

Organic Human Capital Capacity Building Projects Announced

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7, 2021 – U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Marketing and Regulatory Programs Under Secretary Jenny Lester Moffitt today announced funding of \$1.73 million for nine projects to improve the oversight capacity of the organic industry by supporting and expanding the pool of qualified inspectors, reviewers, and other professionals who oversee organic production now and in the future. The funded projects provide support across the human capital pipeline, from initial workforce development to creating resources for existing professionals.

"Organic farmers, ranchers, businesses and consumers all rely on a fair and competitive organic market founded on the work of skilled certifiers and inspectors," said Lester Moffitt. "The projects also emphasize diversity and inclusion to address the needs of historically underserved communities and regions. We are building tools to strengthen today's organic inspectors, and to develop the next generation of diverse, well-qualified organic professionals."

The Human Capital Capacity Building Initiative is managed by the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). It was launched to support the long-term growth of the organic industry by expanding the pool of well qualified organic oversight professionals who ensure consistency, fairness, and the integrity of the system. The initiative also supports the Biden-Harris Administration priority to ensure racial equity by removing barriers to access and building inclusive programs.

Participating organizations will develop capacity-building projects to enable the growth of an organic certification workforce to meet the evolving needs of the organic sector. These projects will support creation of training and educational programs, recruitment strategies, mentorship opportunities, inspector apprenticeships, and professional development resources. Resources developed through the initiative will become public resources made available through AMS.

IOIA is very pleased to be included in FOUR of the nine projects. Funded projects are listed in more detail on page 4.



IOIA's Apprenticeship Project Partners

*IOIA's Virtual AGM - March 3, 2022
Marking 30 years of inspector education & advocacy!*

Notes from the Chair

by Rachel Cherry Myers

Strategic Planning!!!

The middle of November was full of excitement for our future. The board, along with several key consultants, gathered together in Boulder, Colorado to look at how our future might be shaped. More details will unfold as we continue to finalize the plan, and we are so excited to share!!

In the meantime, I'd like to give a very sincere thank you to all who took the time in the middle of our busiest season to shape IOIA's future!! The list of attributes for every single participant runs deep; these are gifts and talents I found to be invaluable during this process.

See Notes, p 4

Welcome New Members

IOIA is in the process of updating the online Membership Directory this is only a partial list of new members.

Supporting Individuals:

Tanya Bagley, Providence, Utah
Jacob Hawkins, Columbus, Ohio
Ethan Miller, Columbia, Missouri
Dusty Swiger, New London, Ohio

New OILC Courses

Int'l Organic Trade Arrangements
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/2f4d957>

Organic Seed Search
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/2f355a1>

Microlearning Courses
<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/2f78b2c>

IOIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Inspectors' Report is the newsletter of International Organic Inspectors Association. IOIA is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization. Our mission is to address issues and concerns relevant to organic inspectors, to provide quality inspector training and to promote integrity and consistency in the organic certification process.
Editor: Diane Cooner [webgall\[at\]ioia.net](mailto:webgall[at]ioia.net)

WEBINAR Training Schedule for details & to register go to our [website](#)

200 Level Webinar - December 1 and 8, 2021 Processing In/Out Balances, Traceability & Recipe Verification under NOP & COR

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific) Two 3 hour sessions.
Trainer: Kelly A. Monaghan. Member cost \$275

100 Level Webinar - January 11 and 14, 2022 NOP Livestock Standards

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (Pacific)
Two 3 hour sessions.
Trainer: Garry Lean. Member cost \$325

Webinar Discount Note:
All IOIA Inspector Members are eligible for 1 half-price webinar in 2021 and 2022.

Self-Paced Learning Courses

Canadian Organic Regime - COR Series Trainer Lisa Pierce.

#1 Our Organic Certification System - The Regulation

#2 COR Crop Production Standards Each course takes approximately 3 hours to complete. Inspectors members cost US\$150 each/\$300 both.

Remote Inspection Training Free to inspector members; All others \$200.
[Available in English](#) [Tambien disponible en español.](#)

IOIA/American Grassfed Association Grassfed Dairy, Trainer Harriet Behar.
Member cost \$300 - \$325 all others.

Dairy Feed Audit, Trainers Jonda Crosby and Nate Powell-Palm.
Member cost \$350, All others \$375 [See our website to sign up.](#)

New Accredited Member!

Congratulations to the following accredited member:

Newly Accredited – Kathleen Newkirk (Crop, Livestock, Processing)

IOIA's Accreditation Program is voluntary. Applicants must demonstrate: Commitment to organics, Education, Work and life experience, Inspection experience, and Continuing education. Additional criteria are the requirement to submit a current resume and evaluation letters from all the certifiers for which they have worked, plus attending inspector training at least every 3 years. Once accredited, applicants may apply for renewal every 3 years, again meeting minimum criteria of ongoing inspector training, continuing education, a minimum amount of inspections in the category, and an updated resume.

Accredited members receive:

- A Certificate of Accreditation
- A laminated wallet-sized card which displays their accredited status
- Recognition of status in the online Member Directory and this newsletter
- Eligibility for work as IOIA Peer Field Evaluators

To learn more, apply or renew, please see our website. Next application deadline is March 1.

For a complete copy of the IOIA Accreditation Program, [click here.](#)

Onsite Training Schedule

May 16 - 20, 2022, Saco, Maine - Basic Crop and Processing Inspection Training

IOIA and MOFGA Organic Certification Services will cosponsor basic Crop and Processing trainings at Ferry Beach Retreat & Conference Center in Saco, Maine. Each course includes 4 days of instruction including a field trip to a certified organic operation, plus ½ day for testing. A minimum of 12 participants is required for each course or it will be cancelled. The courses are limited to 18 participants for training quality.

The trainings follow IOIA's curriculum requirements which include:

- Instruction on the organic standards (USDA National Organic Rule)
- Understanding the difference between inspecting and consulting
- Approved input materials
- Working with organic system plans
- How to inspect organic operations
- Inspector conduct, confidentiality, and ethics
- Audit trail requirements
- Report writing
- Risk Assessment
- Effective communication
- Investigative skills

IOIA's basic Organic Inspection Training courses are recommended for inspector trainees, certification agency staff, regulatory agency staff, farmers, quality control personnel, consultants, and technical service providers who want to better understand the organic inspection and certification process. If you are interested in this training, please visit the IOIA website or email ioiassistant@rangeweb.net.



Advanced Organic Inspector Training - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

Tentatively back in the planning stages for fall 2022, in conjunction with the Organic Connections Conference.

Live Online Basic Training Schedule

IOIA's Live Online Basic Training courses require that participants first complete a 100-level Webinar on NOP Standards (2 sessions of 3 hours each) in the respective scope - Crop, Processing, or Livestock. Separate registration is required for this webinar unless previously completed. **Additional Requirements** for the course include participant reliable internet, a computer, and computer literacy.

Online Basic Livestock Inspection Training

Jan 31-Feb 04, 2022 - Deadline to Register and Apply is December 15, 2021.

Course Description: The course provides basic level training to develop skills required for inspecting and reporting on the management of an organic livestock production unit according to a specified set of standards. IOIA's livestock curriculum includes instruction on applying and using NOP organic livestock standards; understanding the use of input materials; risk assessment; audit trail requirements; report writing; inspector conduct, confidentiality, and ethics; the difference between inspecting and consulting; effective communication; and organic inspection procedures for meat, dairy, fiber bearing animals, and poultry (meat and eggs). Completion of the Basic Crop Inspection training is a prerequisite.

Not finding a training you are looking for or all trainings full? [Please register here](#) to be contacted by IOIA when that training is available. Detailed Info, Application, Registration for all courses available on our [website](#).

Live Online Basic Crop Inspection Training (and Live Online Basic Processing Inspection) will be offered in Spring 2022

Notes from the Chair, from page 1

To Allan Benjamin, for his attention to detail and commitment to tangible deliverables.

To Beth Dominick, for her eagerness to keep the momentum going and her confidence and ability to look at the whole picture.

To Chuck Mitchell, for the perspective from around the globe as well as inside the heart of the USDA.

To Heather Donald, for spending the time to provide input at 9 months pregnant.

To Janine Gibson, for her dedication to sit for hours in front of a computer screen in order to participate from Canada.

To Terrance Layhew for his enthusiasm and insight into the future of inspectors.

To Pam Sullivan, for her insight into both the past and the present.

To Ryan Sitler, for his commitment to keep IOIA relevant to it's members and financially successful.

To Ellie Hudson, for providing stability with her solid management experience insight.

To Monique Marez, for challenging us to be and do better by creating a structure that provided phenomenal success.

And of course to our fearless leader Margaret for the very many years she has served and continues to serve as our Executive Director!!

Projects, from page 1

- **Building a Sustainable and Inclusive Apprenticeship Program for Organic Inspectors and Other Organic Professionals.** Project lead: International Organic Inspectors Association with partners: University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, Organic Association of Kentucky, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild, Elmwood Stock Farm and the Green Door Workshop. For more about this project see page 9.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources for Organic Professionals.** Project Lead: Organic Farmers Association with partners: Cambium Collective, Accredited Certifiers Association, IFOAM North America, International Organic Inspectors Association and the National Organic Coalition. For more about this project see page 6.
- **Bridging the Gaps: Enhancing Organic Programs in Postsecondary Education to Expand and Diversify the Certification Workforce Pipeline.** Project lead: Oregon Tilth with partners: Oregon State University, Iowa State University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and the International Organic Inspectors Association. For more about this project see page 5.
- **Developing Cooperative Support for Organic Professionals.** Project lead: Northwest Cooperative Development Center with partners: Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild, U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives, Aligned Law and the International Organic Inspectors Association.
- **Nourishing the Future Organic Inspector: A Mentorship Pilot and Southern States Recruitment and Training Program.** Project lead: California Certified Organic Farmers Foundation with partners: Southeastern African American Farmers' Organic Network, National Center for Appropriate Technology – Gulf States Region and Farmshare Austin.
- **Deploying a Systems Framework for Classroom and Field-based Organic Agriculture Education.** Project lead: Tuskegee University.
- **Providing High School and Postsecondary Students with Employment Opportunities in the Organic Industry: A Career Educational Technical Model for Organic Technicians/Inspectors.** Project lead: Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers with partners: University of Florida and University of Hawaii.
- **Improving Professional Outcomes for Organic Inspectors through Training in Organic Agronomy.** Project leads: Organic Agronomy Training Service and the Organic Trade Association.
- **Verifying the Promise of Certified Organic in the Northeast: Expanding Collaboration, Cooperation and Capacity-Building in the Northeast to Train, Inspect and Certify to the NOP.** Project lead: Northeast Organic Farming Association with partners: Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association; Delaware Valley University; Alfred State College; Rutgers University; Vermont Technical College; University of Connecticut; University of Maine; University of Massachusetts; University of New Hampshire; and Organic Independents.

The National Organic Program is a program of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). More information on organic certification and free training for professionals engaged in organic oversight is available on the AMS website.

Notes from the Executive Director – More about our Cover Story

by Margaret Scoles

The word for 2020 was certainly “Covid” if you had to pick just one. The word(s) for 2021 are resoundingly “Human Capital”. Even though not everyone loves the term, everyone is concerned about how to guarantee enough well-qualified inspectors. The NOP invested almost \$2 million in projects to answer the question through their Request for Applications. The NOSB devoted serious time to that question in fall 2020 and spring 2021. IOIA devoted serious time to responding to the questions raised both by the NOP last year and the NOSB this year, also to developing an ambitious response to the RFA. With the current level of growth in organic, the workforce is simply not growing fast enough to keep up.

We often hear – how do we engage a more diverse inspector workforce? Our workforce is worryingly homogeneous in the US. IOIA aims to change that by our involvement in 5 separate projects – four funded by the NOP through the RFA and one funded by the NRCS. All address diversity, equity, and inclusion. IOIA will lead an apprenticeship project with Kentucky partners UK, KSU, OAK, and KDA, plus the Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild (see page 9). A little more about the other projects....

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources for Organic Professionals. Project Lead: Organic Farmers Association with partners: Cambium Collective, Accredited Certifiers Association, IFOAM North America, the National Organic Coalition, and IOIA. The focus is on providing excellent training opportunities about systemic racism for the organic certification community – free to all registrants. IOIA will participate in the trainings and has also been accepted for an internship (see page 6) which will pay for a Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) participant to attend a standards webinar and

basic inspection training. Odd timing – The Organic Center is also providing training the same day. Please consider taking one or both of the free webinars on systemic racism in agriculture and our food system on December 8 (see page 6).

Bridging the Gaps: Enhancing Organic Programs in Postsecondary Education to Expand and Diversify the Certification Workforce Pipeline. Project lead: Oregon Tilth with partners: Oregon State University, Iowa State University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and IOIA. This project includes collecting information from certifiers about gaps in competencies that need to be filled. It also surveys existing post-secondary organic education in the US. Among other roles, IOIA leads the creation of a plug and play video that introduces the inspection career and includes a diverse human resource – generation, ethnicity, race, and gender.

And last, though not least – the inspectors’ coop. **Developing Cooperative Support for Organic Professionals.** Project lead: Northwest Cooperative Development Center with partners: Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild, U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives, Aligned Law, and IOIA.

The NRCS funded “**Beginning Farmer and Rancher Training for Organic Field Crop and Livestock Producers in the Northern Great Plains**” aims to include disadvantaged and tribal producers.

We also hear often – how do we engage a younger workforce? In thinking about those who take IOIA’s basic training, about one-third are young, under 30, fresh out of college with related degrees or perhaps the children of organic farmers or inspectors. These younger inspectors tend to be more mobile; many are likely to move to other careers with less



risk, less travel, real health insurance, and more family-friendly. Another third or so of the people we train are approaching inspection at the other end of their career. They come with a lifetime of experience and often graduate degrees. They might average 50 years old when they take basic training. Their children are grown. They can come from banking or accounting or crop consulting or quality control. Many of these folks are happy to work part-time, which reduces the chance of burnout, and they often inspect for 20 years or more. It has been fairly common for IOIA to train second-generation inspectors. However, I especially enjoyed a visit from one of those “other-ender inspectors”. **Justine Dobson** (the mother of two inspectors) and her husband **Frank Dehne** stopped by the IOIA office to visit on November 12. She has been inspecting for 3 years and inspects in all 3 scopes.

Thank you to the generous donors to the *Reynaldo De la Rosa Scholarship* fund. This fund was initiated by the membership at the 2021 AGM, supported by a generous donation from Angela Wartes Kahl and Garth Kahl. Oregon Tilth gave the fund a big boost with \$5000.

Other donors: Lois Christie; Cindy Elder; Chris Schreiner. Thank you all!

Two GREAT Opportunities to learn about systemic racism in our food system and justice for Black farmers in America – both on December 8

The Organic Farmers Association, the National Organic Coalition, IFOAM North America, the Accredited Certifiers Association, and IOIA are collaborating on a project to offer Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources for Organic Professionals.

As a part of this project, we are hosting a webinar on the History of Racism in US Agriculture & Organic, Wednesday, December 8th, from 2 to 3.30 pm ET. [Click here to register.](#)

Organic organizations have recognized the need for a training providing baseline knowledge and common language for diversity, equity, and inclusion across the organic community. This webinar, presented by Cambium Collective, LLC, will provide an overview of systemic racism in organic agriculture systems, data on current demographics surrounding organic farmers, consumers, and service providers, and existing policies contributing or remediating discrepancies.

The webinar is open to all, but is specifically designed for organic inspectors, organic certifiers, and organic farm education organizations.

We hope that you encourage your staff to attend. We know that if we work on this together, we can build a stronger organic movement. **We hope you will join us!** Registration is open through Monday, December 6th.

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION
HISTORY OF RACISM IN US AG & ORGANIC

Wednesday, December 8th, 2021 @ 1 pm ET

Presented by Cambium Collective

Topics include:

- Overview of systemic racism in (organic) agriculture systems
- Organic producer & consumer demographic data
- Findings from organic & transitioning Black, Indigenous, LatinX and Asian farmers focus group
- Update on current policies

Register by December 6th:
www.OrganicFarmersAssociation.org/DEI

Supported through funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program

Logos: OFA, NATIONAL ORGANIC COALITION, USDA ORGANIC, IFOAM NORTH AMERICA, ACCI, IOIA

Text: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION TOOLS FOR ORGANIC PROFESSIONALS

The Organic Center WEBINAR: Black Farmer Justice Wednesday December 8 – 10 a.m. Pacific/1 p.m. Eastern

Black farmers have a rich history and promising future in the United States, even though the Black history of agriculture is often reduced to slavery and cotton plantations. In *Farming While Black* (2018), Leah Penniman argues that justice for Black people, farmers and otherwise, requires learning about Black histories of agriculture, creating new experiences in the natural world, and getting in touch with our food systems.

Join The Organic Center on December 8 for our panel discussion of Black scholars, farmers, and activists, at Black Farmer Justice: Past, Present, and Future where we explore what justice for Black farmers is today, what it has been in the past, and what it can be in the future. This webinar is open to all. [You can click here to register.](#)

Intern Opportunity – Apprentice Organic Inspector

IOIA seeks an undergraduate or graduate student in agriculture, food systems, biological sciences, or environmental science who is interested in becoming an organic inspector. This can lead to part-time or full-time work opportunity as an independent contractor or employee of an organic certification program. There is a strong demand for well-qualified inspectors. Applicants can apply for training in the Crop or Processing scope. This opportunity is available to Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) participants.

Qualifications:

- **For the Crop training:** At least 1 year training or experience in sustainable or organic agriculture, with knowledge of conventional agriculture practices.
- **For the Processing training:** at least 1 year training or experience in food processing.

Further opportunities: Completion of these courses will qualify the intern for an apprenticeship through IOIA, a certification agency, or one-on-one mentoring with an experienced inspector.

Value of the internship: The standards webinar fee is \$350 and the in-person basic training fee is \$2300. This internship provides a full tuition waiver to both trainings, plus some one-on-one mentor support through IOIA to assist the intern in accessing work opportunities.

To apply: Send cover letter and resume to Margaret Scoles, IOIA Executive Director, mscoles@rangeweb.net by January 21st, 2022. An additional training application will be required for those selected as potential interns. Final selection will be based on application, cover letter, resume, and interview. For questions 406-436-2031

IOIA Speaks to NOSB CACS Discussion Document on Modernizing Supply Chain Traceability

“Oversight Improvements to Deter Fraud: Modernization of Organic Supply Chain Traceability” IOIA’s comments were prepared by Staff and Policy Committee members. *Full comments are available here:* ioia-fall-2021-nosb-comment-09-30-2021.pdf Following are some excerpts from the full 7 page comment.

From our intro - *“We acknowledge with both trepidation and excitement the possibilities of the Organic Link System (OLS) as described that can track transactions in real-time. Some of our members have mentioned experiencing chills from their dual negative and positive reactions. The Organic Link System (OLS) is an amazing idea and definitely worth exploring further. We do have some concerns about the feasibility of implementing such a technological tool in the real and organic world we live in.”*

IOIA suggested that NOP consider starting with a voluntary, targeted, sector-focused experimental program, ala a beta test, before requiring participation. And, that once established, the OLS must include an opt-out or exemption criteria for operations that present little risk to organic integrity to the stream of commerce. We voiced concerns on behalf of plain folk who are certified and certifiers who serve them. We urged giving SOE a chance first. SOE promises to improve certifier-to-certifier information-sharing. We see immense value in cross-checks, which promise to be effective, less costly, and less burdensome than full supply chain audits, and certainly less costly and burdensome than the OLS system. We’ve had little opportunity to witness the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of the supply chain audits described in the SOE. We supported increased focus on investigations at NOP and a system that allows for the certification community to provide alerts with less than an ‘abundance of evidence’. Quicker response is important. *“We remain deeply concerned with the years of fraud that were carried out in the Randy Constant case before a successful investigation was conducted. We collectively must refuse to tolerate years of fraud and millions of dollars of organic fraud.”* Acreage data must be collected. Crops should be listed on the certificate or in the OID, or both, with more specificity. Serious audit balance training and expectations are essential. Inspections are too often not executed in the time required, but rather in the time allowed. There is no baseline expectation of competence for inspectors or reviewers. Audits/inspections must include actual documented revenue figures, must address parallel crops when relevant, and must include non-organic aspects of the operation.

“The weight of business intrusion may be too great. If transactions can be viewed only by the NOP, that would be viewed as a huge intrusion. If certifiers and inspectors can theoretically access the information of operations that they are not inspecting, it is much deeper. And if Certifiers can’t share the data, there will not be much added value over the current system where inspectors verify annual sales.”

“Inspectors are increasingly asked to do more at inspection, be more competent, and get more training. Given timeliness expectations for inspections, the more paperwork required and the more data we are collecting, the less time we have to actually execute a physical inspection that is a critical part of the verification process. ie., look in the corn planter, at the seed tags, in the grain bins, at the boiler maintenance logs, and the processing equipment.”

A caution - *“Will one more bureaucratic requirement encourage growers to escape to other alternative labels? Be prepared - organic farmers can be guaranteed to rise up against a system that does not deliver actual value to them without compensating them for additional bureaucracy.”*

“In summary – While an OLS type recordkeeping matrix may at first look to be a sure response to reduce fraud, the possible real world impacts to the organic community of growers/processors/handlers would be uneven and in some cases detrimental. Further expansion of the OID as an informational tool and industry resource should be aggressively pursued. Cross-checks, more certifier cooperation, and robust audits when inspectors are on-site can greatly increase the effectiveness of our system without intrusive and expensive technological leaps forward. We urge proceeding with caution and enlisting highly knowledgeable folks in the organic community, so that you can be sure the shoes of technology fit the beast that will wear them.”



Nathaniel Powell-Palm, serving in Organic Producer seat, was elected at the October meeting. He will serve as Acting Chair until January 2022, when he will be seated as NOSB Chair.

IFOAM News - 2022 is the Year of Organic! - and more!

The IFOAM General Assembly was held on September 13-14. IOIA participated as a voting member. Marla Carlson, Saskatchewan, Co-President of IFOAM North America, co-chaired the virtual meeting with Mathew John, India.

2022 is the Year of Organic! World Board Motion 52, in recognition of 50 years of IFOAM – Organics International – voted *“To celebrate in an inclusive way its 50th anniversary in several parts of the world, in a variety of ways. The IFOAM Network, with all its members, will declare 2022 The Year of Organic. IFOAM will support the efforts with a promotional tool kit.”* Yes, IOIA as a member of IFOAM-Organics International, will take part in the celebration!

Key Topics – Youth and Social Justice. World Board Motion 51 Empowerment and Inclusion of Youth in the IFOAM Network and the Organic Movement – acknowledged the crucial role of youth in the further development of the organic sector. Social Justice was the key to a number of the motions.

Peggy Miars was honored as past president of IFOAM – Organics International, serving on the IFOAM World Board from 2014 to 2021. This included two terms and an extra year – as the IFOAM General Assembly slated for 2020 in Rennes, France was delayed a year. That meeting ended up virtual after all. She serves on the Board of Directors of the IOAS, an international organic and sustainable accreditation organization. Peggy has been Executive Director/CEO of the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) in Eugene, Oregon, since 2010 and was previously Executive Director/CEO of California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), North America’s largest organic certification body. She has worked in the organic movement for 25 years, previously in marketing and management positions with Earthbound Farm, Whole Foods Market, nonprofit organizations, and her own marketing consulting business. She served on the steering committee that brought IFOAM North America from an idea to a reality - with others including IOIA’s Executive Director, Margaret Scoles.

Tunisia was selected for the next General Assembly and World Congress 2024. The meetings are scheduled every 3 years.

IOIA Inspector member Brian Baker honored

The IFOAM—Organics International gave Dr. Brian Baker an Award of Recognition for his volunteer service to the organization over the past 30 years. As a member of the Principles of Organic Agriculture Task Force, he played a key role in laying the foundation for IFOAM’s policies. He served as a member of the IFOAM Standards Committee for nearly 20 years, helping to harmonize organic standards in North America and Europe. His work with IFOAM helped bridge the gaps in standards between the NOP, the EU, and Canada, which enabled those trading partners to reach equivalency arrangements. Brian also was a founder of IFOAM North America, serving as its first President. Dr. Baker currently serves as President of the Technology Innovation Platform of IFOAM.



Newly Elected IFOAM World Board Members

The democratically elected World Board is a 10-member team responsible for overseeing and supporting our work growing the global organic marketplace, communicating the benefits of organic, training organic leaders, and facilitating capacity-building for organic farmers. The World Board members for this session include: Karen Mapusua, Fiji 2nd term and new President; Julia Lernoud, Argentina 2nd term; Choitresh Ganguly, India 2nd term; Sarah Compson, United Kingdom; Paul Holmbeck, Denmark; Shamika Mone, India; Fortunate Nyakanda, Zimbabwe; Miyoshi Satoko, Japan; Marco Schlüter, Germany; Jennifer Taylor, USA. Julia Lernoud is Co-president of Young Organics Global Network; she kindly spoke to the IOIA Town Hall on September 16 about “IFOAM – Why You Should Care”.

Member Motion 61: Hydroponics
The vote was 152 “yes”, 10 “no”.

M61 Hydroponic Production Not in Line with Organic Principles

IFOAM - Organics International adopts the following position and advocates for it within national and international fora and to private and government standard setters: Hydroponic production does not align with the Principles of Organic Agriculture and cannot be considered as an organic production method. Hydroponic production is completely dependent on external inputs and does not enhance a living ecosystem that connects mineral soils, organic matter, billions of microbes fed by the roots of plants, soil animals, and the plants themselves. In short: Terrestrial plants grow in soil and subsoil.

✓ Motion carries as amended.

IOIA builds relationships to launch Apprenticeship Program

IOIA is building on past training collaborative relationships with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (a certifier), Organic Association of Kentucky (a regional non-profit), Kentucky State University, and University of Kentucky (both land grant universities) to launch an innovative organic inspector apprenticeship program. The project aims to create a toolkit for building similar programs in other regions.

All four organizations have worked in the past with IOIA as cosponsors or host training farms. The Organic Integrity Co-operative Guild will create and test curriculum and training materials as well as delivering apprentice intensives in both Crop and Livestock scopes. Mac Stone of Elmwood Stock Farm will assist with ground truthing the livestock curriculum. OAK will develop promotional marketing and outreach materials designed to recruit from more diverse and inclusive farmer and undergraduate student populations.

KSU and UK have dedicated resources to develop and guide curriculum development, provide training classrooms, and to ground truth materials with undergraduate students. Garry Lean, IOIA lead trainer, will develop and deliver a Transition Trainer Training with OAK for extension agents and assist with this aspect of the toolkit. Jonda Crosby, former IOIA Training Services Director, will work with him to bring the dual perspective of experienced inspectors and professional educators to review curriculum. This project will demonstrate the complete pipeline of recruitment, training, and retaining organic professionals; create the resources for others to replicate the model; and add the missing rung in the onboarding ladder for new inspectors. Longer term goals include an ongoing organic hub for the southeast US. Ellie Hudson, Green Door Workshop, Michigan, is Project Manager.

More IFOAM News

Once every three years the international organic community gathers together in a World Congress to share our stories, knowledge and our passions. In conjunction with this gathering, our General Assembly votes on the policy motions necessary to innovate and evolve our movement, along with electing a slate of representatives to the IFOAM World Board to lead the implementation of our vision over the next three years.



This issue of IFOAM North America's *Cultivated Quarterly* celebrates the IFOAM 2021 Organic World Congress and General Assembly - the world's largest congregation of organic farmers, researchers, certifiers, regulatory agents and activists. Most impressively, under the most stringent health protection measures we've ever put into place. IFOAM pulled it all off virtually (with some in person Organic World Congress events in France).

If you were not able to attend, you will have reviews of the event by our members and a summary of the motions voted on by our fellow members at the General Assembly. If you were in attendance, you will be pleased to enjoy the history and background of Karen Mapusua, our new IFOAM World Board President, and the story of her work organizing the development of organic agriculture in the Pacific Islands. You will also hear from Peggy Miars, the outgoing IFOAM World Board President and her reflections on her term in office.

This is how we build bridges, build relationships and build integrity into our global movement. Discover the process supporting a democratic practice that invites input and participation from the organic community around the earth.

[Download Cultivated Fall 2021](#)

Recommendation #1 to the World Board by the membership voted at the GA:

"The World Board of IFOAM – Organics International shall take note of the Rennes Declaration of IFOAM Animal Husbandry Alliance. The Declaration sets out the conclusions of the Pre-Conference on Organic Animal Husbandry. It acknowledges the centrality of animals/livestock in sustainable agriculture and highlights the key priorities for supporting, developing and promoting organic animal husbandry. It emphasizes that organic animal production must take place in the context of holistic systems that enhance environmental benefits and animal welfare."

NOP/ACA Professional Development Annual Training 2022

Registration is now open for this January 2022 event!

Independent contract inspectors can register on the ACA website, see the info box below which has a direct link.

The preliminary agenda is listed on the next page. The final agenda will be sent out closer to the training and available on Whova. The NOP agenda will also be sent out when ready.

** The registration form on the ACA website gives inspectors the option to sign up for either training. You do not have to attend the ACA training.

To attend the NOP training, inspectors must be verified by an NOP accredited certification agency. The option will appear when you answer the "Are you an IOIA member?" question. If you are an IOIA member you will get a discount on the ACA training.

ACCREDITED CERTIFIERS ASSOCIATION

Professional Development
Annual Training 2022

Preliminary Agenda



Held Virtually via Whova
NOP Training: January 24-25, 2022
 (Agenda sent separately)
ACA Training: January 26, 2022 & February 7-9 2022
 12:00 - 5:00 pm (EST)/11:00 - 4:00 pm (CST)
 10:00 - 3:00 pm (MST)/9:00 - 2:00 pm (PST)
 5:00 - 10:00 pm (GMT)



To Register go to:

[Register for the NOP/ACA Training! - Accredited Certifiers Association, Inc.](#)

The cost is \$250 for ACA and IOIA members.
(\$325 for non members).

The NOP training portion is free.

Open to certifiers & inspectors!

The NOP training is only open to USDA NOP Accredited Certification Agencies (their staff and contract inspectors). Inspectors must have permission from a certifier that they are currently contracted with. The ACA training is only open to organic certification agencies (their staff and contract inspectors). If you are registering over 8 attendees, a 10% discount will be applied.

Remote Unannounced Inspection Workshop - November 2

Working Together – Certifiers and Inspectors. During the ACA/IOIA Annual Training & Conference session "Sharing Our Perspectives", dozens of items were identified where IOIA and ACA might work together. The ACA and IOIA boards, meeting in their regular conference calls, determinedly reduced those to a feasible number. One of the items they identified was remote inspection training, especially on unannounced inspections. The first of the series was delivered on June 3 with more than 200 participants. The focus was not so much on unannounced. The second workshop, delivered November 2, focused almost entirely on Unannounced Inspections. Connie Karr, ACA Chair, kicked off the training with a review of the NOP Guidance on unannounced inspections and what we know and don't know about the NOP's position regarding Remote Inspections. Greg Robertson of Florida, an independent contract inspector working exclusively for QCS, gave salty, seasoned, and practical suggestions and shared some "war stories". Amanda Birk, now working as a staff reviewer for QAI but a full-time independent contract inspector for most of the pandemic, presented tips and tricks for unannounced inspections. Debbie Leverenz, IOIA inspector member and CCOF employee inspector, discussed performing field evaluations remotely, both at on-site and remote inspections. The workshop was free to IOIA and ACA members. There were 124 participants. Terrance Layhew moderated the event. The training was developed with volunteers from the ACA plus IOIA staff. The only downside was not quite enough time for Q&A. **Action Point from "Sharing Our Perspectives" - DONE!**

NOPI/ACA Event Schedule

Accredited Certifiers Association

DIAGNOSIS
COLLABORATION

Wednesday January 26, 2022
12:00 - 5:00 pm (Eastern Time Zone)

12:00—1:30 pm Collaboration and Communication is Key!
In this workshop we will explore:

- Changing certifiers by choice vs. current certifier going out of business
- Handling transfers
- Communication on investigations
- Label verification
- Inspector perspective
- Timelines

1:30—1:45 pm Break

1:45—3:15 pm Strengthening Organic Enforcement
The forthcoming Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) Proposed Rule will strengthen oversight and enforcement to protect integrity in the organic supply chain. This panel will discuss some of the anticipated challenges, explore ways to manage the additional workload, and address key areas where we can collaborate together as we plan to enforce these proposed amendments.

3:15—3:45 pm Break

3:45—4:45 pm Speed Networking
Join us for an hour to meet your fellow certifiers and inspectors. Attendees will be randomly assigned in small groups (up to 4 people) just like sitting around a speed networking table face to face!

4:45—5:00 pm Wrap up

Accredited Certifiers Association

DIAGNOSIS
COLLABORATION

Monday February 7, 2022
12:00 - 5:00 pm (Eastern Time Zone)

12:00—1:15 pm Navigating the Farmer's Field is a Maize: Pesticide Residue Sampling
This session will explore methodology and provide resources for defensible sampling techniques. It will include a presentation from HHRA on a Pesticide Residue database that can assist certifiers in assessing geographical and high risk crops to better inform sample selection.

1:15—1:30 pm Break

1:30—3:00 pm Private Label Brand Owners & Co-packers
This session will cover best practices for certification of private label brand owners as well as co-packers working with private label brand owners. Topics will include:

- An overview of different types of relationships between private label brand owners and co-packers
- What information should be in each OSP and what does not need to be
- What to look for on organic certificates,
- Best practices for when you certify both the label owner and co-packer
- What to look for at inspection, and more.

3:00—3:30 pm Break

3:30—4:45 pm Hope You Have a Sense of Humus? Updates from the Materials Working Group
The ACA Materials Working Group will discuss their ongoing work to ensure consistency among material reviews.

4:45—5:00 pm Wrap up

Tuesday February 8, 2022
12:00 - 4:30 pm (Eastern Time Zone)

12:00—12:30 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Introduction
Small groups of professionals with similar roles and responsibilities will meet to share tips, ideas and solutions to certification stumbling blocks. Lively and informative discussions amongst colleagues will lead to future work topics for the ACA.

Breakout Rooms:
Crop Production
Livestock Production
Handling/Processing Production
International
Evaluating Input Materials
Management and Accreditation
Remote Auditing Tools
Data Management
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

12:30—1:15 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Breakout Session #1

1:15—2:00 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Breakout Session #2

2:00—2:45 pm Break

2:45—3:30 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Breakout Session #3

3:30—4:15 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Breakout Session #4

4:15—4:30 pm Wrap up

4:30—5:00 pm State Agency Meeting
Only open to state agencies

Wednesday February 9, 2022
12:00 - 5:00 pm (Eastern Time Zone)

12:00—1:00 pm Sharing Our Perspectives Review/Results
An overview of yesterday's discussion groups.

1:00—1:15 pm Break

1:15—2:30 pm Origin of Livestock
This session will provide an overview of the proposed rule and explore practices to adopt in advance of rulemaking.

2:30—3:00 pm Break

3:00—3:45 pm ACA Annual Meeting
Video presentation which overviews our organization's finances, provides a summary of working groups from 2021, explains our best practices and where to find them, and last but not least introduces our board members! A chance to interact with the ACA board and the ACA Coordinator to ask any questions you may have.

3:45—5:00 pm Keynote Session and Closing Remarks
A keynote presentation on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organic industry followed by closing remarks from the ACA Chair.

On-site Training is back! Basic Crop Inspection Training, Farmington, Minnesota – October 18-22

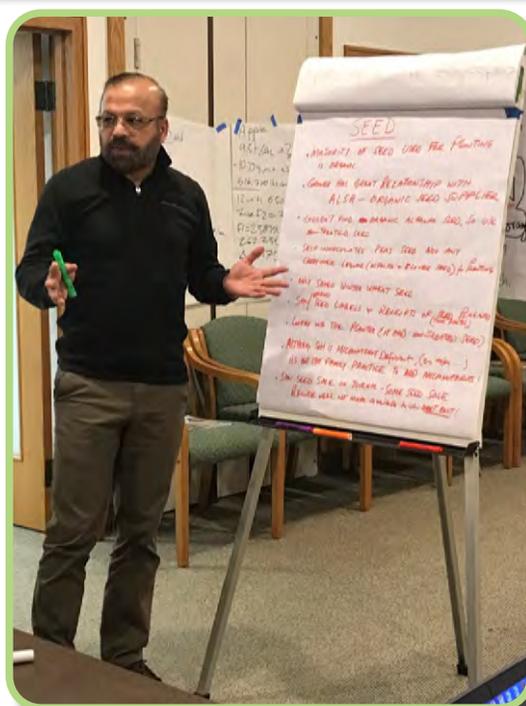
Eleven participants came from across the US, including some originally from Pakistan, France, and Ecuador. Several came from Rodale Institute, learning as much as possible in order to help producers make the transition to organic. MCIA sent two participants. The state departments of Maryland and Oklahoma each sent one person. Just one person came from the private sector, with the goal of becoming an independent contract inspector. Confirming field trip hosts was a little challenging. Who really wants a group of 6 people from around the world tromping through your fields during a global pandemic? With the help of MOSA and MCIA, host farmers were identified and graciously and patiently hosted our groups. Wendy Paulsen, staff inspector/reviewer for MCIA, assisted as Group Leader for a group of 6 to the Curt Russell farm near New Richland. Margaret Scoles served as lead trainer and took a second group of 5 to Century Hills Inc, a mixed crop/dairy farm near Hastings where Kevin Chamberlain hosted a mock inspection. Both groups were deluged with rain at some point during the field trips. (It never rains on Zoom!)



Mount Olivet is the most frequent venue in IOIA's 28 years of training history. Since 2011, IOIA has held training at this venue five times! Located outside of Farmington in farm country, amid a perfect rural setting, the Center is conveniently less than one hour from a major airport (MSP) and surrounded by potential field trip hosts in all three scopes. The chef takes pride in providing organic ingredients and produces herbs, greens, and veggies in raised beds on a re-purposed tennis court. Lots of space made it a good place for re-entry, including a spacious classroom, spots for working outside in small groups with flip charts or discussion exercises.

At right - Fawad Shah, PhD, President and CEO of MN Crop Improvement Association debriefing the field trip experience.

Above - Century Hills farm barn – and field trip group.



IOIA On-site Training is Back! Basic Livestock Inspection Training, Farmington, Minnesota, October 25-29

Nine participants from across the US joined together at the Mt. Olivet Conference & Retreat Center for the first on-site basic training for two years. The peaceful setting overlooking a lake allowed for maximum focus.

Many walking trails provided an avenue for reducing stress and clearing minds. IOIA Trainers Nate Powell-Palm (Montana) and Jonda Crosby (Pennsylvania) guided the group expertly through the course including a field trip at Derrydale Farm, with the assistance of hosts Kevin and Meg Stuedemann. Their farm raises small grains, corn, and hay and milks about 90 cows. It was tricky navigating the real-life mock inspection around rainy weather, but it was great to be outside on a real working farm.

Consistently, IOIA participants rate the field trip as one of the most important activities of the training. All participants completed the NOP Livestock Standards webinar as a pre-requisite to the course.



Trainers Nate Powell-Palm and Jonda Crosby with tour hosts Meg and Kevin Stuedemann, of Derrydale Farm.





IOIA Asia Pacific Committee

Seminar of Organic Grower Group Inspection

IOIA Asia Pacific Committee (IOIA APC) delivers this seminar “Organic Grower Group Inspection and Certification update” as part one of a two part series.

IOIA APC updates the training program for Grower Group Inspection to adapt various country's norms and agricultural characteristics. Our experienced inspectors, who have conducted a large number of inspections in the Asia Pacific Area, will collect and analyze the core of Grower Group Inspection protocols. Besides gathering information, IOIA inputs other worldwide experiences among our network. The module we have developed will be helpful for any type of inspection and certification in the world. We will be able to give you information about EU and NOP requirements for Grower Groups.

Prior to the training, participants will receive useful resources and information about organic grower group certification in our member countries. You can learn the key points of 7 countries' organic standards requirements and the current situation of organic grower group certification. We will also introduce the content of a more comprehensive training planned in the middle of March.

This seminar is free to anyone who has an interest of our training.

Date : **Friday 14th of January 2022**
 Time : 14:30 - 16:30 (Pacific/Fiji)
 11:30 - 13:30 (Asia/Japan)
 09:30- 11:30 (Asia/Bangkok)
 08:00 –10:00 (Asia/India)

Speakers:

Sandeep Bhargava (India)
 Maheswar Ghimire (Nepal)
 Vitoon Panyakul (Thailand)
 Kathe Purvis (Australia)
 Isidor Yu (Korea)
 Mutsumi Sakuyoshi (Japan)
 James Pierce (Fiji)



Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/tZcrc-ypqzspHNWcpwU0K9glSZtByHRVZajc>

Meeting ID: 836 4515 0361

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

The IOIA Asia Pacific Committee

Coordinator: Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, e-mail: msakuchan-mu@juno.ocn.ne.jp

What's New with IOIA?

Annual Meeting – March 3! Following the success of IOIA's first virtual AGM in 2021, with 60 inspector members attending, IOIA will again host the meeting online at a time that accommodates our members in all time zones. Mark your calendars for Thursday, March 3, 3 p.m. Pacific Time (March 4 morning in Asia). The meeting will be approximately 3 hours. Three board members will be elected; we are seeking 6 candidates. Nominations close 60 days prior to the AGM. If you are interested in serving as a director or would like to nominate someone, contact Eric Feutz, Nominations Committee Chair at ebfeutz@gmail.com or give him a call at 660-202-7383 by **January 1**. He can send you an info packet before you commit to candidacy. Elections will be conducted via the ElectionRunner app. Would you like to join the AGM Organizing Committee? Please let Margaret Scoles know at mscoles@rangeweb.net.

Our New Podcast we've started a Podcast! The first episode is 30 minutes, and features an interview of Al Johnson, Inspector Member from New Jersey, hosted by Terrance Layhew about the NOFA Documentary Al developed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of NOFA. Al shares about how he joined NOFA, the history of the organization, how the documentary started and much more. Al was a founding member of IOIA in 1991. [Click here to go to our first-ever podcast](#), If you have questions about the podcast, [email Terrance](#).

Town Hall- IOIA Holiday Party – December 16 – 3 p.m. Pacific Fun, contests, games, surprise guests, and holiday cheer. Inspection work is a solitary business. Let's come together for a time of camaraderie and joy! Admittedly it will be hard to beat Jim Riddle and Joyce Ford mixing up a holiday Nor'easter; surprise guest Jenny Tucker; or Brian Magaro winning the Zoom outfit with a kilt! But we are planning a great time.

Town Hall is being transformed! No Town Hall is planned for January. Town Hall will reconvene Thursday February 17, 2022 to focus on the Annual Meeting and the board of directors' new Strategic Plan. We will be offering something 10 of 12 months in 2022. Quarterly, we will sponsor "**Ask Me Anything**" sessions with invited speakers on timely topics. Dr. Marcus Bernard of Kentucky State University has agreed to be the speaker for March 17 - **IOIA Townhall Presents "Ask Me Anything about my work in rural sociology, and how inclusion and building equity for everyone is essential to move our industry forward"**. Dr. Bernard is a member of IOIA's team that will develop intensive apprentice training and toolkits. He served as the Director of the Rural Training and Research Center for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/ Land Assistance Fund in Alabama. He completed his doctoral studies at the U of KY in Rural Sociology and Medical Sociology. His dissertation research focuses on how Black men farming construct their ideas about masculinity and gender roles. Bernard has built on his relationships with community organizations, small businesses, and farmers to research economic development, health care, and opportunities for youth in agriculture throughout the Black Belt Region. His PhD work centered on the Black Belt, Black farmers, and how marginalized groups build community through resistance and resilience. For his MS in Agricultural Economics, his thesis research focused on access to health care providers and utilization of health care across the Black Belt region.



IOIA is 30 years old! We are seeking content for a special membership-focused anniversary newsletter issue to publish early in 2022. We want stories, old photos, poetry, fiction, film, interviews to make this a very special issue – if you have ideas, please contact Diane Cooner, our Newsletter Editor. at amani@ioia.net.

Our new website launched in October – the fruition of a year's work.

Thank you! to Amanda Birk, who led the committee that organized 17 Town Halls in 2020, then stepped up in Sept 2020 to chair the Mentorship Committee, which led the development of IOIA's Apprenticeship initiative through October 2021. That committee morphed into a Transitional Working Group, which ended its work by making recommendations to the board of directors including one for a training advisory body. Thank you also to the full Mentorship Committee, Trish Dougherty, Pam Sullivan, Lois Christie, Janine Gibson, and Angela Wartes-Kahl.

Basic Live Online trainings

Crop Training,
August 2021.
Garry Lean,
Trainer.



Processing Training,
September 2021.
Garry Lean, Trainer;
Margaret Scoles,
Assistant.

Crop Training,
November 2021.
Garry Lean,
Trainer;
Luis Brenes,
Assistant Trainer.



Meet Ellie Hudson, Green Door Workshop, new IOIA team member

Those who participated in Town Hall on June 17 met Ellie as she explained IOIA's developing application to NOP regarding the Human Capital Capacity Building. Ellie was Lead Project Writer for IOIA, starting in May, and is now serving as Project Manager for the Apprenticeship project that was funded through the initiative: *Building a Sustainable and Inclusive Apprenticeship Program for Organic Inspectors and Other Organic Professionals*. The project is slated for completion at the end of September 2022. Ellie is also under contract part-time to IOIA to assist in organizational planning and will assist in a variety of projects. She will fill an essential role in implementation of the board's new Strategic Plan. Based in Traverse City, Michigan, she has a MS in Administration, Organizational Development & Leadership, and among other credentials – a Certificate in Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace. She brings 13 years of experience in the coffee industry, including partnerships development toward funding in sustainability and education initiatives, and developing e-Learning, on-line testing, and credentialing. For fun, she spends time outside with her husband and two-year old daughter and is on a curling team.



Organic Trade Association launches search for new CEO

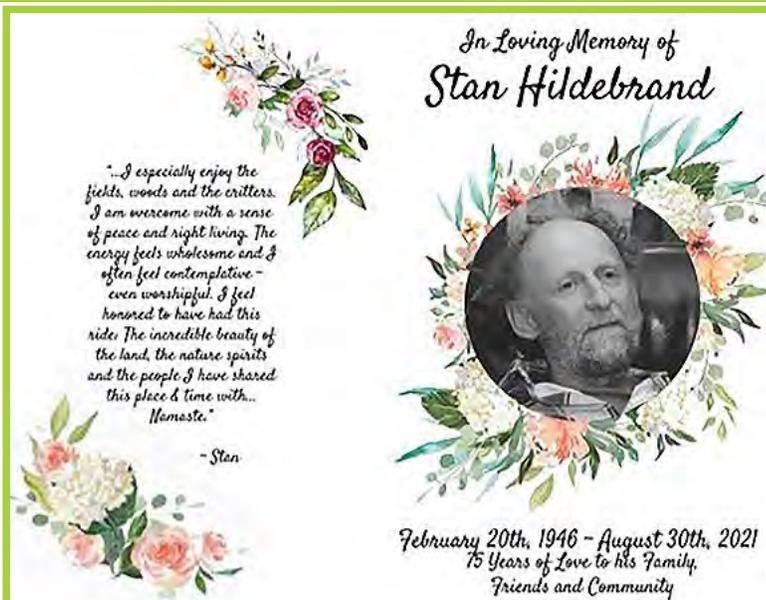
After 15 years of dedicated service, OTA CEO and Executive Director Laura Batcha has [announced her plans to step down](#) in spring 2022. Laura first joined OTA back in 2006 as Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Since then she has provided tremendous service to the organic community and positioned OTA as the premier voice of organic on the Hill and nationwide. Laura will be supporting OTA through the search process, which is being led by our Board in partnership with global organizational consulting firm Korn Ferry.

We are looking for a leader with a visionary and inclusive style who is skilled in relationship management and has a keen awareness of the organic landscape. Please pass along this opportunity to anyone you know who might be a strong fit. Click [here](#) to read the full press release on the announcement and [here](#) to learn more about the CEO/Executive Director opportunity.

Please join OTA in giving a heartfelt THANK YOU to Laura for her years of service and leadership!



In Memoria – Stan Hildebrand



Stan on a field trip, shown here with IOIA past chair Margaret Weigelt, Ottawa, 2017.

Board of Directors Minutes Highlights

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

July 15, 2021 6-8 p.m. EDT

Attendance: Rachel Cherry Myers (Chair), Janine Gibson, Terrance Layhew, Beth Dominick, Allan Benjamin, Heather Donald, Chuck Mitchell and Margaret Scoles, ED.

Treasurer Report: 2nd Quarter Financials, Bank Balances, Cash reserve, Balance Sheet and Accounts Receivable were all discussed. The 2nd Quarter Financials are quite positive compared to projected. Income is higher than expected and expenses have been lower. Janine moved to approve the Treasurer's report and financial reports – no opposition. 2nd draw for PPP money is to be forgiven. Donations are being received for the Reynaldo De la Rosa scholarship. The funds are being put in a separate account.

Draft Document Retention Policy: This document was compared to the Emergency Plan to make sure that all important documents were accounted for. Janine moved to approve the draft document retention policy, but retain it as a DRAFT rather than final policy – no objections.

Employee Handbook Juneteenth Holiday: IOIA follows 10 Federal Holidays. Janine moves that Juneteenth (June 19) be given as a paid holiday for IOIA staff – no objections. Holiday will not be retroactive; MS will give bonus or wage increase in July to compensate instead.

Plan agenda for Jenny Tucker meeting August 27: MS and Rachel will plan agenda and present at next board meeting.

Canadian News: Janine – Organic Federation of Canada is notifying all provincial organizations to lobby our provincial ministers of agriculture to put funding for Canadian Organic Office on the fall national meeting agenda. Government has removed funding for Standards Interpretation Committee. Need to fund through the sector. Farmers can't deal with the additional costs. This is affecting organic production in Canada. There should be a correlation of organic funding based on what is given to the non-organic agriculture sector. Is there something IOIA can do in support? There is a lack of communication between certifiers. Janine and Margaret have already encouraged CFIA to nurture something like the ACA in Canada but nothing has happened.

Board Retreat: Planning date and location Nov. 8 – 11 or Nov. 11 – 14. 2 days of hard work.

Town Hall & Podcast Ideas: Favor doing a pilot program for the podcast. This could be a benefit to membership services. Margaret could do a podcast about each issue of the newsletter – hitting highlights and some details, her comments. Lots of enthusiasm. Town Hall committee should come together with a proposal. Get feedback from the committee.

ED Report: Information Management System (IMS) Update – Our Membership Directory has been down for nearly 2 months. If website and database are not up and complete by next board meeting August 2021 it will be a problem that needs more attention. For now, staff are dealing with it.

August 19, 2021 6-8 p.m. EDT

Attendance: Rachel Cherry Myers (Chair), Janine Gibson, Terrance Layhew, Beth Dominick, Allan Benjamin, Heather Donald, Chuck Mitchell, Margaret Scoles, ED, and Angela Wartes Kahl, Guest

BOD Strategic Planning – November 15 – 18, 2021 – Two day travel / Two day Meetings . Facilitator – Rachel and Margaret have reached out to Monique Marez. Implementation Plan for Retreat – Rachel, Monique and Margaret will work together in advance. Ellie Hudson will help with implementation post-retreat.

RFA Projects Review/Apprenticeship Program/FAFO application: The RFA project is not bringing in much/any revenue beyond the cost of the project itself, but IOIA will be creating something that IOIA will make money on later - the Apprenticeship Program. Organic Valley – (FAFO) Farmers Advocating for Organics Grant Program – IOIA planning to apply for \$20,000. Also, applying for other grants and submitting letters of intent. Promotional ad to raise money from the brands will publish in OTA magazine in September.

Finalize agenda for Jenny Tucker meeting Aug. 27: USCOEA interpretation issue that was discussed on Town Hall added to the agenda.

IOIA Annual Meeting & ACA Meeting: Not possible to make an informed decision just yet. Explore venues in Northern California, Humboldt for AGM, March 2022.

Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild: Angela Wartes Kahl, OIGC President, gave an update on the Co-op and what they are doing. Expect launch date of October 1.

Board of Directors Minutes Highlights

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

September 16, 2021 – 6 – 8 p.m. EDT

Attendance: Rachel Cherry Myers (Chair), Terrance Layhew, Beth Dominick, Allan Benjamin, Heather Donald, Chuck Mitchell, Margaret Scoles, ED and Monique Marez, Guest. Regrets: Janine Gibson.

BOD Strategic Planning: Monique joined meeting at 6:30 – Her role is to have IOIA walk away with a final deliverable that is a representation of the Board. Allan – Proposed statement of work – In reference to the pre-packet for the BOD, will it include findings or summary of meetings? As much lead time as can be made would be appreciated for the discovery report. Margaret – Board meeting on October 21 and board planned on discussing Strategic planning that meeting as a primary topic. Monique will create a Discovery report and she highly advised the BOD to be ready before the onsite meeting. She will try to have preliminary findings together by October 21st meeting. Monique exited meeting at 6:45. She will bring up a review of what was done, and do some polling. Rachel presented a strategic plan rough draft spreadsheet. The spreadsheet started in Texas; Lisa Spicka added it. This was created as a foundation for the strategic plan. It will cover 3 years.

Determine 2022 IOIA membership dues amount: Margaret – Reference ED Report. Certifiers have had their dues raised most frequently, but they have not been raised the most, if you look at percentage of amount due to other categories. Asia Pacific may need special consideration for a different dues rate. Traditionally dues are invoiced October. Chuck –Asia Pacific rate comparable to the Latin America rate, but not quite that low. Suggests to leave dues amounts the same. Beth –More important to increase members rather than dues amount. Allan – Thinks that IOIA offers multiple services to inspector members and dues could easily be raised. Terrance – Value of membership is based on inspection rate. Terrance moves that dues should be left the same except that the certifiers dues will be raised to \$540 to reflect minutes of 12.01.2020. No opposition.

Debrief August 27 meeting with Jenny Tucker: Margaret will do a write-up to introduce the Board to Apprenticeship.gov funding opportunity. Chuck – US government is all about credentialing. Not sure why not more support. Certifiers may see it as a barrier when there is an inspector shortage. Should think about opportunities for training in the Strategic plan. Beth - Statistics for COVID related business & employment [90% Businesses impacted by Covid; 55% Training has been delayed; 67% Training is getting in the way of doing their jobs; AI technology is taking over].

US Government vaccine mandate impact on RFA: Board had discussion on the pros and cons of enforcing the new vaccine mandate for federal contractors. IOIA will wait until later and discuss as needed as the rules for federal contractors are written.

Fall NOSB Meeting. Do we comment? Comment requested for database system that tracks all transactions of all certified products. Especially, input from inspectors was requested. Chuck – we should comment that we endorse this concept. Would like to see something to emphasize there are other avenues for cross checking information. Reference the SOE language on certifier information sharing. As inspectors we have no way to verify what is sold through a different certifier's certified operation. General consensus that a simple comment would be good, recognizing that we will likely have another opportunity to influence through comment if it progresses from discussion document to recommendation. Concern about the reality of tracking product through certified operators that are setting up different entities. Margaret – Offers to draft the comment. Due Sept. 30. She would be willing to complete a comment and submit to Board and Policy Committee for comment via Google, send to the Board for approval, and submit to NOSB.

Plan remaining BOD meetings for 2021 and early 2022 – Timeline for 2022 Budget Preparation General agreement that combining the ACA-IOIA Board calls, Town Hall, and Board meetings on the same day is working well and seeing good participation. Rachel – Suggests to skip December meeting and finalize strategic planning / budget in January. Beth –No preliminary budget until after Strategic planning. Margaret and Allan will present 3rd Qtr. reports at the October meeting and will include a list of the “standing expenses” that need to be paid in January whether or not the final 2022 budget is passed yet. Might need to meet twice in January. Skip standing Nov. & Dec. meetings and meet in January.

October 21, 2021 6-8 p.m. (all board members in attendance) focused on 3rd Qtr. financials and Strategic Planning. Monique Marez, facilitator, reviewed the draft Discovery Report and agenda for BOD planning session. Minutes will be approved at the next full board meeting in January.



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KEEP IOIA STRONG – LEND YOUR STRENGTH AND GET INVOLVED!

2022 Calendar

**Many live events have moved to a virtual platform at this time.
Please check your favorite event's website for updates.**

January 19 - 22 | Rooted in Resilience | EcoFarm Conference, Asilomar, CA

January 26 and February 7-9 | ACA/NOP Professional Development | Virtual, See Page 10 & 11

January 31- February 2, 2022 | OTA Organic Week 2022 - Washington, D.C.
Monday evening for the Organic PAC Reception, Tuesday Conference Day and the Organic Dinner Celebration,
Wednesday advocate for organic in targeted meetings on the Hill.
[Event Info Here](#)

January 24 - 29 | Guelph Organic Conference in partnership with Organic Council of Ontario (OCO)
is excited to announce 6 virtual workshops. [Click here for info.](#)

February 24 - 26 | MOSES Conference, La Crosse, Wisconsin | Registration opens Dec. 1st.

February 25 - 27 | 29th annual BC Organic Conference | Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, BC
Registration opens on December 1 | <https://organicbc.org/conference/>

May 30 - June 15 | IOIA/Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre Live Online Basic Crop Inspection Training

**PLEASE SEE PAGES 2 & 3 FOR THE CURRENT LIST OF
IOIA LIVE ONLINE, ONSITE, WEBINAR AND SELF-PACED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**