to determine a point person? Garth Kahl suggested we have a brochure (available both hard copy and electronic) to hand out and create a contribution category above sustaining member. Will Garth be point person? Margaret Anne will help. Margaret S volunteered Stuart to get involved in the social network component of fundraising.

300 Level Training: Meeting member needs, what do inspectors need? Margaret S thought there was a huge potential for growth and room for improvement for advanced trainings, but it will take staff, time and money.

ED Report: Written report was included with meeting documents. Margaret S used her time to ask for approval by vote that the basic training course appeal policy be changed to a 60-day limit from completion of training. Garth moved that we modify the appeal policy and approve the new training appeal document. Pam seconded the motion. Motion was amended by Pam Sullivan to read "60 days after receiving their grade." Ib asked if anyone was opposed to the motion as amended. None opposed. Motion carried.

IOIA BOD Meeting May 30, 2013- Conference Call

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Stuart McMillan for Chair Ib Hagsten.

Present: Isidor Yu, Pam Sullivan, Margaret Weigelt, Bill Stoneman, ED Margaret Scoles. Ib Hagsten joined call at 7:18, left at about 8:30. Garth Kahl joined a few minutes later. Secretary: Margaret Weigelt.

Guest presenters: Rebecca Burnworth, PrimusLabs Assistant Audit Technical Manager and Katie Novo, PrimusLabs Marketing Coordinator.

Review Draft 2013 AGM Minutes for posting on website. Consensus was to approve AGM minutes in principle, and to correct, review and approve by BOD email.

Newsletter: e-Version, executive summaries. BOD discussion about publication options per suggestions in ED Report. BOD members expressed preferences for e-version or hard copy. Printing and mailing costs were discussed. Isidor emphasized the need for newsletter content for Asian inspectors. Margaret Scoles suggested we poll the membership. Garth made the motion that we initiate a membership survey (electronic Survey Monkey). Margaret Weigelt seconded. None opposed. Motion passed. Number of questions, 3-4 topics and a possible incentive to fill out survey were discussed. Isidor offered to translate survey into Korean. Garth noted that we also have the resources or inspector members to translate into Spanish and Japanese. Consensus was to translate survey into these languages as precedent to offering translated content in other languages.

Fundraising Committee- Strategy, principles, donor policy, questions. Garth summarized activities: fundraising binders dusted off, solicitation letters, scripts and templates were contributed by Jonda. Our first sustainer member. Garth outlined BOD topics for discussion (New levels, higher membership categories, Gift Acceptance Policy, Donor list confidentiality, Conflict of Interest) Pam made motion to accept the idea of adding other membership categories. Garth seconded. None opposed. Motion passed. The idea was passed back to the fund raising committee to make recommendations regarding new membership levels.

Food Safety/GAP Audits for Organic Inspectors: Online presentation. After presentation they took questions from BOD. Discussion. Garth made motion that we as BOD work with IOIA staff to prepare a membership **See Minutes, page 22**

GMO NEWS

GE Wheat Discovery Prompts Call for Moratorium, Lawsuit

After the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced in late May that unapproved, genetically engineered (GE) wheat was found contaminating an Oregon farmer's field, the non-profit group Center for Food Safety called for a moratorium on GE crop field trials and, along with several Washington state wheat growers, has subsequently filed a lawsuit on June 6 in U.S. District Court in Spokane against Monsanto, Co., over the unauthorized release of genetically modified wheat, claiming the discovery of the wheat in an Oregon field has damaged sales of exports.

The GE wheat, known as Roundup Ready, was developed by the Monsanto Company to withstand direct application of Roundup (glyphosate) herbicide.

"USDA has once again failed to protect the food supply from GE crop contamination," said Andrew Kimbrell, executive director at Center for Food Safety. "This incident underscores why stronger regulation is long overdue. Congress needs to investigate how this occurred and the prevalence of contamination. Until then, USDA, at a minimum, should immediately place a moratorium on open-air field testing of genetically engineered crops."

After a decade of field trials, Monsanto dropped efforts to introduce the GE wheat in 2004 in the face of intense international opposition from consumers, farmers, wheat millers and food companies. However, after a six-year hiatus, Monsanto once again began extensive field-testing of GE wheat in 2011.

Opponents of GE wheat have long argued that it would contaminate conventional wheat, making it unsellable to many markets that reject GE prod-

ucts. A 2005 study estimated that the wheat industry could lose \$94 to \$272 million if GE wheat were introduced. Past transgenic contamination episodes involving GE corn and GE rice have triggered over \$1 billion in losses and economic hardship to farmers.

In late 2005, the USDA's own Inspector General issued a scathing report detailing numerous violations of agency rules in regulating genetically engineered crop field trials. USDA officials did not know the locations of many field trials it was charged with regulating, and did not conduct required inspections of others. In 2002, the National Academy of Sciences also criticized serious deficiencies in USDA's regulation of genetically engineered crops. USDA records reveal that Monsanto has conducted 279 field tests of herbicide-resistant wheat on over 4,000 acres in 17 states since 1994.

The discovery could have far-reaching implications for the U.S. wheat industry if the growth of the engineered product turns out to be far-flung. Many countries around the world will not accept imports of genetically modified foods, and the United States exports about half of its wheat crop.

The discovery also could have implications for organic companies, which by law cannot use GE ingredients in its foods. Organic farmers have frequently expressed concern that genetically modified seed will blow into organic farms and contaminate their products.

Oregon Department of Agriculture Director Katy Coba said in a statement that the discovery is "a very serious development that could have major trade ramifications." The state exports about 90 percent of its wheat.

"I am concerned that a highly regulated plant material such as genetically modified wheat somehow was able to escape into a crop field," she said.

USDA officials declined to speculate whether the modified seeds blew into the field from a testing site or if they were somehow planted or taken there, and they would not identify the farmer or the farm's location. The Oregon Department of Agriculture said the field is in the eastern part of the state.

Contamination from GE crops is a serious concern to wheat farmers. Farm state legislators have made several efforts to protect their states' wheat farmers should Roundup Ready wheat be introduced. In 2002, Republican State Senator Bill Bowman of North Dakota proposed legislation that would give North Dakota farmers the right to sue Monsanto if GE wheat contaminates their crop. Now, despite GE wheat's unapproved status, such legislation is looking increasingly prescient.

Originally published by The Center for Food Safety & AP on May 29, 2013.

Study shows Roundup could be linked to Parkinson's, cancer, and other health issues

Heavy use of the world's most popular herbicide, Roundup, could be linked to a range of health problems and diseases, including Parkinson's, infertility and cancers, according to a new study.

The peer-reviewed report, published in April in the scientific journal *Entropy*, said evidence indicates that residues of "glyphosate," the chief ingredient in Roundup weed killer, which is sprayed over millions of acres of crops, has been found in food.

Those residues enhance the damaging effects of other food-borne chemical residues and toxins in the environment to disrupt normal body functions and induce disease, according to the report, authored by Stephanie Seneff, a research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Anthony Samsel, a retired science consultant from Arthur D. Little, Inc.

Samsel is a former private environmental government contractor as well as a member of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

“Negative impact on the body is insidious and manifests slowly over time as inflammation damages cellular systems throughout the body,” the study says.

We “have hit upon something very important that needs to be taken seriously and further investigated,” Seneff said.

The EPA is conducting a standard registration review of glyphosate and has set a deadline of 2015 for determining if glyphosate use should be limited. The study is among many comments submitted to the agency.

Monsanto, creator of Roundup, and other leading industry experts have said for years that glyphosate is proven safe, and has a less damaging impact on the environment than other commonly used chemicals.

Of the more than two dozen top herbicides on the market, glyphosate is the most popular. In 2007, as much as 185 million pounds of glyphosate was used by U.S. farmers, double the amount used six years ago, according to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data.

Reuters and The Huffington Post, April 25, 2013.

Feds deregulate DuPont’s genetically engineered corn

USDA says GE corn poses ‘no significant risk’ to environment
The Agriculture Department said on June 20 that it is allowing genetically engineered corn created by DuPont Pioneer, the largest U.S. producer of hybrid seeds for agriculture, to be sold commercially.

Sustainable Food News, June 21, 2013

March Against Monsanto

The May 25 March Against Monsanto took place in 436 cities in 52 countries, with an estimated two million participants. The next March is planned for October 12. Everywhere. <http://www.march-against-monsanto.com/>

CT passes GMO labeling bill

The state of Connecticut has passed HB 6527, their GMO labeling bill. The bill will go into effect when “Four states, not including this state, enact a mandatory labeling law for genetically-engineered foods that is consistent with the provisions of this subsection, provided (1) such state borders Connecticut; and (2) the aggregate population of such states located in the northeast region of the United States that have enacted a mandatory labeling law for genetically-engineered foods that is consistent with this subsection exceed twenty million based on 2010 census figures.” The group GMO Free CT stated, “While we believe we have a right to know what is in our food today, we are satisfied that the language of the GMO labeling bill will give CT consumers transparency in labeling that will allow them to make informed decisions once the law is triggered”.

Text of the bill is at <http://tinyurl.com/lxu5745>

GMO Free CT on June 2, 2013.

Maine becomes second state to pass GE labeling legislation

On June 11, Maine’s House of Representatives passed LD-718 (known as An Act to Protect Maine Food Consumers’ right to Know about Genetically Engineered Food), which would require the labeling of genetically engineered (GE) food and seed stock sold in Maine. The bill passed through the House by an overwhelming margin of 141 to 4. The following day, the Maine Senate approved a similar version of the bill in a unanimous vote. Once differences are ironed out,

the final bill will move to Governor Paul LePage to sign. Similar to the Connecticut bill, it will not go into full effect until four other contiguous states approve similar laws.

USDA approves voluntary GMO-free label

The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) recently approved a label for meat and liquid egg products that would inform consumers about whether the product contains genetically modified ingredients.

The approval marks the first time the department has approved a non-GMO label from a third party.

The verification seal comes from the Non-GMO Project, a non-profit organization “committed to preserving and building sources of non-GMO products, educating consumers and providing verified non-GMO choices.” The seal allows consumers to know if the animal product they’re about to consume was fed GMO crops like soy, corn and alfalfa. (The FDA has not approved any genetically modified animals for the food supply, but some animals do eat GMO feed.)

Genetically modified foods were approved for human consumption in the United States in 1995, but the FDA never required them to be labeled as such.

The FDA responded to the Non-GMO Project’s labeling efforts in April: “The FDA supports voluntary labeling for food derived from genetic engineering. Currently, food manufacturers may indicate through voluntary labeling whether foods have or have not been developed through genetic engineering provided that such labeling is truthful and not misleading.”

The USDA adopted the Non-GMO Project’s requirements, auditing process and standard. The USDA also must approve all labels before the product is delivered.

This article was originally published by WTVR.com on June 25, 2013.

Notes, from page 1

us well at key Canadian events, and he was the primary sponsor of the helpful SurveyMonkey questionnaire that a very high percentage of you took part in. **Pam Sullivan**, as treasurer, is providing scrutiny, oversight, detailed and timely reports, plus supportive feedback to accounting in Broadus. **Margaret Anne Weigelt**, as secretary, is putting her librarian skills to good use on our behalf as the one taking copious notes (and FYI to keep from mixing the two Margaret's, we use her middle name, too).

Garth Kahl, as a director, has utilized his knowledge of the Spanish language and cultural sensitivity to get IOIA signage translated and used at a key Mexican tradeshow event with much success. **Isidor Yu**, also a director, has utilized his Korean base to greatly enhance the image of and involvement in IOIA interests in the Far East. **Bill Stoneman**, as executive member at large, has added the dimension of organizational management and of an ED review skill set that otherwise was missing in this well-functioning, engaged, and exciting BOD of IOIA.

2. The small staff at IOIA is having a mighty impact on membership interaction, social media involvement, training efforts (in the USA, on the web, and around the world), interfacing with both the NOP and with the work of the AC A (Accredited Certifiers Assn.) in action to outreach to the organic community, at large, plus the world beyond.

Margaret Scoles, Executive Director, with whom I have frequent phone conversations or brief e-mail interactions, allows me to realize how hard, untiring, and dedicated Margaret thinks, breathes, and works

for the benefit of and overall health of the IOIA vision, mission, and day-to-day activities and future development. **Sacha Draine**, Associate Executive Director and International Training Manager, provides a built-in continuity to IOIA, and a tremendous amount of worldwide co-sponsored managed training in multiple languages.

Kathy Bowers, as US Training Services Coordinator, makes certain that all the training packets and support materials are put together correctly and arrive at the various training locations in plenty of time to avoid scrambling or concern by the trainers. **Jonda Crosby**, Training Services Director, coordinates the development of webinars at an ever-increasing pace for the many-faceted training needs of new and seasoned inspectors in the continually-expanding world of organic inspections (and reviewers). **Joe Whalen**, Office Administrator, is wearing several hats (in addition to the Stetson shown on the



Isidor Yu and Stuart visit at the 2012 AGM

website), namely mastering QuickBooks, social media, answering the phone (which he does delightfully), and assisting Margaret in a multitude of different ways.

In the next couple of months you might wish to come by and see us at various events, starting with the **IOIA Booth** in Baltimore at **Natural Expo East #8529, Sept. 26-28**. If you are in Canada you may wish to participate in our Basic Processing Training event, Dec. 9-13, or the Guelph Organic Conference, Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014. IOIA will be again sponsoring the Guelph event. And looking ahead, we would love to see you at the training and AGM in Costa Rica next spring (March 22, 2014). Thank you for your participation in the various IOIA surveys, trainings, discussion groups, and face-to-face topical or advanced training sessions where the most invaluable networking can take place, if you so desire. ☺

Minutes, from page 19

survey about this proposal and that the time line for it be open-ended. Pam seconded. None opposed. Motion passed. **Select 2014 AGM venue:** Discussion of options. Tilajari in Costa Rica chosen through discussion and consensus.

Oregon Bans GE Canola

On August 16, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber signed into law a bill banning commercial production of canola until 2019 inside the three million acre Willamette Valley Protected District, one of the world's pre-eminent vegetable seed producing regions.

Center for Food Safety (CFS) had sued the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) after seed and organic vegetable farmers objected to a controversial decision to permit canola production in the Willamette Valley. The vast majority of canola is genetically engineered, which contaminates organic and conventional varieties, as well as cross-pollinates with weeds, creating new invasive species problems, as herbicide resistant traits spread to native weed populations.

<http://tinyurl.com/mhhgo53>

Organic Report on Africa

"Organic Agriculture: African Experiences in Resilience and Sustainability," a report released in May by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, demonstrates that organic management in Africa can benefit people, the economy and ecosystems. According to the report, research results confirm that organic agricultural practices increase yields, improve livelihoods and food security, conserve indigenous knowledge, plant varieties and animal breeds, as well as sociocultural development, and provide much greater resilience in times of climate extremes, such as drought and heavy rains.

RESOURCES

Wanna Compare Standards?

The information platform *Organic Standards*, which is run by the German Ministry of Agriculture, has recently taken on the East African Organic Product Standards. The information platform started with the EU Regulation, the US National Organic Program (NOP) and Codex Alimentarius. Other standards it now includes are the IFOAM Standard, Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards (COROS) and Asia Regional Organic Standards. The platform has the facility to search for topics or words and offers different ways of comparing all the standards it includes. *The platform can be found on www.organic-standards.info/en/*

NOP's new Substances Fact Sheet

explains the basic rules for deciding what farm inputs or ingredients may be used for the type of organic operation in question. *The factsheets are available on <http://tinyurl.com/ldbjuull> (from TOS #147)*

New version of Driftwatch helps more discourage pesticide drift

Purdue University has transitioned its Driftwatch™ crop registry to [Field-Watch Inc.](#), a commercial enterprise that can handle further expansion. Certified organic growers in nine states have been using the original registry -- information about those fields will automatically shift to Field-Watch.

The registry allows crop producers to identify and map the location of their sensitive crops such as tomatoes, fruit trees, grapes, vegetables and organic crops, providing a resource for applicators to consult before spraying. The more producers who register fields in the program, the more useful the map is to applicators.

Food Safety Modernization Act

National Sustainable Agriculture Campaign offers news analysis and action opportunities via email, sign up for [NSAC's FSMA updates](#).

Apples to Twinkies 2013: Comparing Taxpayer Subsidies for Fresh Produce and Junk Food

Former National Sustainable Ag Campaign intern Julia McCarthy contributed extensive research and drafting assistance to CALPIRG on this recently published report comparing subsidies for fruits and vegetables to subsidies for commodities crops like corn and soy. The study examines the extent to which federal dollars subsidize junk food and junk food additives, including 17 of the 37 ingredients in a Twinkie as well as the extent to which subsidies compete with public health priorities. See the report at: <http://tinyurl.com/l7wp6tg>

New IATP report In *Nanomaterials in Soil: Our Future Food Chain?*, Dr. Steve Suppan digs in to the science behind why companies are pushing ahead with nanotech, why governments are so far behind, and why real (read: non-industry) science and conversation is sorely needed before our soil and the microfauna that keep it functioning become nothing but dirt. - See more at: <http://tinyurl.com/jvtncmw>

USDA Publishes Country of Origin Labeling Final Rule

On Thursday, May 23, the USDA published the final rule amending the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) regulations in the Federal Register. A pdf version of the final rule is available [here](#). COOL was originally enacted in the 2002 Farm Bill and required retailers to notify customers of the country of origin of covered commodities. Covered commodities include muscle cuts of beef, lamb, chicken, goat, and pork, as well as ground beef, ground lamb, ground chicken, ground goat,

ground pork, wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish, perishable agricultural commodities, macadamia nuts, pecans, ginseng, and peanuts.

Publication Highlights Findings From Food System Research

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture recently updated [Food Facts](#), with key findings from marketing and food systems since 2000. The 30-page document provides research-based statistics farmers can use for marketing their products. It also contains a list of online tools and resources regarding food systems.

Paper examines status of biodegradable mulch

Faculty from Washington State University, the University of Tennessee and Texas Tech answer questions about biodegradable mulch in a newly released paper, [Current and Future Prospects For Biodegradable Plastic Mulch in Certified Organic Production Systems](#). Currently, certified organic farmers can use conventional polyethylene mulch, provided it is removed from the field at the end of the growing or harvest season. They have not been able to use available biodegradable plastic mulch products because these did not conform to standards set by the National Organic Program.

This paper explains the problems with polyethylene mulch and examines the properties of biodegradable alternatives. In October 2012, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) voted to recommend to NOP to approve biodegradable plastic mulch in organic production. Expectations are that the NOP will follow through on this recommendation within this year.

Researchers from Oregon State University presented a poster on this topic in the Research Forum at the 2012 MOSES Organic Farming Conference. You can read more about their findings [here](#).



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Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!

2013 Calendar

September 9-13 Loveland, Colorado - Basic Organic Crop Inspection Training

September 24 – 25 HACCP for the Organic Professional, workshop in conjunction with Expo East. <https://www.ota.com/events/haccp/register.html>

Sept 25 – 28 Expo East, Baltimore, MD. <http://www.expoeast.com/expoeast2013/public/enter.aspx>

Sept 27 – 29 Oakland California. Eat Real Festival. Jack London Square. www.eatrealfest.com

October 21 - November 1 Binghamton, New York - Basic Organic Crop, Livestock and Processing Inspection Training; and Advanced Training, see page 3 for info.

October 22 -24 Fall 2013 NOSB meeting, Louisville, Kentucky. <http://tinyurl.com/c3qtgnd>

November 15 New deadline for comments Produce Rule and Preventive Controls (Food Safety Modernization Act) <http://tinyurl.com/bytx43f>

December 3 – 5 Middle East Natural & Organic product Expo - MENOPE 2013. Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, U.A.E. visit www.naturalproductme.com

January 24 - 26, 2014 NOFA-NY Winter Conference, Saratoga Springs, NY www.nofany.org/events/winter-conference

January 30 - Feb 2 Guelph Organic Conference, <http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca/>

January 22 - 25 Eco-Farm Conference, Asilomar, CA www.eco-farm.org

February 12 - 15 BioFach, Nuremberg, Germany. <http://www.biofach.de/en/>

Feb 27 – March 1 MOSES Organic Farming Conference. <http://www.mosesorganic.org/conference.html>

March 18 - 24 NOP Training for certifiers – Spanish language, IOIA AGM, and Advanced Training. See page 1.

April 29 - May 1 Spring 2014 NOSB meeting: San Antonio, Texas

October 13 – 15, 2014 18th edition of the IFOAM Organic World Congress (OWC), Istanbul, Turkey.

Please see page 3 for the current list of IOIA on-site trainings
Please see page 4 for the current list of IOIA Webinars