



CERTIFIED Organic

INSIDE LOOK ■

GETTING THE DEGREE

Organic Education in California



**CCOF Producers Offer Feed During Drought
"Farming the Urban Edge" Summary
Future Organic Farmer Grant Fund**



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Getting the Degree

"Ten years ago, there weren't many choices for a student who wanted to go to college and study organic farming. Now, it is possible to major in organic agriculture."

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For every pound of paper used to print this edition of *Certified Organic*, an equivalent number of trees are planted through Trees for the Future, an organization dedicated to planting trees with rural communities in the developing world, enabling them to restore their environment, grow more food, and build a sustainable future.

WE'RE ORGANIC

ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION

POLICY CONFERENCE & HILL VISIT DAYS

MAY 21 – 22, 2014, WASHINGTON, D.C.

You've likely heard about the sweeping and historic Farm Bill that was recently signed into law. The final bill represents a huge win for the organic industry – with full funding for all priorities voiced by OTA and its member companies. This type of victory for farmers, consumer and industry would not be possible without the sustained advocacy of OTA's membership. But with each step forward, the stakes grow higher and the battles become tougher for organic. With all this in mind, OTA invites you to register now for its 2014 Policy Conference and Hill Visit Days. There is still so much for organic to achieve from a policy standpoint. We can only get there if we are united in our efforts.

We look forward to welcoming you to Washington, D.C. this spring.

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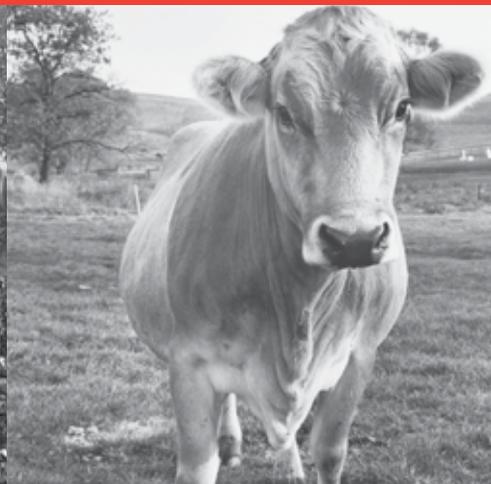
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Growing Future Organic Farmers

Future organic farmers will soon receive grants from CCOF to further their organic studies. Grants between \$500 and \$2,500 will be distributed this summer through a first-ever partnership of CCOF and private sector organic leaders UNFI Foundation, Driscoll's, Organic Valley, and Bradmer Foods. Grants will target students in K-12 classrooms and individuals entering agricultural education programs that focus on organic production methods.

This month's feature story, "Getting the Degree," by CCOF Outreach and Policy Specialist Jane Sooby, tells us that enrollment in agricultural programs at U.S. colleges and universities has increased by 14 percent at non-land-grant colleges and almost 9 percent at land-grants during the past decade. (Land-grant universities were established by the federal government to provide agricultural and technical training at public institutions of higher learning). According to Sooby, there are now 65 California colleges that offer hands-on training in organic production through a student garden or farm. In the future, she plans to further document these programs beyond the Golden State (see table on page 30). A report released in 2012 by the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) rated only six of 72 U.S. land-grant universities as meeting all of their eight rating points for criteria, which include maintaining organic research land; cultivating a student organic farm; offering an organic minor, major, or certificate; and employing a dedicated organic faculty or staff member.

In the face of an aging farmer population (the average age of the U.S. farmer is about sixty), it is good news that there is increased interest in going into farming and other agricultural careers among young people and that educational institutions are creating opportunities for learning about organic production. It is also good news that organic leaders are joining forces to offer Future Organic Farmer Grants beginning in 2014 (see page 15 for more details). CCOF has documented that few, if any, existing educational grant programs target studies in organic production methods.

The fund for Future Organic Farmer Grants is still growing. We are now at \$50,000, which will allow us to make between 40 and 60 grants. This year, CCOF will administer the fund so that every dollar contributed can go directly to students. If you would like to support this fund by making a contribution, please contact CCOF Development Manager Emily Shoemaker (eshoemaker@ccof.org) or make a donation online at www.ccof.org/foundation.

Thank you for supporting our work to make organic the future of American farming.



Cathy

Cathy Calfo
CCOF Executive Director/CEO

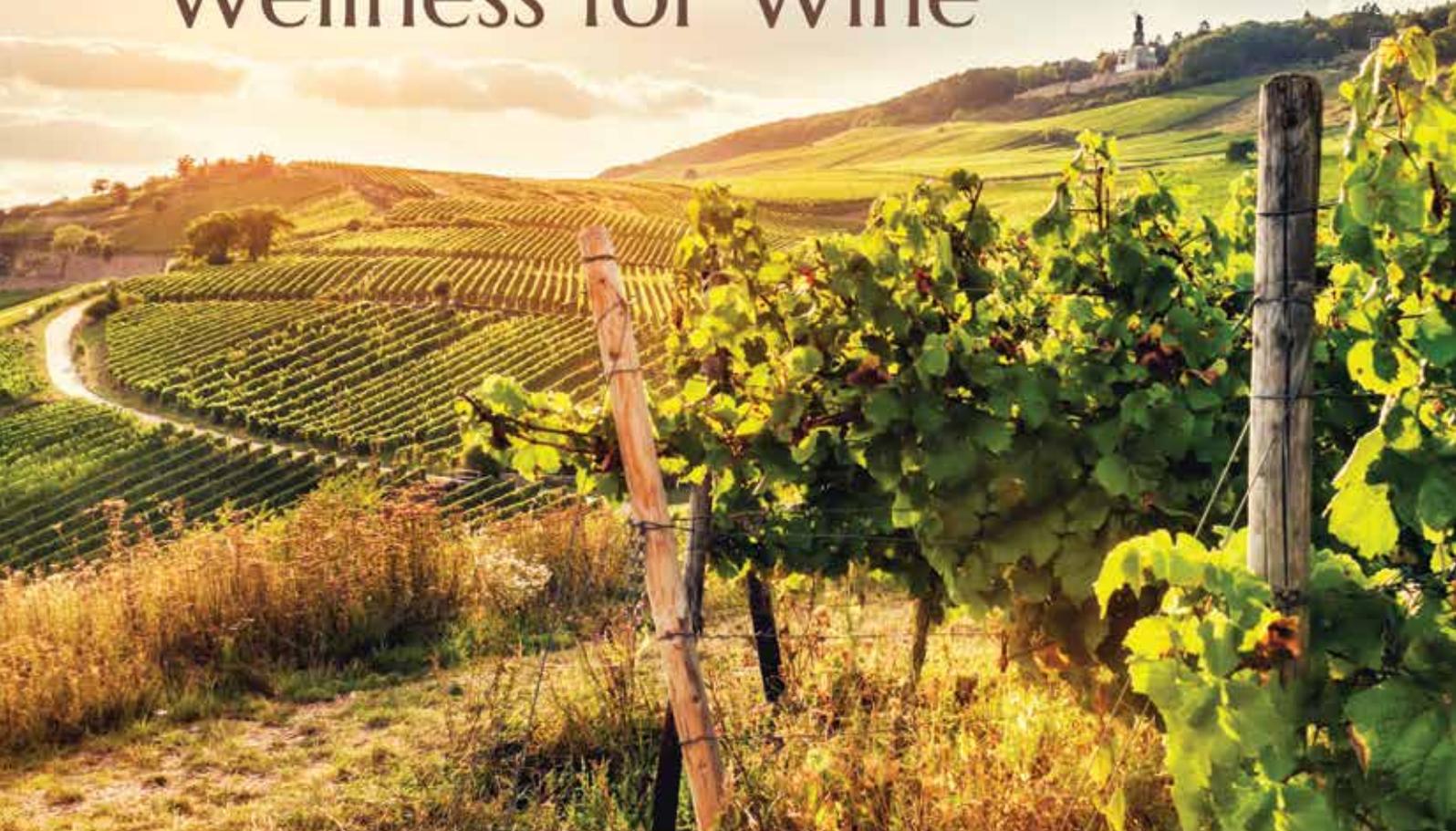
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Getting the Degree, page 24



Jane Sooby has worked in sustainable and organic agricultural research and education since 1992. Sooby believes that organic farming offers practical solutions to many contemporary environmental problems. She is now Policy and Outreach Specialist for CCOF.

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Balance your Fatty Acids with Organic Whole Milk

Important new research published in the journal *PLOS One* proves a nutritional advantage of choosing organic. From January 2011 through June 2012, a team of researchers from Washington State University's Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources (CSANR) analyzed 384 monthly samples of organic and conventional whole milk from seven regions across the United States. Their findings show that organic whole milk carries more polyunsaturated fatty acids than conventional whole milk. Unlike many conventionally raised animals, which are fed a diet consisting mainly of corn silage and grains, organic standards require that lactating dairy cows receive a portion of daily dry matter intake from pasture and forage-based feeds.

"We were surprised by both the magnitude and consistency of our results," said Charles Benbrook, research professor at CSANR, in a report primer. "The ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids in organic milk was 2.3 averaged over a year, compared to 5.8 in conventional milk. In addition, other health-promoting fatty acids and nutrients (e.g. antioxidants) are also present in organic milk at higher concentrations."

The team evaluated the meaningfulness of their results by looking at a model of the daily dietary intakes of omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids by an active thirty-year-old woman.

Her unbalanced intake of both fatty acids could be improved by increasing dairy consumption, switching to organic dairy (preferably whole milk because nonfat strips away the fatty acids), and seeking out low omega-6 alternatives.

What's the lesson here? Drink more organic whole milk and work on balancing out those omegas for a heart-healthy lifestyle!

Organic Benefits Biodiversity

Oxford University researchers say that organic farms support 34 percent more plant, insect, and animal species than conventional farms. Their study, a meta-analysis published in early February in the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, evaluated information dating back to 1989 from 94 studies across 184 farm locations. Using information mostly from North America and Europe, the researchers applied satellite imagery to estimate land use in the area around each farm to see if it had an impact on species richness.

"Our study has shown that organic farming, as an alternative to conventional farming, can yield significant long-term benefits for biodiversity," said Sean Tuck of Oxford University's Department of Plant Sciences, lead author of the study, in a statement. "Organic methods could go some way towards halting the continued loss of diversity in industrialised nations."

The study observed "species richness," finding that the number of different species on organic farms was 50 percent higher than conventional farms. "Species richness tells us how many different species there are but does not say anything about the total number of organisms," said Tuck. "There are many ways to study biodiversity and species richness is easy to measure, providing a useful starting point. Broadly speaking, high species richness usually indicates a variety of species with different functions. Taking the example of bees, species richness would tell us how many different species of bee were on each farm but not the total number of bees."

Organic farms had an even more significant effect on richness when the land surrounding them was intensely farmed or contained large tracts of arable land. However, the effect of organic farming on increasing total species richness varied across the data, with average gains between 26 and 43 percent. This range comes down to factors like farming practices, pesticide/fertilizer use, and definitions of "organic."

As we like to say, organic is good for the body and good for the environment. We're glad to see more and more research demonstrating the many benefits of growing and eating organic food.

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Buying certified organic is still the best way to avoid foods containing genetically modified ingredients.

GM Crops Put Monarch Butterflies in Danger

Because of herbicides tailored specifically to genetically modified (GM) crops, monarch butterfly populations are at risk. Their annual migration of up to 2,800 miles from the United States and Canada to Mexico has been threatened due to a lack of milkweed, a primary food source for monarch larvae, across the Corn Belt and in cities and urban areas. A report released by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Mexico's Environment Department blames the spread of genetically modified crops for the low number of monarchs hibernating in Mexico's forests. In fact, monarch numbers are at their lowest in 20 years, with a 43.7 percent decrease in the amount of forestland occupied by monarchs in the areas surrounding the Mexican Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve.

As GM crops make their way across the country and infiltrate agricultural production, milkweed is less prevalent than ever. Most of the migrating monarchs grow up eating the plant in Canada and the United States but herbicides regularly used on the plants wipe out milkweed from the farmscape, decreasing food access. The butterflies also face perils like high temperatures and arid weather conditions, and when they arrive, the monarchs must make their way through forests deteriorating from illegal logging.

WWF work includes preserving butterfly habitat, encouraging sustainable tourism and forest management, supporting sustainable businesses that help restore forests, and providing funds to communities working to reduce illegal logging. Learn more about monarchs and other species at risk at www.worldwildlife.org.

Maine Votes for GMO Labeling

Good news! If other states follow suit, Maine will become the second state to implement a GMO labeling law. The bill, LD 718: An Act to Protect Maine Food Consumers' Right to Know about Genetically Engineered Food, passed through Maine legislature last year with bipartisan support. Introduced by a Republican state representative and signed in January by Maine Governor Paul LePage, LD 718 will require producers to label foods containing genetically modified ingredients. But first, five nearby states must pass similar labeling laws to build proper support for the requirement. If the states do not pass similar legislation, Maine's bill dies. One of those states, New Hampshire, will address the topic this year. Connecticut, which

signed a GMO labeling bill into law in December 2013, will not implement their requirement until a combination of states that add up to 20 million residents also vote for similar legislation.

Maine and Connecticut may be the only two states to pass GMO labeling bills at this time, but 30 states have introduced legislation demanding their right to know what's in their food. Monsanto, of course, has already threatened legal action against Maine and Connecticut in the name of free speech.

With no federal GMO labeling requirement in place, buying certified organic is still the best way to avoid foods containing genetically modified ingredients.

Only Organic Campaign Takes on "Natural"

Only Organic, a public education campaign launched to highlight the benefits of organic food, has taken on the task of helping consumers understand the difference between "natural" products and certified organic products.

With great effort put into social media and video, the Only Organic public education campaign has already produced a few clever and informative videos challenging the "natural" food label and the food businesses behind deceptive labeling. The videos were developed by the recently launched agency Humanaut with help from advertising icon Alex Bogusky. Each video delves into how food businesses can confuse shoppers with "natural" labels while still including artificial ingredients, preservatives, and dyes in their products.

"Many consumers mistakenly believe that foods labeled as 'natural' are better than food that has been certified as organic," said Lewis Goldstein, vice president of brand marketing at Organic Valley, in a press release. "Organic food starts with organic farming, from the ground up. Only organic is subject to tough, enforceable standards created by the USDA designed to insure that our families can count on their food being produced in ways that protect their health, the environment, and the welfare of farm animals."

Only Organic was launched by Organic Voices, a nonprofit organization, and is supported by organic companies and other companies, including AllergyKids, Annie's, Earthbound Farm, Happy Family, INFRA, Late July, Nature's Path, NCGA, Organic Valley, Rudi's, and Stonyfield. Watch the videos, learn more, and get involved at www.onlyorganic.org.



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CCOF Producers Offer Feed During Drought

After California Governor Jerry Brown declared a drought emergency for California on January 17, CCOF mobilized to generate resources and tools for our members. These efforts included a drought resources page on our website (see www.ccof.org/drought-resources), a temporary variance request to the NOP, frequent communication on the issues, and a call to members to help their fellow organic producer. We continue to stay active given that the severe drought shows no signs of improving.

We've offered complimentary classified ads (www.ccof.org/classifieds) to those who have crop wastes or culls that could serve as organic livestock feed. We appreciate the certified members who have offered free organic feed options for livestock producers challenged by access to organic feed and forage. Our first donors, Browning and Larsen, did their research to determine if organic olive leaf forage would make a suitable supplemental feed. They have graciously offered dry organic olive leaves and branches, as well as fresh leaves and silage out of Raymond, California. Then, Alive & Radiant (www.eataliveandradiant.com) offered more than 1,000 pounds of kale stems per day for producers in areas near Oakland. We hope to see more members offer their usable crop wastes and hulls if feasible and possible. Thank you for your efforts!

WRITTEN BY Elizabeth Barba

New Member Spotlight - Treats for Chickens

Sure, chickens will eat just about anything they can snatch off the ground, but loving guardians of backyard and urban chicken flocks can now spoil their ladies with certified organic chicken treats from Treats for Chickens, a family-owned and operated business that's been making chicken treats since 2009. Certified by CCOF in December 2013, the Treats for Chickens organic line will please any chicken's picky palate with options like Cluck'n Sea Kelp, Chicken Crack (grains, seeds, dried mealworms), Mother Clucker (ocean greens, alfalfa greens, bee pollen), or Worms'n Flakes (grains and mealworms). But don't just flatter your fowl with treats - improve their health and wellbeing with high-quality organic ingredients. The Nesting Box Blend is full of organic lavender, chamomile, peppermint, wormwood, eucalyptus, and other herbs to help ward off the "creepy crawlies and bugs that bug your chickens." Add it to your nesting box while cleaning the coop for calm and mite-free chickens. Packed with vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and carbohydrates that help maintain chicken health, Cluck'n Sea Kelp supports "bright glossy plumage, marvelous orange-y yolks, strong development of bone structure, reduced coccidiosis outbreaks, increased weight gain, and overall fantastic healthy intestinal flora and bacteria." These treats pack a nutritional punch to provide "health and happiness for the modern backyard chicken."

Your feathered friends will shake their tail feathers and cheep with delight for these flock-friendly goodies. Order online and get helpful chicken keeping advice from the "Nesting Box of knowledge" at www.treatsforchickens.com.

Organic Seeds for the Urban Gardener

The Living Seed Company is ready for the upcoming gardening season. Certified organic since 2012, Living Seed Company offers a unique organic seed shopping opportunity - many of their organic seeds are packaged into convenient and location/function-specific collections. We're especially excited about the opportunity for small-yard or urban gardeners. Living Seed's Urban/Small Garden Collection is tailored for small spaces and containers, featuring small-space friendly crops: tomatoes, beets, peppers, cucumbers, beans, radish, herbs, lettuce, kale, summer squash, peas, and spinach. Plus, the seeds are packed in strong, re-sealable envelopes that can be stored between four and ten years if kept cool and dry! Organic gardeners won't need to restock every year because of the excellent bounty provided by Living Seed's collections.

The company's online store at www.livingseedcompany.com is jam packed with other seed collections as well as individual seed packets. Choose from the Culinary Herb, Salsa, or Pizza Garden collections to get your plot started for the season. There's even a micro garden collection for balconies and window boxes!

To find more organic seed companies, visit www.ccof.org/directory and search "seeds".

Traditional Medicinals Sets 2024 Sustainability Goal

Wellness tea maker Traditional Medicinals has set a goal of achieving "full ingredient sustainability" by the company's 50th anniversary in 2024. To reach this ambitious target, the Sebastopol, California-based business will make changes in ingredient sourcing and quality as well as packaging. Though 97 percent of the tea company's herbal ingredients are certified organic (they purchased more than 1 million pounds of organic ingredients in 2012!) and all of its tea products are Non-GMO Project Verified, the 2024 goal aims for 100 percent certified organic, fair trade, FairWild, and Non-GMO Project Verified ingredients. They also plan to use biodegradable, compostable and/or recyclable packaging, including organic and Non-GMO Project Verified sources for its Manila hemp fiber tea bags and the attached cotton strings.

Traditional Medicinals is a Certified B Corporation and California Certified Green Business, so it is no stranger to sustainability commitments. In fact, it has already achieved a lot in terms of ethical sourcing, sustainable packaging, and renewable energy. Traditional Medicinals generates the majority of its electricity from its own solar panels and offsets about 20 percent of electricity use through the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits. In terms of packaging, the company uses tea carton packaging made from 100 percent recycled paperboard and case packing boxes made from 100 percent recycled fiber. Last but not least, nearly 35 percent of the company's herbs come from certified fair trade and/or FairWild sources, or through their Revive! Project, while half of their products carry social sustainability certification labeling. It is clear that the company places a lot of value on good relationships with local, rural, and indigenous people.

"Social responsibility is part of our DNA," said Josef Brinckmann, vice president of sustainability for Traditional Medicinals, in a press release. "Our ultimate goal is to help transform the commerce of herbs by supporting ethical and sustainable

trade at every point of the value chain. On the cusp of our 40th anniversary we want to formally share decades of work in hope of inspiring others."

Head over to www.traditionalmedicinals.com to learn about their sustainability efforts, read the Company Sustainability Report (developed under Sustainable Food Trade Association guidelines), or order a fresh supply of ethical, organic wellness teas. Great job, Traditional Medicinals! You've set a high sustainability mark for other organic producers and food businesses to reach.

\$25 Million in Funds for Local Food Makers

Whole Foods Market's Local Producer Loan Program has reached its initial goal of providing \$10 million in low-interest loans to local food makers and farmers, and has now committed up to \$25 million in funding. In 2012, the company disbursed \$1.6 million through 29 loans. These recipients range from cattle farmers to yogurt makers and body care producers. Since its inception in 2007, the loan program has provided 184 loans to 155 companies that use the funds for expansion and capital expenditures like buying new equipment or getting more animals. In order to be eligible, producers must have a viable business plan and adequate cash flow, and they must meet Whole Foods' Quality Standards and animal welfare standards. To promote the program and encourage applicants, Whole Foods removed application barriers by streamlining the process and paperwork and offering an online application process. Targeted loan amounts fall between \$1,000 and \$100,000, with a \$25,000 maximum for start-ups.

"The most rewarding part of the loan process is building relationships and sharing ideas for progress," said Dwight Richmond, Whole Foods global grocery purchasing coordinator, in a prepared statement. "Whether it's improving the business plan, discussing market trends or connecting people with new partners in our network, it's exciting to see the results of great teamwork combined with monetary support."

Visit www.wholefoodsmarket.com for loan program details. If you know someone who might benefit from this funding opportunity, please share the information!



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Pie Ranch via Facebook: "We are pleased to announce that Pie Ranch has been approved by the Animal Welfare Approved program!"

Congratulations, Pie Ranch! Animal Welfare Approved certification is a great complement to your organic certification and shows that you really care about the overall wellbeing of your animals.



EcoTulips via Facebook: "Monarchs in decline - what can you do? 1. Plant native milkweed and other flowers. 2. Avoid using pesticides and herbicides. 3. Choose Organic - corn fields once had milkweed between rows providing a much needed food source during migration - not anymore due to Roundup-ready GMO corn. ..."

Thanks for sharing this helpful advice with your readers! Many people are not familiar with the relationship between monarchs and milkweed plants, so this is valuable information.



Massa Organics via Facebook: "We picked up our Springboard Biodiesel BioPro 190 biodiesel processor! This machine will enable us to convert vegetable oil from crops we grow into top-grade biodiesel we can use to power our tractors. Many thanks to CUESA & The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market and everyone who supported our Kiva loan!"

We're so glad your loan was a success, Massa. Kiva loans can really help a farm business succeed. Learn more about Kiva and Kiva loans on our blog at www.ccof.org/blog.



Eel River Brewing Company via Facebook: "Not all chemicals are bad. Without chemicals such as hydrogen and oxygen, for example, there would be no way to make water, a vital ingredient in beer. - Dave Barry"

We couldn't agree more, Eel River!



It's Organic via Facebook: "Did you know? Scientists studied and found out that organic food often even tastes better than non organic food. Also it is proven that often there are more antioxidants in organic food, making organic food healthier."

Thanks for sharing some facts with your fans so they can be informed on why it's important to buy organic.



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CCOF Foundation Expands Foundation Programs for 2014!

Want to change the way the world eats? So does CCOF. That's why the board of CCOF Inc., together with CCOF leadership, has decided to reinvigorate and expand the programs of the CCOF Foundation in 2014. Since its founding in 2002, CCOF Foundation priorities have been dynamic, mirroring the rapid evolution of the USDA National Organic Program during the past decade.

Between 2005 and 2009, the CCOF Foundation led the *Going Organic* project to provide information about organic certification and production to hundreds of agricultural professionals, and helped 40 farmers to convert more than 4,000 acres to organic production. *Going Organic* also supported the introduction of the USDA organic seal by promoting its acceptance.

CCOF's membership of certified organic producers, processors, and retailers has reached 2,700, and today we certify more than 2,000,000 acres of organic land! Organic seems to be everywhere from the local farmers' market and farm stand to the produce sections and shelves of major retailers. 82 percent of Americans report that they purchase organic products. But even so, organic remains less than 5 percent of all agricultural sales.

While organic food is more widely accepted by the public and agricultural community than it was in 2002, the barriers

to *Going Organic* and growing the organic movement have changed. Greater challenges are now getting more organic producers into the market and helping established producers access key resources and education that support their economic success and viability over the long term.

That's why the CCOF Foundation will invest in four key areas during 2014.

Supporting Students Who Aspire to Lead Careers in Organic Agriculture

Investment in agriculture is skewed toward conventional agriculture and agribusiness, and traditional channels for engaging young people and new farmers reflect the same bias. CCOF believes that a key challenge to growing future organic farmers is the lack of support within the existing farm education network for young people and new farmers wishing to pursue projects or careers that focus on *organic* production methods. We know that new students are interested in organic agriculture and that vocational and higher education programs are springing up across the country to cater to the needs of this next generation of farmers and agricultural professionals. (See our feature article on page 24 for higher education ag programs



-
- SUPERIOR AUDITING KNOWLEDGE**
 - BAR-CODED DATA COLLECTION**
 - MAPPING FOR PEST ACTIVITY**
 - INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**
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in California.) We want to support these students' interests and, in doing so, put pressure on vocational programs, community colleges, and universities to provide additional opportunities for career development and higher learning in the field of organic agriculture.

To help address the lack of direct financial support to youth who wish to pursue projects or studies related to organic agriculture, the CCOF Foundation has established the Future Organic Farmer Grant Fund: a fund of \$50,000 that will provide direct grants that support project-based learning for K-12 and scholarships to vocational and higher education students pursuing studies in organic agriculture. Key partners for the grant fund include the UNFI Foundation, Driscoll's, Organic Valley, and Bradmer Foods.

The Bricmont Fund for Hardship Assistance

Today, there are few programs that provide direct financial assistance exclusively to organic producers, processors, and handlers hit by unforeseen hardship, other than that which CCOF has provided annually since 2007. Further, farming is an inherently risky business with even successful operations having relatively small margins.

CCOF was founded by a community of farmers around the kitchen table at Barney Bricmont's organic lettuce farm, defining CCOF from the early days as an organization of producers working together, innovating organic practices, and creating organic standards, long before the USDA National Organic Program was implemented in 2002. As a close community that spanned the state, CCOF members built support of others in the organic community into their culture.

In this tradition, we formed the hardship assistance fund in 2007. The fund continues today, and is now named in memory of Bricmont, who passed away in 2011. This fund helps offset certification costs for organic producers who have suffered losses due to extreme hardships such as drought, fire, invasive pest losses, or other natural disasters. Applications for hardship assistance will be made available to organic producers in the fall of 2014.

Buy Certified Organic Campaign

Public awareness is one of the greatest challenges facing the organic community. Too many consumers are unable to distinguish characteristics of the organic label when compared to competing eco-labels like "natural" or "sustainable," and farmers spend too much of their own time making the distinctions between terms clear to consumers.

Learn more about the CCOF Foundation by visiting www.ccof.org/foundation.

CCOF launched the *Buy Certified Organic* campaign in 2011 to tackle one area of consumer confusion that directly impacts certified organic growers' sales. This campaign annually prints and provides thousands of "Buy Certified Organic" postcards to organic farmers for distribution at farmers' markets across the nation. We will make these postcards available to organic producers free of cost again this year. Organic producers everywhere will be able to order postcards in batches of 100 on the CCOF website beginning later this spring.

Each postcard includes a "Buy Certified Organic" magnet, an explanation about the meaning of "certified organic," and consumer tips for understanding farmers' market signage. Misleading and confusing signage can be prevalent at farmers' markets, including claims like "no spray" and "pesticide free," which have no legal or verified meaning. The backside of the card explains the reasons why consumers should buy certified organic. These include protecting your family's health, stopping the spread of GMOs, removing additional antibiotics and hormones from the food chain, and defending the environment.

Our goal is to get these magnets on the refrigerator of every farmers' market shopper in California and across the country!

Organic Training Institute

From year to year, CCOF Certification Services sees about 5 to 7 percent of its clients drop out of organic certification, which is a typical attrition rate for all certifiers. There are several contributing factors to this rate including cost, compliance issues, and lack of technical support. At the same time, new farmers enter into organic production each year, many of who have a steep learning curve and would benefit from additional opportunities to access education and technical assistance

directed specifically to *organic* production. The CCOF Foundation supports current and prospective certified organic producers, processors, and handlers by providing a series of low-cost field days, workshops, and webinars to help improve and grow their operations.

During 2014, the CCOF Foundation Organic Training Institute will serve approximately 250 organic producers and supporters by designing and hosting workshops, field days, and webinars. Training topics include the following: Developing a Field-Level Food Safety Plan, Small-Farm Financing, Postharvest Handling, Wholesale Market Tours, NRCS Funding for Organic Farms and Livestock Operations, Nitrogen Budgeting on Organic Farms, Breaking in to Retail, and Alternatives for Fire Blight Control.

Find out more about our education programs by visiting our Events, Trainings & Resources page on the CCOF website, www.ccof.org.

Help Organic Grow

It is through projects like these that we are going to change the way the world eats - one student, one farmer, and one consumer at a time. Every dollar that you contribute to CCOF this year will go directly to supporting these programs, as CCOF, Inc. has provided seed funding for staff and overhead. Your support will go directly to Future Organic Farmer Grants, the Brimont Fund, consumer education, and technical assistance.

Make your tax-deductible contribution now. Contributions should be made payable to the CCOF Foundation, Tax ID 30-0106255 and can be made online at www.ccof.org/foundation.





Urban Edge Examined at CCOF's 2014 Annual Conference

Balmy southern California was the setting for CCOF's 2014 Annual Conference on March 5, which featured a morning program, an all-day bus tour that examined "Farming the Urban Edge," and an evening beer and wine tasting reception.

The day began with a program during which Cathy Calfo, CCOF Executive Director/CEO, presented Will Daniels with a plaque for his 13 years of continuous service to CCOF, eight of those as CCOF Board chair. Calfo said, "Will Daniels served during a period of tremendous growth at CCOF. We attribute much of this success to his steady leadership, vision, and commitment to organic agriculture."

Rachel Surls, Sustainable Food Systems Advisor with Los Angeles County Cooperative Extension, presented a talk and slide show recounting the history of agriculture in the Los Angeles region. The audience was absorbed by her narrative of how the once-sleepy area was colonized by Spanish padres and ultimately grew into one of the most densely populated metropolises in the United States.

Then it was "all aboard" as people climbed onto their buses and headed out to the first stop on the tour, the Great Park in Irvine. Hosted by former California Secretary of Agriculture A.G. Kawamura and Allan Price of Orange County Land

Management, participants were treated to a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the former Marine Corps air station. Now slated for development that includes 100 acres of certified organic farmland, visitors saw two-story high piles of runway concrete that will be crushed and recycled, making the land available for building and farming. Green fields growing lettuce, kale, strawberries, and other crops dotted the landscape.

The buses stopped at the Incredible Edible Farm and the VALOR project, where visitors feasted on three varieties of freshly picked strawberries while they listened to A.G. Kawamura describe how the site provides training in farming for returning vets, using innovative approaches such as planting into stacked containers (photos below) and utilizing compost-stuffed wattles. Kawamura noted that they can grow four to five crops in succession annually since they can immediately plant back into the wattles after harvest. All food produced at the site is donated to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County. Placement of the farm and the nearby Farm + Food Lab, a two-acre urban agriculture demonstration garden, brings farming closer to the 25 million people who live within a two-hour drive from the park, said Kawamura.

Organic farmer and community food activist Tezozomoc offered commentary on urban farming during the bus tour. Next,



Our annual meeting was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all that we have done together for the organic movement.

the buses headed toward the San Bernardino Mountains to Cherry Valley, site of Highland Springs Resort and 123 Farm that provides most of the resort's food. The stark reality of the creeping "urban edge" was clear as the buses drove down a road that on one side featured a newly built housing development and on the other was still an open field with hawks sitting on fence posts. Resort staff served an organic lunch on a long table made of split redwood logs. The expansive view from the resort across pastures and meadows was tempered by the sight of the adjacent development. Renata Brillinger, Executive Director of the California Climate Action Network, gave an update on her group's effort to pass Assembly Bill 1961, the Sustainable Farmland Strategy Act, which would require counties to develop a strategy for protecting the agriculturally-zoned land in the county.

Lunch was followed by a brief tour of the resort property and farm. Tina Kummerle, president of Highland Springs, described how they are continually having to fight against plans for development that would negatively impact their operation while farmer Jan Keilmann entertained people on his tour with his insightful and humorous comments.

The buses then headed toward Riverside for the final stop of the day at the University of California Citrus Research Center, where entomologist Raju Pandey described the work he is doing to develop biological controls and organic solutions to the Asian citrus psyllid that is posing a threat to California citrus producers. Some certified organic citrus groves have been subjected to mandatory insecticide sprays when the pest, which is a vector for the deadly citrus disease huanglongbing, was detected nearby. Pandey spoke in front of a large screened room where generations of two insect species, natural enemies of the citrus psyllid, are being produced. Citrus growers on the tour seemed cautiously optimistic after hearing Pandey speak.

The evening reception drew over one hundred people to taste organic beer, wine, and tequila along with an array of organic food. Chef Frank Caputo of the Cancer Treatment Centers of America improvised a delicious variety of hors d'oeuvres using ingredients donated by CCOF members.

Thank you to all who attended the day's events. Our annual meeting was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all that we have done together for the organic movement. See you next year!

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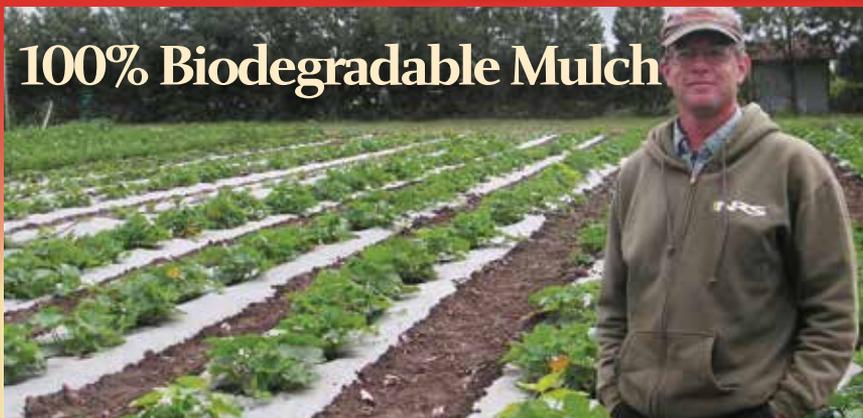
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Welcome New CCOF Policy and Outreach Specialist

Former chapter coordinator Jessy Beckett did an excellent job of working with chapters throughout the past year. She is now the CCOF Foundation Program Coordinator and has transitioned her chapter responsibilities to CCOF Policy and Outreach Specialist Jane Sooby. Jane is excited to begin building relationships with our chapter leaders and certified members.

As 2014 kicked off, chapter leaders kept busy holding elections and meetings and moving to a direct electronic deposit system for chapter payments. All but one chapter have opted into the electronic system.

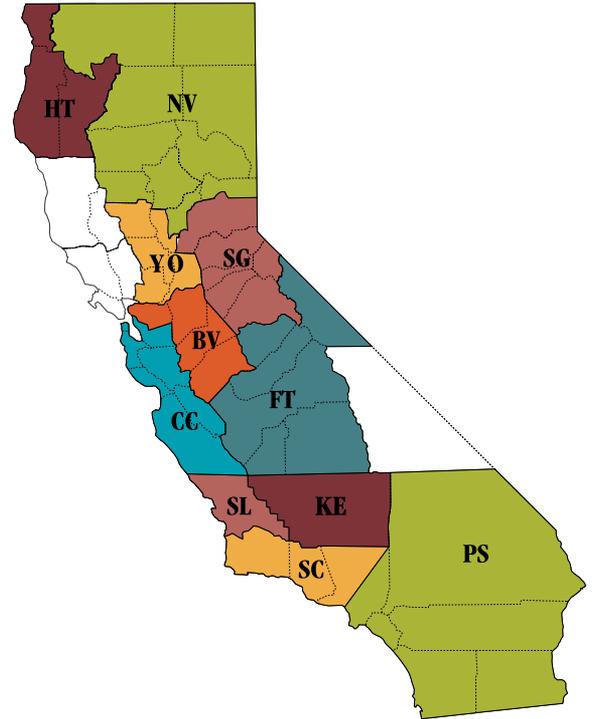
Four chapter meetings were held in winter 2013: Central Coast met November 20 after a town hall meeting; South Coast met December 3; Humboldt-Trinity met December 5; and Fresno-Tulare met December 12. Here are some of the highlights.

Central Coast (CC)

The Central Coast Chapter meeting was held in conjunction with a town hall meeting in Salinas focused on Central Coast water issues. Thanks to chapter president Steve Pedersen for initiating the panel discussion and speaking about water from his perspective. The panel included a presentation about the Ag Waiver from a Water Board representative, reports from local farm advisors, and a discussion on how organic practices can mitigate water pollution from USDA organic researcher Eric Brennan.

Humboldt-Trinity (HT)

The Humboldt-Trinity Chapter meeting, held at the Humboldt Grange, was attended by 15 people. President John LaBoyteaux announced that he is retiring and moving and will no longer be able to serve as chapter president. Kristina Radelfinger also decided to step down from her chapter leadership position. The HT Chapter is grateful for their service and sad to see them go! At the meeting, the group heard presentations by Deborah Giraud of UC Cooperative Extension, Maurice Viand on the history of the Humboldt Grange, and Leah Stamper of GMO Free Humboldt County.



Fresno-Tulare (FT)

The Fresno-Tulare Chapter meeting featured a presentation by Laura Batcha from the Organic Trade Association on the proposed organic marketing order that would provide research and marketing funds for the organic industry. Dean Charles Boyer and staff from the California State University Fresno Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences & Technology also attended the meeting. Chapter members emphasized to them how important the CSU Fresno organic farm and curriculum is to the organic industry in the San Joaquin Valley.

The Humboldt-Trinity and Processor/Handler Chapters held online elections that were scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2014.

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**Let the CCOF community know what
your chapter is doing!**

Please keep us posted! While we try to keep track of all chapter activities, there is always more to learn. Write to jsooby@ccof.org and we will publish your chapter update in the next edition of *Certified Organic*.



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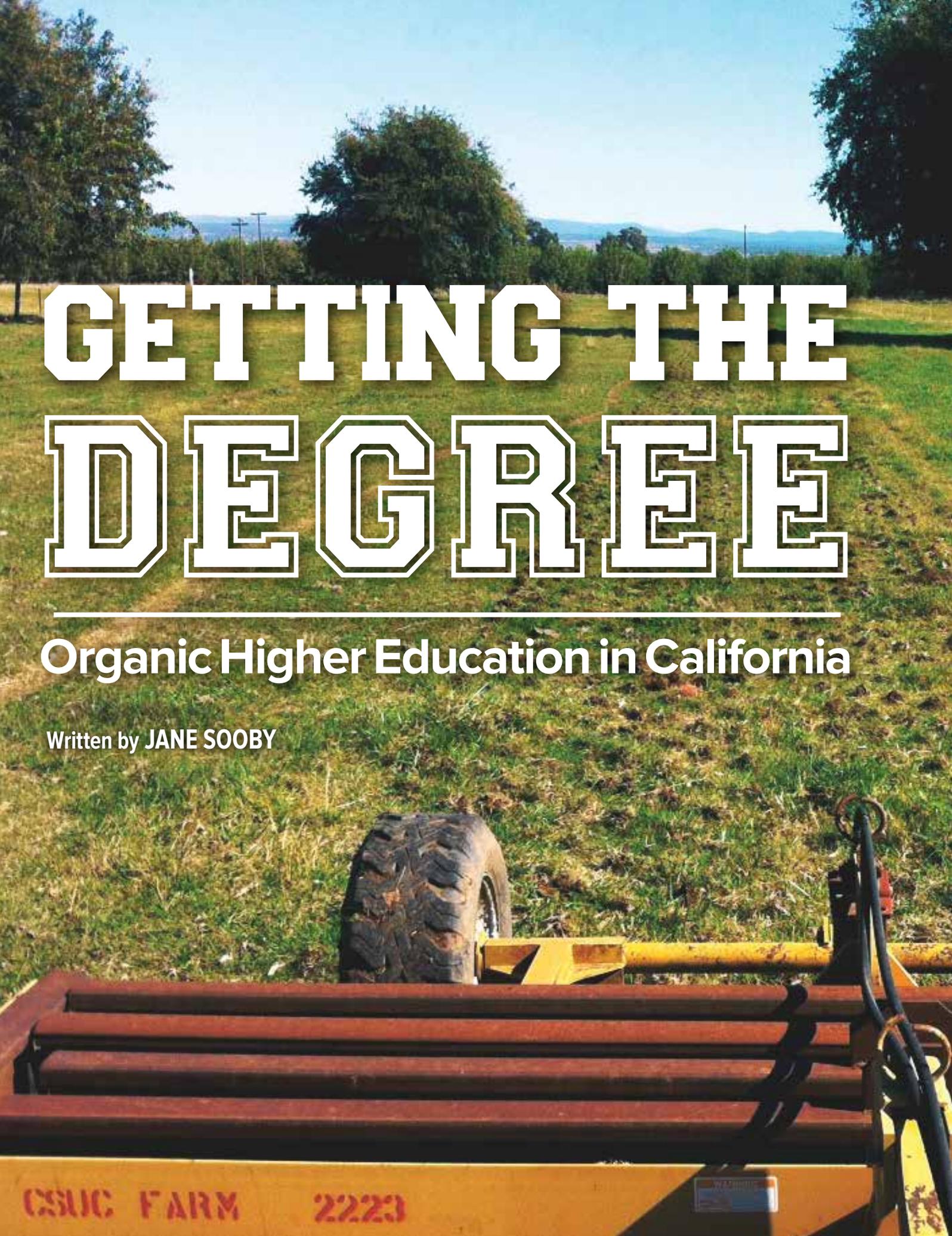
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GETTING THE DEGREE

Organic Higher Education in California

Written by JANE SOOBY

CSUC FARM

2223



Where would you go to college if you wanted to become an organic farmer?

There's a lot to be said for the "school of hard knocks" and experience from which most of the world's farmers graduate in order to become successful. The rare individual who grows up on a family farm is raised to appreciate the work ethic and practical savvy it takes to run a farm business. At the same time, the intimate knowledge of the hard labor and long hours that it takes to farm successfully often turns farm kids toward other careers. Rural America can also hold less attraction for many young people who prefer to live in thriving urban areas and enjoy an array of cultural opportunities.

Still, students are signing up to study agriculture in greater numbers at U.S. colleges and universities. Enrollment in college ag programs has seen an overall increase of 14 percent at non-land-grant colleges and 8.5 percent at the land-grants over the past nine years. Clearly, more young people want formal training in farming. But organic agriculture has not typically been in the curriculum—until recently.

Ten years ago, there weren't many choices for a student who wanted to go to college and study organic farming. Now, it is possible to major in organic agriculture. A broad array of other educational options exists for those seeking an agricultural career outside the conventional mainstream.

Six land-grant colleges across the country were identified by a national survey in 2011 to offer an organic major or certificate program combined with hands-on experience in organic production and marketing, typically on a student farm. Noteworthy programs include Washington State University's major in organic agricultural systems (the first to be offered in the country), the Organic Farmer Training Program offered at Michigan State University, University of Minnesota's Organic Horticulture & Local Food program of study, and an organic production concentration in the plant sciences major at the University of Tennessee.

A more recent study conducted by this author looked at all 446 colleges and universities in the state of California including community colleges, the state university system, and private schools. A pilot project that will now broaden to include all colleges in the country, this survey found that organic, sustainable, urban farming, and food systems programs in higher education are being offered at a wide range of institutions. Students have a choice of 16 colleges in California that offer a related major, minor, or certificate program (see table on page 30). A total of 65 California colleges offer hands-on training in organic production through a student garden or farm. Most of these campus gardens are not linked to a formal academic program but do offer students a place to learn to grow their own food and gain an appreciation for where food comes from.



Organic training programs have influenced the current generation of farmers, academics and educators, ag entrepreneurs, government agency personnel, and activists.

Damian Parr, Research and Education Coordinator at the Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems at the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC), was key in organizing UC Davis's new Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems while a graduate student and postdoctoral fellow at Davis. An instructor and researcher who has been published widely on the sustainable and organic farming movements in higher education, Parr has observed changes over the years and notes, "What we would consider historical agricultural education institutions, such as land-grant colleges of agriculture, are increasingly starting student farms and getting into organic and agroecological research."

In California, there exists a stable core of long-time organic training programs, more or less formalized in the academic curriculum, that has influenced the current generation of farmers, academics and educators, ag entrepreneurs, government agency personnel, and activists. These include programs at UCSC, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and UC Davis.

Stimulated by the growth of the organic industry and the movement that fuels it and turbocharged by increasing public interest in food-related issues, new programs are becoming increasingly common offerings in higher education. Courses include San Diego City College's three-year old Sustainable Urban Ag program and the intensive Veteran's Sustainable Agriculture Training now offered through Cal Poly Pomona and taught at a CCOF-certified farm.

One emerging trend is the integration of organic consciousness and production at culinary schools. Napa Valley College Cooking School boasts that it has developed "our own biodynamic system" that emphasizes reducing waste through composting and recycling, growing their own produce in an organic garden, and maintaining a flock of heritage breed hens. Similarly, San Diego Mesa College's culinary arts program produces its own fresh herbs in three organic gardens, and Laney College in Oakland grows an edible garden that produces food for its culinary arts program. Campuses nationwide are increasingly sourcing local and organic food to serve in student dining halls. The Real Food Challenge, a national movement working to shift university food budgets away from industrialized products to community-based and sustainable sources, is contributing to this change.

College-level ag training programs in California fall on a spectrum that reflects the ag economy. On one end are long-established conventional ag colleges that offer students training in everything from rodeo and equestrian studies to conventional production agriculture and heavy equipment maintenance. But newer programs have sprung up that offer training in alternative agriculture systems, using varying terminology including sustainable agriculture, ecological horticulture, and "Alternative Food Production Methods" (a skills certificate offered at Cabrillo College).



While each of the vibrant ag training programs in California deserves acknowledgment, the following profiles provide a taste of the types of programs available to college students today.

San Diego City College: *Sustainable Urban Agriculture Program*

Run on a shoestring budget and staffed by a small yet committed core of faculty and students, a sustainable urban agriculture program with its own urban farm has emerged on the campus of San Diego City College (SDCC). Now, students have the opportunity to earn an Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree in Sustainable Urban Agriculture and any of three certificates, including an Urban Farming Professional certificate and a Certificate of Performance in Organic Gardening for the Culinary Arts. According to the SDCC website, “The Associate’s degree in Sustainable Urban Agriculture prepares students to transfer to a four-year college in agriculture and related fields.” Already, students who have completed the 26-unit program have gone on to start their own urban agricultural enterprises or find work on local organic farms.

Lora Logan is a sustainable urban agriculture professor at SDCC and was, until recently, one of a few part-time farm managers at SDCC’s Seeds@City Urban Farm. She describes how a little-used lawn was transformed into a one-acre organically managed campus farm that supports a year-round CSA and an on-campus farm stand open during the school year. The farm was started as a hands-on lab for organic production and sustainable agriculture classes, and offers internships for students who provide crucial labor for maintaining the farm.

Recently, a “fully fledged greenhouse” has been installed at the Orchard, where students learn intensive vegetable as well as orchard production. A third location, the Flower Site, provides space for growing ornamentals.

Logan explains that the school district has been providing more funding for the sustainable urban agriculture courses over time, but the campus urban farm is largely self-sustaining through fruit and vegetable sales, grants, and even a Kickstarter program used to fund construction of the new greenhouse.

“We definitely get a lot of students who have glorious ideas about being a farmer,” said Logan. “Even students who think that they would like to be a farmer and decide it’s not for them, it educates them in the value of local food and other ways to engage. It’s really important that we teach people to grow food for themselves or for others. With or without a certificate or A.A. degree, most leave with an understanding of how to grow food for themselves.”

University of California, Santa Cruz: *Certificate in Ecological Horticulture (Apprenticeship Program)*

Many elements of the contemporary organic movement originated in Santa Cruz, California, where the campus garden founded at UCSC by Alan Chadwick in 1967 blossomed into a hands-on apprenticeship program that has shaped a new generation of organic farmers, activists, and academics. One of oldest and most influential of university-based alternative agricultural training programs, it is also unique in that it is located at a center within the Division of Social Sciences on a



Several students have returned to their family farm after completing the program, many are working on organic dairies, and others have gone into teaching or other professions with a new perspective on organic practices.

non-land-grant campus. The apprenticeship program at UCSC has inspired other educators to pattern their internships on it.

Over 1,400 students from around the world have immersed themselves in the six-month residential apprenticeship program, gaining a thorough grounding in organic farming and gardening through a combination of hands-on farm experience, lectures, practical skills courses, and field trips. A CSA program and farm stand provide students with training in postharvest handling and marketing. The three-acre Chadwick Garden and 30-acre farm are certified organic and were some of the first farm sites certified by CCOF. The organic farm also provides space for field research and currently hosts plots where anaerobic soil disinfestation is being studied as a method of controlling soil pathogens in organic strawberry and vegetable production.

Numerous graduates of the apprenticeship program have started their own successful farms and educational programs around the country and around the world. One recent example: a graduate from UCSC's apprenticeship program was hired earlier this year to head the city of San Francisco's new Urban Agriculture Program.

Other well-known graduates from the apprenticeship program include Thom Broz, who founded Live Earth Farm

in Watsonville, California; Emily Freed, regional production manager for Jacob's Farm/Del Cabo, Inc.; Kevin and Charuth Loth, who manage the 34-acre Shadow Brook Farm near Lincoln, Nebraska; Jered Lawson and Nancy Vail, who started Pie Ranch, an educational farm located near Pescadero, California; and Cathrine Sneed, who developed a gardening program at the San Francisco County Jail and went on to launch The Garden Project to serve former offenders.

California State University, Chico: *Organic Dairy & Vegetable Programs*

Chico State is home to the first certified organic dairy program on the West Coast. Certified organic in 2006, the dairy sold its first bulk tank of organic milk in 2007 and now has 100 certified acres dedicated to its pasture-based dairy program.

Cindy Daley, director of the Organic Dairy Program and professor in the College of Agriculture, emphasizes the learning-by-doing model. Working together with her staff, she hires a team of students to manage the 80-cow herd of crossbred Jerseys. Students are actively engaged in every aspect of organic dairy production, from milking to calving, breeding, pasture management, grazing practices, and integrated pest management. Students also learn the



business of organic dairy by working with budgets, nutrient management plans, and organic certification requirements. A new upper division course entitled "Organic Dairy Production & Management" has been added to the catalog to support the dairy.

Currently, Daley has 10 students on payroll, 10 in directed work experience, and 30 enrolled in the new course this spring.

"We teach value-added production practices to help the family farm survive," said Daley. She reports that several of her students have returned to their family farm after completing the program, many are working on organic dairies, and others have gone into teaching or other professions with a new perspective on organic practices.

Chico State's Organic Vegetable Project (OVP) harvested its first crops in 2008 and has since expanded from one to three certified organic acres. A primary objective of the project is to trial new vegetable varieties under organic conditions and provide the results to local organic growers. In addition to many types of flowers and herbs, a wide range of cool-season and summer crops are grown on the plot.

Director and professor in the College of Agriculture, Lee Altier noted that the project has become an outdoor classroom for several classes including Sustainable Vegetable Crop Production and Integrated Pest Management. A crew of five student employees manage the fields, and 12 students participate in directed work experience. Produce is sold at a weekly campus farm stand and to campus food services. The OVP hosts field days and workshops for students and community members on diverse aspects of organic management.

Chico State does not yet offer a specific certificate or degree in organic production, but does provide students with unique hands-on experience managing organic dairy and vegetable production.

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo: *Sustainable Agriculture Minor & Cal Poly Organic Farm*

An oasis of organic and sustainable agriculture in the heart of one of the oldest and largest agricultural colleges in the United States, Cal Poly's sustainable agriculture program has gone through ups and downs since director Hunter Francis started it as a "small grassroots" effort when completing his master's degree there. One of the constants associated with the program is the Cal Poly Organic Farm, which has grown from one acre certified organic by CCOF in 1995 to its present size of 10 certified acres. In the past, the student organic farm has grown food for a CSA and hosted a broad array of community programs and farm visits. Now, the farm continues to be a site for hands-on experiential learning and its produce is still sold at an on-campus farm stand and to local restaurants and stores, but the CSA is no longer active.

Cal Poly is well positioned to train the organic farmers of the future. Notes Francis, "The incredible array of resources at Cal Poly offers everything that a young farmer needs to support them. Though there are only a few courses dedicated specifically to organic production and processing, the instruction and training provided at Cal Poly would help any student become a successful farmer."

Organic & Sustainable Ag Higher Education in California

California Community Colleges

Cabrillo College Aptos, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Food Production Methods (Skills Certificate)
College of Marin Kentfield, CA Novato, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Landscaping: Landscaping, Organic Farming and Gardening (A.S. Degree) • Environmental Landscaping: Landscaping, Organic Farming and Gardening (Certificate of Achievement) • Environmental Landscaping: Landscape, Organic Farm, and Garden Production (Certificate of Achievement)
Mt. San Antonio College Walnut, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Pest Management (A.S. Degree)
Shasta College Redding, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture Science (A.S. Degree)
Sierra College Rocklin, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture (A.S. Degree) • Sustainable Agriculture (Certificate of Achievement)
Merritt College Oakland, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permaculture Design (Certificate of Proficiency)
San Diego City College San Diego, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Urban Agriculture (A.A. Degree) • Organic Gardening For the Culinary Arts (Certificate of Performance) • Urban Gardening (Certificate of Achievement) • Urban Farming Professional (Certificate of Achievement - beginning Fall 2014)
Santa Rosa Junior College Santa Rosa, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture (A.S. Degree) • Sustainable Agriculture (Certificate of Achievement)

California State Universities

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona Pomona, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veteran's Sustainable Agriculture Training (six-week certificate program in partnership with Archi's Acres certified organic farm)
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo San Luis Obispo, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture (Minor)
California State University, Stanislaus Turlock, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Studies (B.A. Degree) with concentration in Sustainable Agriculture

Private Four- Year Schools

Stanford University Palo Alto, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth Science (B.S. Degree) with Sustainable Food and Agriculture track
Santa Clara University Santa Clara, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Science (B.S. Degree) with concentration in Applied Ecology specifies it can prepare students for an agroecology career path
Occidental College Los Angeles, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban and Environmental Policy (B.A. Degree) specifically covers food and resource issues

University of California

University of California, Davis Davis, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (B.S. Degree) • Agricultural Systems and Environment (Minor) with Sustainable Agriculture track • Horticulture and Agronomy (M.S. Degree) with specialization in Agroecology
University of California, Santa Cruz Santa Cruz, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Studies (B.A. Degree) with focus in Agroecology & Sustainable Agriculture • Ecological Horticulture (Certificate)

The hands-on Organic Enterprise course is how most students connect with the organic farm. The course is a semester-long internship where students learn organic production and marketing by working at the farm for six hours per week. Additionally, the popular Organic Agriculture class, which utilizes the farm as a lab, has exposed hundreds of students to the topic.

Currently in a state of transition, Cal Poly's sustainable agriculture program has gradually become more integrated into the university's structure under Francis's direction. A decade ago, program staff and faculty developed a sustainable agriculture minor that is available to all Cal Poly students. While a steady stream of students have chosen this minor, the program is currently being updated to include new curricula and make it easier for students to fill the minor's requirements.

Cal Poly's sustainability effort was formalized in 2010 into the Center for Sustainability, which hosts a wide array of educational programs including an annual Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference developed in collaboration with CCOF. The Center also sponsors the Cal Poly Compost Project, one of the nation's largest university-based composting programs, that utilizes waste from campus livestock facilities and landscaping to generate approximately 4,000 tons of compost per year. Cal Poly offers a four-day intensive training on large-scale composting to the public and a one-day compost symposium for growers and others interested in recycling organic materials and promoting soil health. It is also looking into setting up a large-scale model vermicomposting operation.

Lundberg Family Farms has funded a faculty fellowship in organics that is allowing Cal Poly to establish a new, full-time position: Professor of Sustainable and Organic Agricultural Plant Sciences. The new faculty member, among a number of other duties, will oversee management of the Cal Poly Organic Farm. Francis is excited about the possibilities. "That person will be instrumental in providing direction for the future," he said. 

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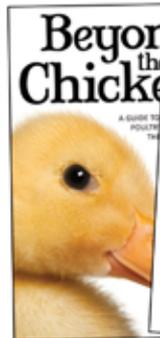


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Responding to Drought

CCOF has taken action to respond to farmers' growing concerns about the severe drought affecting the western United States. The new drought resources page on our website (visit www.ccof.org/drought-resources) is updated regularly with information and resources for producers affected by the drought conditions.

We also conducted a survey of organic livestock producers to better understand the impact of the drought on their operations. CCOF staff used the information gathered in the survey to submit a variance request to the USDA National Organic Program that would temporarily reduce the required percentage of dry matter intake for livestock operations in light of the severely limited pasture. We did not request an exemption of the requirement that feed be organic. USDA responded quickly, granting a two-month variance from all pasture requirements in drought-impacted counties. We communicated this information to our certified livestock producers in California, and will continue to provide information and resources as the situation progresses. Keep an eye on our blog (www.ccof.org/blog) and drought resources page for these updates.

Read Member News on page 11 to learn about how our certified members have stepped up to help their fellow organic producers.

Farm Bill Finally Passes!

After years of starts and stops, we finally have a new farm bill that was signed into law by the President on Friday, February 7. Organic programs fared incredibly well and we believe that the engagement of CCOF members with policymakers had a real impact on the outcome. "As a \$35 billion industry, organics are a significant and growing part of our agriculture economy," said Congressman Jim Costa of California's 16th district, who was a strong champion of certification cost share on the committee responsible for final negotiations between the Senate and House versions of the farm bill. "Organic farmers in my district and nationwide made their voices heard about the importance of organic certification cost share programs, and I was proud to help champion their cause. The organics industry has proven to be an important option for many American families, and because of that they were a winner in this farm bill."

Among the wins for organic was the National Organic Certification Cost Share program, a main focus of CCOF's policy work last year. Our work was achieved through direct advocacy by our staff, CCOF grower meetings with policymakers, and CCOF member calls and emails to members of Congress.

The National Organic Certification Cost Share program helps farmers and processors afford the expense of organic certification by reimbursing them for up to 75 percent of their certification costs, with a maximum of \$750 per scope of operation. In 2013, only \$1.425 million in cost share funds were available to farmers in 16 states. The new farm bill reinstates the program to farmers and handlers in all states for a total of \$11.5 million per year. An additional \$1.5 million is available for organic certification cost share to farmers through the Agriculture Management Assistance (AMA) program. AMA is available in 16 states where participation in the Federal Crop Insurance Program is low: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. **We will update our members when information about obtaining certification cost share funds is available.**

This farm bill also includes \$20 million per year for the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, a competitive grant-making program that funds organic research.

More organic wins in the bill include:

- \$5 million for the Organic Data Initiative, which gathers statistical data on organic production
- \$5 million for necessary technology upgrades at the USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
- Increased enforcement authority for the NOP
- Expanded exemption for organic operations from conventional check-off programs



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- Authorization for USDA to consider an application for an organic check-off program, should the organic sector choose to pursue a check-off

Other programs for which CCOF advocated that received funding include the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, a new microloan program, farmers' market promotion, and other key rural development programs. Federal disaster assistance funding will also be offered, which is good news for growers in drought-stricken regions. Unfortunately, this farm bill cut billions of dollars from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs, which many CCOF growers participate in.

We will continue to represent our members by ensuring these programs are implemented in a way that maximizes their benefits for organic producers across the country.

NOSB News

In February, the NOSB went to Washington D.C. for a two-day training. This opportunity enabled members to meet with USDA officials from the Office of General Counsel and the Agricultural Marketing Service, as well as the National Organic Program. Coincidentally, the training occurred on the same day that the farm bill passed in the Senate and on the day of a scheduled reception to celebrate the release of the *PLOS One* report that showed that organic whole milk provides more beneficial fatty acids than conventional (see In the News on page 7 for details on the study). Members of the NOSB got to meet organic champion Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) during the event. The NOSB will now be preparing for the full agenda at their next meeting in San Antonio, Texas, April 29 - May 2. Visit www.ams.usda.gov and click "National Organic Program" for NOSB meeting information.

California State Policy

CCOF continues to serve on the executive committee of the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN). CalCAN believes that California farmers and ranchers can make powerful contributions to slowing climate change, including farming practices (such as organic) that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon.

This coalition has recently seen some significant wins. On January 9, Governor Jerry Brown released his budget draft for fiscal year 2014/15, and we are encouraged by the inclusion of investments in climate friendly agricultural practices and farmland conservation. Visit www.ebudget.ca.gov to view the California draft budget.

Under the proposed budget, the spending categories that will benefit farmers are as follows:

- \$100 million to implement regional Sustainable Community Strategies that include agricultural land preservation as a component of integrated land use and transportation planning
- \$50 million for water infrastructure and watershed projects, which will support water use efficiency in agriculture and watershed protection
- \$20 million for agricultural management strategies that improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Alternative Controls for Fire Blight

2014 is the last season in which organic apple and pear growers can use antibiotics to control fire blight. Now is the time to look at non-antibiotic controls, for which there has been significant progress in the past few years.

Two new resources are available this spring for growers. An annotated presentation by Dr. Ken Johnson of Oregon State University (www.tfrec.wsu.edu/pdfs/P2850.pdf) outlines possible control strategies and shares results of the most recent research on coppers, oils, lime sulfur, and biological materials.

Additionally, "Grower Lessons and Emerging Research for Developing an Integrated Non-Antibiotic Fire Blight Control Program in Organic Fruit," a publication by Harold Ostenson and David Granatstein (<http://organic-center.org/scientific-resources>), describes what Washington organic growers in the EU program have done historically and how new control options can be integrated into a systems approach.

From the Ostenson/Granatstein abstract: "Successful non-antibiotic fire blight control centers on combining orchard management practices into an integrated systems approach which is multi-faceted, and marries effective fire blight prevention with fungal control, insect control, bloom thinning, spray coverage, tree training, soil and foliar nutrients, and cultivar and root stock selection."

The report goes on to discuss each of these facets and some overall management considerations. Each grower will need to adapt the principles and strategies presented to their own particular location and type of operation. It is especially useful that detailed timing recommendations are given separately for apples and pears. The publication has extensive references and suggestions for further reading.

Some additional promising materials are being researched and will become available in the next few years. Meanwhile, growers need to start learning to work with the products and techniques already available in order to remain organic without antibiotics in the future.

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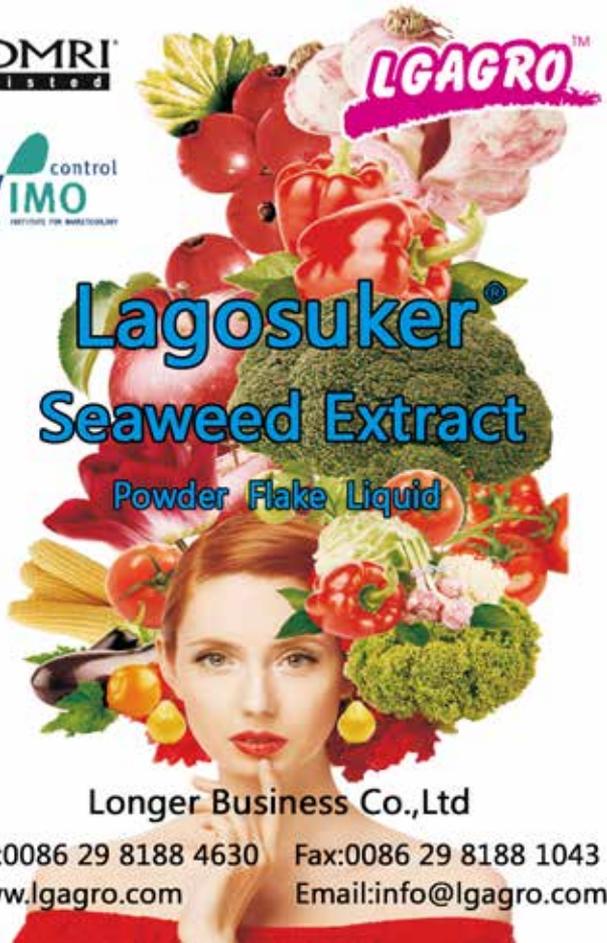
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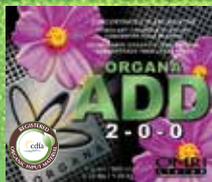


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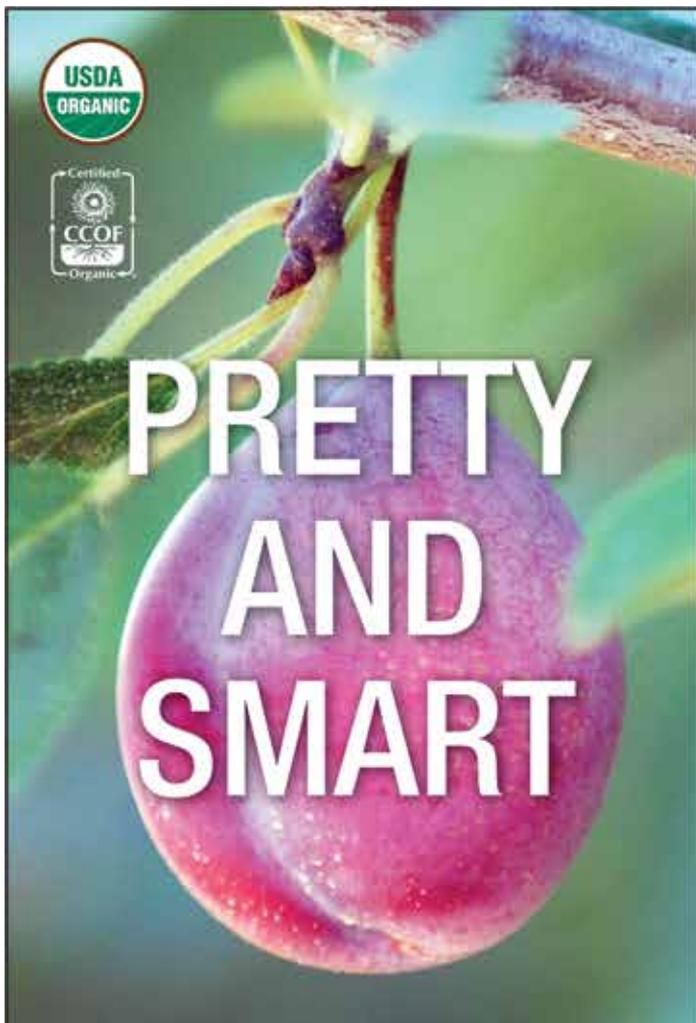
- Make sure the auditor is comfortable
- Take your auditor to your best crew
- Have a practice audit the day before your auditor arrives
- Deep clean before the audit or schedule the audit right after your regular annual/seasonal cleaning
- Do a walk-through two hours before the audit

WHAT NOT TO DO:

- Tell the auditor you have no food safety problems and don't need an audit
- Argue with the auditor about down-scores
- Rush the auditor and act like you have more important things to do (phone calls, interruptions, etc.)
- Try to hide things
- Spend time searching for documents

Taken from *The Dos and Don'ts of Food Safety Audits* by Stephen Bird. Stephen Bird is an experienced organic and food safety auditor who provides trainings for creating food safety plans and USDA approved HACCP certificates. He also provides consulting services on-site to create individualized HACCP plans and food safety plans.

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2014 Farm Bill Changes Organic Landscape for Check-Offs

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Among the “wins” for organic agriculture in the Agriculture Act of 2014 (more commonly known as the 2014 Farm Bill) is an important provision expanding the exemption for organic operations from conventional check-off programs.

Up to the passage of this farm bill, as a result of provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill, only those organic operations certified to the 100% organic standard were eligible to be exempt from paying into conventional check-off programs, many of which promote conventional products at the expense of organic.

Thanks to advocacy by the organic sector which resulted in broad support by Republicans and Democrats alike in the House and Senate, the 2014 Farm Bill includes language extending the exemption to the 95% organic category within which the overwhelming majority of certified organic operations fall. As a result, all operations certified to the 95% organic standard will also be exempt from paying into the conventional check-off programs.

Before this happens, however, the USDA must issue regulations implementing the new exemption threshold.

In support of this, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) wrote a letter in February to Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack urging USDA to implement this immediately. In the letter, OTA urged that this exemption be implemented quickly and retroactively to the date of President Obama’s signature.

Subsequently, OTA’s Director of Legislative and Legal Affairs Marni Karlin and CEO/Executive Director Laura Batcha met with Anne Alonzo, Administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, and discussed prompt implementation of the exemption.

In an additional but related provision, the farm bill authorizes USDA to consider an application for a check-off program by the organic sector, should it choose to pursue such an option.

To clarify, USDA is not authorized to take steps on its own to create an organic check-off. Instead, the sector must first create a framework, and then survey the industry—all organic certificate-holders—to determine whether there is support for

the proposal. Without a large majority vote in favor of the plan, an organic check-off cannot be pursued.

If there is great support for the framework, the sector would have to draft a program proposal and petition USDA for its creation. At that point, USDA would consider the application, issue a final proposed program, and conduct a referendum of organic certificate-holders to determine support for the proposal. If the referendum shows support, USDA is authorized to issue a final order and appoint a board.

At this point, it is all up to the organic sector to act. Leadership at the OTA believes that some sort of research and promotion program for organic is essential to grow the sector and move it forward to the next level. Consequently, OTA is stepping up outreach on the issue.

The current proposal, now open for comment and posted on the United For More Organic website (www.unitedformoreorganic.org), offers options on how fees might be assessed, such as basing the number on a percentage of gross profits or calculating a percentage of the total cost of organic ingredients used. Organic certificate-holders along the organic supply chain—in every stage of production, distribution, and sales—would pay in and have a voice in how the program’s dollars would be spent. However, the proposal includes an exemption from fees for operations with sales less than \$250,000 a year. Meanwhile, imported organic products would be assessed a fee.

The key is that collectively, we can accomplish more than we can alone. The door is open and the opportunity is there. It is now up to us to determine how we step forward.



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making certification more efficient. We hope that this puts you in the driver's seat and saves you time with decisions.

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MyCCOF: Materials Search is powered by Ecert Audit Management software. Ecert is created by our partner Intact, developer of customized audit, traceability, and quality management software solutions.



We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and the Washington State Department of Agriculture materials review program for their support and assistance in bringing this service to our members.

NOP Instruction Forces Changes for CCOF Operations

On February 13, 2014, the National Organic Program (NOP) released an instruction document, "4009: Who Needs to be Certified," regarding what parts of operations and stages of production require separate standalone certification. View this instruction document by visiting www.ccof.org.

The NOP clarified in the new instruction that in order to strengthen NOP oversight and enforcement, independent businesses that take possession and further process, handle, or produce organic products must be independently certified. Under the instruction, operations that lease facilities can include the facilities in their Organic System Plan (OSP). Alternatively, the facilities can seek independent certification.

This is counter to long-established CCOF systems for including co-packers, hullers, bottlers, or other agricultural processors in a client's OSP, where they are inspected as part of the client's annual inspection cycle. Historically, CCOF has included these operations within the OSPs of existing clients. For many years we have allowed operations to include OSP sections for additional facilities at reduced prices, with the CCOF operation taking responsibility for certification of that facility. In all cases they have been inspected and held to all the same requirements as any organic processor.

We believe that the systems we've developed with operations to support the inclusion of subcontracted and occasional-use facilities in their OSPs has contributed to the success of our members. In some cases these are facilities that have refused independent certification, and including them in a CCOF-certified member's OSP has ensure the continued use of the services they provide. However, including these facilities

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We will work to develop solutions that keep low-volume, occasional-use, and reluctant contracted processing facilities in the organic program.

within another operation's OSP has resulted in the inability of the NOP to track, investigate, or inspect these operations. These subcontracted operations included in another operation's OSP do not have a direct relationship with the NOP. We understand the concern of the NOP and will work hard to implement a smooth transition that minimizes negative effects on CCOF operations while meeting the needs of the NOP and complying with their mandatory instructions.

Existing separate entities will likely have the option of splitting their certification into a standalone certificate, functioning as a subcontracted facility who holds their own certificate but with the CCOF-certified member playing a role, or leasing facilities/equipment to the CCOF operation so a separate certification is not necessary under the NOP instruction.

To comply with the new instruction, we will be implementing a 12-30 month process of identifying affected parties, developing solutions that meet business needs, and transitioning to new systems. Because CCOF has OSPs and inspections on file for all facilities, a transition to independent certification should not involve significant paperwork for those facilities that choose this option. We will work to develop solutions that keep low-volume, occasional-use, and reluctant contracted processing facilities in the organic program. Where separate certification costs are incurred, we expect that certification cost share funds approved in the 2014 Farm Bill will significantly ease the effects.

International Trade Update: Japan and Korea

U.S.-Japan Equivalency Agreement Effective January 1, 2014

The U.S.-Japan Equivalency Agreement is now effective! Organic products certified in either the United States or Japan may now be sold as organic in either market.

With the equivalency agreement, restrictions on humic acid and lignin sulfonate no longer apply for products shipped to Japan, and CCOF no longer asks for documentation regarding the use of these materials. CCOF has also removed anyone not directly exporting to Japan from our GMA Japan Export program. Only operations directly exporting to Japan need to be enrolled in our GMA Japan Export program.

In addition to the equivalency, there is also a new option for applying the JAS seal, which is required on all organic plant and

plant-based products sold in Japan. The JAS Seal Consignment Contract allows a U.S. exporter to apply the JAS seal directly to their NOP-certified products in the United States. By signing the JAS Seal Consignment Contract with a JAS certified importer, the U.S. exporter agrees to identify a responsible employee for the process, undergo some minor training, and maintain records of the number of seals applied for each shipment. For further details about the JAS Seal Consignment Contract process visit our Japan webpage (www.ccof.org/japan).

Our export department is available to help facilitate a JAS Seal Consignment Contract and offer additional information on the agreement. Please contact export@ccof.org with any questions.

Korean Import Restrictions Extended to July 1, 2014

Korean officials announced in a January 2014 press release that the Korean import restrictions are extended for another six months. This "education period" will allow for the sale of U.S. organic product in Korea until July 1, 2014.

The education period is a time of non-enforcement of the new Korean standard. Korean distributors are allowed to sell U.S. organic product, but may receive warnings that the product will no longer be allowed after the education period ends.

Korean officials also released a list of exempted ingredients, which can be exported to Korea without requiring certification to the standard. These ingredients are processed products that are not currently available in Korea. If you export one of the ingredients on this list as bulk product not meant for direct to consumer sale, you will not be affected by the Korean standard.

CCOF is also investigating certification options for the Korean standard. It appears that, unless the ingredients in the final product are on the list of exempted ingredients, the entire supply chain will require recertification. CCOF has developed a relationship with a certifier that can provide efficient Korean certification if needed.

During the education period, the NOP and other agencies are working diligently on an equivalency arrangement with Korea, with the support and encouragement of CCOF.

If you have interest in Korean certification, or have any questions, contact export@ccof.org.

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