

Organic News, Events, Certification Updates, Member Profiles, and More!



CERTIFIED Organic

INSIDE LOOK

Farm-Based Education

Making it Work for Farmers



**Organic Hops in Demand
Say Hay Farms Builds Organic Flavor
Interview with Brian Leahy of DPR**

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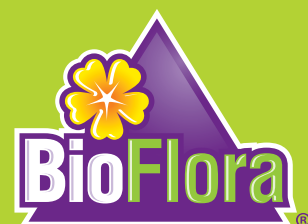
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Farm-Based Education

"Farm field trips are great experiences that make agricultural, environmental, and nutritional concepts come to life."

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Organic Hops in Demand

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SENIOR EDITOR/WRITER Elizabeth Barba

ART DIRECTION/DESIGN Sarah Watters

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Advertising

Teamworkx

Eric Fraser (Group Leader & Advertising Sales)
(707) 921-6152, advertising@ccof.org

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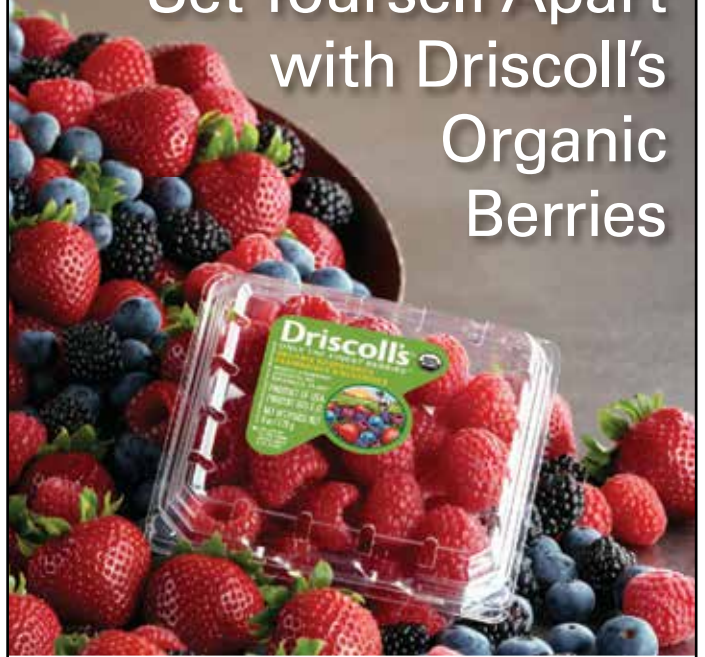
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Supporting Organic Advocacy

Whether Michael Pollan- or Rachel Ray-inspired, more and more Americans are seeking a stronger connection to the food they grow and eat. At the ballpark you can find “field to fork” cuisine featured amidst the fragrances of garlic fries and hot dogs; in school cafeterias there are calendars that include pictures of fresh local produce; and at restaurants, we find menus listing seasonal fare and where it is grown. Fostering this connection, our feature story, *Farm-Based Education: Making it Work for Farmers*, offers tips on how farmers can diversify their operations to nurture the emerging interest in farming among kids, researchers, and consumers alike.

As part of our mission to advocate on behalf of organic, CCOF works to foster the connection between policymakers and the food that we grow and eat. We’ve learned that spending time on an organic farm can open the eyes of policymakers and deepen their recognition of organic as a key part of America’s agricultural future. Early this summer, a California coalition of sustainable agriculture advocates organized a tour of TD Willey Farms, operated in Fresno, California, by the Willey family, longtime CCOF members. Central Valley Congressman Jim Costa toured the 75-acre Willey operation, which offers a year-round palette of bountiful vegetable production, growing everything from artichokes to rutabagas using the latest in biological fertility systems. The group also visited the nearby Purity Organics processing site, hosted by CCOF Board of Directors member Steve Koretoff.

Congressman Costa is one of only two California representatives who sit on the powerful U.S. House Committee on Agriculture. Shortly following the tour of our CCOF organic producers, the congressman stepped up to support the small but critically important National Organic Certification Cost Share Program. The program, currently funded through the federal farm bill, will likely be discontinued unless more farmers, processors, handlers, consumers, and other supporters weigh in persuasively during the weeks ahead.

As CCOF members and supporters consider diversifying their operations, as suggested in our feature story, please remember that every connection you make is one more voice that we can engage to weigh in on behalf of organic, and help reshape the future of agriculture. If you take a minute to check in with our policy director, Brise Tencer (btencer@ccof.org), she’ll be happy to provide you with the tools and information that you need to engage your visitors.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Calfo". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cathy Calfo
CCOF Executive Director



Farmers' Market Numbers Jump Once Again

Survey data from the USDA shows that we have reached 7,864 farmers' markets nationwide in 2012, jumping almost 10% from last year, and 40% higher than 2008. California still leads the way in overall market numbers at 827, with New York and Massachusetts in second and third place with 647 and 313, respectively. The Mid-Atlantic region - Delaware, Washington, D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia - saw growth of 15.8%, with the Southeast markets growing at 13.1%. Farmers' market managers voluntarily provide the self-reported data to the USDA on an annual basis.

"These outlets provide benefits not only to the farmers looking for important income opportunities, but also to the communities looking for fresh, healthy foods," said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, in a prepared statement.

CCOF currently certifies over 400 clients who regularly sell produce at a farmers' market booth, and we're excited to see this sales method succeed for our members. We invite you to read more about our efforts to raise consumer awareness about organic certification and production at farmers' markets on page 12.

Alice Waters Hotel Menu Full of Delights

Grilled Chicken with Pesto Sauce, Roasted Potatoes, and Cherry Tomatoes is just one of the many delicious items appearing on Hyatt Hotels Corporation's new three-course organic and seasonal children's menu, created by sustainable food pioneer Alice Waters. The new menu, "For Kids By Kids," will please over three million children served annually in full-service Hyatt hotels across the country, Canada, and the Caribbean, and features other delectable items such as a shaken chopped salad, breakfast taco, and grilled beef dinner entrée. The "For Kids by Kids" menu was tasted, tested, and approved by kids, including 11-year-old Haile Thomas (host of her own online cooking show), who worked with Hyatt and her peers to make sure the new menu items are fun, nutritious, and delicious.

"All children deserve to eat real food," said Alice Waters, in a Hyatt press release. "I wanted to do a small, three course meal, within the context of Hyatt's initiative, that could be sourced exclusively from organic farms across the country. Of course it's about taste and ripeness and seasonality—but it's bigger than that, too: it's about supporting the people who are taking care of the land for our future generations."

The "For Kids By Kids" menu builds on Hyatt's work with Partnership for a Healthier America and their commitment to continuously improving the quality and nutrition of hotel menus, and promoting healthy habits. The company will also offer fruits or vegetables as a side item, as well as low-fat milk with free refills. We applaud Hyatt Hotels for their efforts to reinvigorate hotel menus while offering nutritious and delicious items for children.

Oregon Ranks Fourth-Largest in Nationwide Organic Sales

A recent report from Oregon State University (OSU) and Oregon Tilth, Inc. notes that Oregon ranks fifth in the number of organic farms and fourth in organic sales, nationally. "Enhancing Organic Agriculture in Oregon: Research, Education, and Policy" uses survey data, interviews, and focus groups to capture the perspectives of the organic community and enhance organic agriculture in the state. With interviews from farmers' market managers, produce distributors, farm to school program staff, nonprofit organizations, and OSU organic agriculture researchers, the report also seeks to identify opportunities for research, education, and policy surrounding organic agriculture.

Reducing food losses by even 15% could feed more than 25 million Americans every year at a time when one in six Americans lack a secure supply of food.

“We wrote this report to provide guidance and a research-based resource for researchers, educators, and policymakers who can help meet the needs of Oregon’s organic sector and broader community,” explained Garry Stephenson, coordinator of the OSU Small Farms Program and one of the report’s lead authors, in a press release.

“Enhancing Organic Agriculture in Oregon” identifies a number of needs in the organic community, specifically organic-appropriate strategies for production-related challenges: pest, disease, and weed management; nutrient management; plant breeding; access to inputs; and seed saving. Other important considerations raised during the research process relate to marketing organic products; developing new markets; associated costs of organic production; and assistance with recordkeeping, farm succession, and health insurance.

The report is a product of the partnership between OSU Small Farms Program and Oregon Tilth, which includes education for beginning and transitioning farmers, and applied research on cover crops and nitrogen management in organic production systems. “Enhancing Organic Agriculture in Oregon Research, Education, and Policy” by Garry Stephenson, Lauren Gwin, Amy Garrett, and Maud Powell, is available online at www.extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog.

Pregnant Women Benefit from Organic Diet

The effects of an organic diet on pregnancy and childbirth are essentially unknown. Organic diets cut out growth hormones, GMOs, and synthetic pesticides and herbicides, so there is good reason to believe that eating an organic diet during pregnancy will have a positive effect on the mother and child. New research from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health’s (NIPH) Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study indicates that pregnant women consuming plenty of organic foods have a higher density of fiber and lower density of sodium in their diet compared to pregnant women on a conventional diet. 63,808 women in the Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study answered a general health questionnaire at week 15, and a food frequency questionnaire at weeks 17 through 22 of their pregnancy. Published online in the journal *BMC Public Health*, the study associates data from the 9.1% of respondents who reported frequent consumption of organic foods with increased scores in health and sustainability.

These participants had a diet with high density of fiber, folate, beta-carotene, and vitamin C; and low density of sodium

compared to other participants with less organic consumption. This feedback indicates that pregnant women with a high consumption of organic foods have diets more in line with health and diet standards, and sets the stage for future studies on the consumption of organic food during pregnancy.

Americans are Serious Food Wasters

We feel guilty about it, but the fact remains that Americans waste 40% of their food, throwing away over 20 pounds a person per year. “Wasted: How America is Losing Up to 40 Percent of its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill” is a new report from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) that notes that getting food to our tables is eating up 10% of the total U.S. energy budget, 50% of U.S. land, and 80% of freshwater consumed nationwide. These startling numbers drive home the point that there needs to be a shift in the way food is grown and consumed in the United States towards efficiency and streamlining in the food industry, and respect built for food by its eaters.

According to the study, reducing food losses by even 15% could “feed more than 25 million Americans every year at a time when one in six Americans lack a secure supply of food to their tables.”

The NRDC report urges the U.S. government to conduct a study on losses in the food system and set national goals for waste reduction, and calls on Americans to learn when food goes bad, buy imperfect produce, and store and cook food with an eye to reducing waste. These efforts have the potential to aid in alleviating hunger while saving money and improving the environment through efficiency and sustainability in food production.

Many organic consumers are already used to purchasing fun and bizarre-looking produce at local farmers’ markets or directly from the farmer, while home food preservers grab all the slightly mushy and lopsided produce with glee, knowing they can secure a cheaper price while helping lessen harvest waste. Farmers have an opportunity to educate their consumers through markets and CSAs on storing, cooking, and preserving fresh produce. Farmers can also offer valuable advice on starting a home composting system or edible garden. While there must be system-wide change, it is possible to make a difference by making small changes to your lifestyle that can have a large impact on your budget and environmental footprint.

The report is available online at www.nrdc.org/food/wasted-food.asp.



Johnny's Selected Seeds Now 100% Employee Owned

It's been forty years since Rob Johnston, founder of Johnny's Selected Seeds, envisioned a company that would provide high quality plant varieties to gardeners and growers. Their mission "to help families, friends, and communities feed one another by providing superior seeds, tools, and information" is achieved by a dedicated staff and customer base. Johnny's now includes over 130 full-time employees, serving thousands of supportive customers.

The company's 2006 plan to become an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan) set 2016 as their deadline for the ESOP to own 100% of the company's shares. Achieving their goal early, Johnny's Selected Seeds became 100% employee owned in July 2012, celebrated with a company event held at the company's research farm. There, the Johnny's board and staff honored Johnston and his wife, Janika Eckert, for their work in accomplishing employee ownership.

"This is a wonderful retirement benefit, and I am so grateful to Rob and Janika for making this decision," said Mary Gomane, an employee and ESOP trustee, in a prepared statement. Congratulations to the Johnny's staff on this momentous occasion!

David Mas Masumoto Named to National Council on the Arts

In the midst of a busy peach season and crazy harvest day, David "Mas" Masumoto of CCOF-certified Masumoto Family Farm received a call from the White House. On Wednesday, June 20, President Obama announced his intent to nominate Mas Masumoto to the National Council on the Arts. Mas will join other visual artists, authors, and musicians to advise the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), seeking to "put rural arts on the national map." Mas is the author of, among other books, *Epitaph for a Peach: Four Seasons on My Family Farm*, which details a year of his life on his 80-acre organic farm producing grapes, nectarines, peaches, and other stone fruit. He was unsure as to how he came to the White House's attention and was surprised at the nomination.

"It's terrific," said Representative Jim Costa of Fresno. "Anyone who wants to understand the rural nature of the San Joaquin Valley has to read him."

Council members serve staggered six-year terms on the 18-member board. Each member is Senate-approved and undergoes an FBI background check prior to confirmation. Together they advise NEA on budgets, policies, and grants, meeting three times a year in Washington D.C., unpaid. "It's like all my other professions, like farming and writing," Masumoto said with a laugh, in an interview with the *Fresno Bee*. "It's not monetary."

Congratulations to Mas on this high honor! Learn more about Mas Masumoto and Masumoto Family Farm at www.masumoto.com.

Whole Foods Donates School Salad Bars

Certified member Whole Foods Market has partnered with Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, and the Whole Kids Foundation, to provide 57 salad bars valued at more than \$300,000 to elementary schools within New York City's five boroughs. The retailer opened their seventh Manhattan

location in August on 57th Street, donating five percent of opening day sales to the salad bar program. Over 1,000 salad bars have already been installed in city schools through a partnership between the Department of Education, Mayor's Fund, and Fund for Public Schools in an effort to increase access to healthy choices and encourage fruit and vegetable consumption. The initiative seeks to bring salad bars to all New York City public schools by 2015. Contributors to the new salad bars include Olivia's Organics, DiMartino Pasta, Happy Baby, Honest Kids, Laurel Hill, Kind Snacks, Nature's Path, Organic Valley, and others.

"Thanks to our pioneering initiatives, New York City has recently defied the national trend and seen an unprecedented decline in childhood obesity," said Mayor Bloomberg in a statement. "Giving every student access to healthy fruit and vegetables is the next step in countering the obesity epidemic and getting kids started on a healthy habit for life. Kids love salad bars in schools - I keep hearing that they are often the first choice for lunch - and this donation from Whole Foods will help bring this delicious and healthy option to more kids."

CCOF is pleased to hear of Whole Foods' work to help combat obesity and improve access to healthy foods in schools. Learn more about educating communities about our food system through farm-based education on page 18.

Organic Valley Debuts Classic American Singles

There's something about biting into a grilled cheese sandwich made with slices of American cheese that makes a person swoon. Flashbacks of childhood lunches, or a desire to suddenly have tomato soup for dipping, are common reactions to this nationwide food staple. It's a shame that so many of our favorite cheeses are highly processed - blends of multiple cheeses heated with various emulsifying agents - and not delicious. Organic consumers, rejoice! Organic Valley, a CCOF Supporting Member, has introduced 100% real, unprocessed American cheese made with organic milk from the co-op's family farms. These singles are perfect for grilled cheese (obviously) and burgers, or as a snack, bound for the lunchbox. Children and adults alike will relish the mild and melty goodness of the American singles, which are free of antibiotics, synthetic hormones, and GMOs. In addition, each serving has 20% of daily recommended calcium and only 110 calories!

Look for this delicious classic in the cheese section of your local grocery store now! Visit www.organicvalley.com for more product details.

CCOF "Likes"

Member News Meets Social Networking



C & A Organic Farm via [Facebook](#): "We have fresh vine ripened cantaloupe, Sugar Baby watermelons and Crimson Sweet watermelons. Give us a call during the week to pick one up, or find us at the local farmers markets."

Giving your customers up-to-date information about what's fresh right now gets them excited about eating seasonally and trying new varieties! Having the option to call is also helpful to those who can't make it out to the market but still want to get their hands on delicious produce.



Gnosis Chocolate via [Facebook](#): "We're still looking to add new stellar people to our Team, friends - if you've got customer service and sales experience and are so excited to express your passion for health and nutrition through your job, we absolutely want to hear from you!"

Maybe they offer some of their delicious chocolate as an employment benefit! Sharing job opportunities through social media is a great way to tap into a pool of passionate potential applicants.



High Mowing Organic Seeds via [Facebook](#): "Have you ever made Kale Chips? Super easy, and kids love them. Take several leaves of Kale, chop them into bite size pieces, lightly sprinkle with oil, and then spread them on a cookie sheet (one layer deep). Sprinkle with sea salt, and bake for 10-20 minutes at 350°. Check about half way through to make sure they aren't burning. When done properly, they are light and crispy, and very addicting!"

Yum! Facebook statuses are a short and simple way to share an easy recipe with your fans. This sounds like a great way to get kids excited about eating healthy greens like kale. Pass the kale chips, please!



Lucero Olive Oil via [Facebook](#): "Have you tried our products and fallen in love? Visited our Tasting Room and Mill and had a fantastic time? Well then let others know by posting a review on one or more of the following sites: Yelp, TripAdvisor, Google Places."

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- *Most importantly, hone the skills and attitudes to take a leadership role in the industry!*

After the first residential course, we embark on a 7-month E-learning journey, culminating in a six-day residential session in September 2013 during the Organic Summit in Baltimore.



Our Class of 2012 in action during the training

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Consumer Awareness Campaign Launches in San Francisco

Many consumers are confused when it comes to the purchases they make at their farmers' market because conflicting labels and signage often complicate the process of finding certified organic foods. Much to the surprise of many, not all goods sold at farmers' markets are certified organic. To address these issues, we developed a guide for clients and market managers to distribute throughout the year at farmers' markets that defines "certified organic" and its regulations as they pertain to market sales. Part of these educational efforts includes a consumer postcard with an attached magnet that answers "Why buy certified organic?" and provides simple advice for shopping at local farmers' markets. We offered these cards free of charge to our certified members for distribution at their respective markets and "sold out" immediately!

CCOF launched a farmers' market education campaign on Saturday, June 30, at the San Francisco Ferry Plaza Farmers' Market to celebrate these materials. CCOF Director of Marketing, Robin Boyle, and Program and Member Services Specialist, Tina Cosentino, passed out the newly designed informational postcards to 25 CCOF-certified market vendors for distribution

to their customers. The fun and informative event was covered in *SF Chronicle's* SFGate, *The Packer*, Examiner.com, and many other online news sources.

CCOF to Celebrate 40 Years of Growing Organic at EcoFarm

We are busy planning a series of activities for 2013 to celebrate our 40th anniversary and the history of organic certification! Help kick off the celebration by joining a tour with pioneers and innovators of the organic movement on California's Central Coast. Participants will look at some of the latest technology in organic agriculture and research, while learning how CCOF organic certification got its start. Tour stops include Phil Foster Ranch-Pinnacle Brand, Fuentes Berry Farms and USDA-ARS Organic Research Station, and more to be announced. Hear from speakers Mark Lipson, CCOF's first employee, and current USDA Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Policy Advisor; Sam Farr, California Congressman (confirmed, pending congressional schedule); Irene Reti and Sarah Rabkin, Co-editors of *Cultivating a Movement: An Oral History of Organic Farming and Sustainable Agriculture on California's Central Coast*; and others.

The 40th anniversary events will take place as a preconference event to the 2013 EcoFarm Conference on Wednesday, January 23, 2013. The day will begin with comments from members and a review of accomplishments at our annual membership meeting. Celebrations continue with our commemorative bus tour and conclude with a reception and dinner featuring organic ingredients certified by CCOF. Registration opens October 29 at www.eco-farm.org. Spaces are limited so sign up early to reserve your spot at this historic event!

Please contact programs@ccof.org if you are interested in donating food items for the dinner.

Getting Ready for EcoFarm 2013

The EcoFarm planning committee has been busy at work this summer putting together a fantastic lineup of speakers for the 2013 conference. Each year, the committee reviews hundreds of workshop proposals from the sustainable agriculture and organic community to develop a top rate program featuring the latest research, innovations in production practices, marketing tips, and other hot topics. Look for fellow CCOF members speaking at sessions, including Organic Marketing 101, Farm Bill: A Farmer's Perspective, and Organic Wine Making. Check www.eco-farm.org for details.



Consumers are often confused about labels when shopping at their farmers' market. We developed a guide that defines "certified organic" and addresses this confusion.

New Partnership with CASFS Central Coast Beginning Farmer Training Program

Training for beginning organic farmers on California's Central Coast will get a significant boost through a newly awarded USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher grant. The \$665,000 grant for "Building a Foundation for New Farmers: Training, Resources, and Networks" was announced at a press event on August 21 by U.S. Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA) and UC Santa Cruz Chancellor George Blumenthal. CCOF's Tina Cosentino joined the congressman, chancellor, and newly appointed executive director of the Center for Sustainability and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS), Daniel Press, to announce the award and celebrate CCOF's new partnership with CASFS.

The event took place at the 25-acre UCSC Farm and Garden as current farm apprentices harvested organic produce. "We are tremendously grateful for the support and trust this USDA grant represents," Press said. "With it, CASFS demonstrates how Americans can recruit and train a new generation of farmers for the 21st century. Through programs like ours, these new farmers will be more diverse – ethnically and economically

– than before. They will also learn and use some of the most sustainable and innovative agricultural practices on Earth."

"The Central Coast of California is the capital of organic agriculture," said Farr, who has championed organic agriculture for more than 25 years. The grant "recognizes the innovation in organic farming at UC Santa Cruz and the Central Coast," he noted.

For 45 years, apprentices at UCSC have learned techniques in small- and medium-size sustainable organic farming. Known as the Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture since 1975, the program has graduated more than 1,400 apprentices who have taken their training to start farms, farmers' markets, and other organic gardening training programs across the nation and globe. The grant will fund upgrading the apprenticeship training manuals, and launches a new partnership between CASFS and partner groups CCOF, Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), and the Ecological Farming Association (EFA). Over the next three years, CCOF will play a coordinating role with CASFS, CAFF, and EFA to develop a beginning farmer training program on California's Central Coast. The program will include one-on-one technical assistance by farm manager Jim Leap, and workshops, field days, and webinars focused on marketing, business planning, and production agriculture.

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This summer, CCOF chapters enjoyed potlucks and barbecues, and built the organic brand by passing out postcards at farmers' markets!

Fresno-Tulare (FT)

The Fresno-Tulare chapter held a meeting on August 14 at Organic Fresno, a restaurant that serves food made from fresh, local, and organic ingredients. Dwayne Cardoza, chapter president, led the meeting. CCOF Executive Director Cathy Calfo spoke about what to expect from the upcoming CCOF and Oregon Tilth restructuring and hosted a lively Q&A session. Members raised questions to Cathy regarding concerns with the elimination of the FT chapter RSR position, currently held by Cynthia Ortegon. The chapter acknowledged Cynthia's hard work and support during the past decade. Judith Nelson, a local activist, gave a presentation on Proposition 37, which if approved will require the labeling of genetically modified foods. CCOF Policy Director Brise Tencer spoke about the implications of the upcoming farm bill on organic farmers and the various ways people can get involved in shaping the legislation, from participating in action alerts to meeting with their congressman. At the end, the chapter held an elaborate raffle with donated products.

For more information on the farm bill and how you can get involved, contact policy@ccof.org.

Yolo (YO)

The Yolo chapter met at Dixon Ridge Farms in Winters, California, on July 8 for a barbecue. There, members saw the Lesters' new hanging drip irrigation system that has proven to be very effective in applying water evenly and efficiently in their mature 68-acre walnut orchard. Russ Lester also led a tour of Dixon Ridge Farms' walnut shell gasifier and power generation system, which has allowed the walnut processing and storage plant to become energy self-sufficient. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently honored Lester for his sustainable practices and named him this year's "Sustainable Agricultural Champion" for California, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada, and Guam, "going above and beyond walnut production and being a model for true farm sustainability."

Members also discussed the importance of conservation tillage in organic systems, and people expressed interest in equipment sharing to make it easier and more affordable. CCOF Executive Director Cathy Calfo spoke on the upcoming CCOF and Oregon Tilth restructuring and hosted a Q&A session on how the restructuring will affect the chapters. The meeting concluded with a lively barbecue picnic.

Pacific Southwest (PS)

The Pacific Southwest chapter held a potluck on June 16, hosted by Deane and Christine Foote of Foote Path Farms. They shared their great mealtime by relaxing in a pleasant atmosphere with live musicians playing in the background. A new chapter member informed the group of concerns with fluoride. Guest speaker, Phil LaRocca, inspired the group by sharing his journey with organic winemaking and encouraging the chapter to stay collectively active in the pursuit of organic integrity. "One can be heard," he said. "However, strength in membership is a force gained by gentle resolution and action for a mighty win."

Chapter President Soleil Develle took the opportunity to promote CCOF and organic at the Temecula Farmers' Market on June 30. There, he passed out CCOF's new "Why Buy Certified Organic?" postcards to CCOF farmers to educate consumers at the market.

Processor/Handler (PR)

The Processor/Handler chapter held a second webinar session focused on food safety on June 14 with Gwendolyn Wyard, the associate director of organic standards and industry outreach at the Organic Trade Association. Twenty six members attended the webinar and discussed how pending Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) standards may impact organic operations.

Please contact Joelle Mosso at JMosso@ebfarm.com if you have a topic you would like included in the PR chapter webinar series.

Let the CCOF community know what your chapter is doing!

Write to programs@ccof.org and we will publish your chapter update in the next edition.

Thank you to this issue's contributors: Joelle Mosso (PR), Darlene Eells (PS), and Dr. Sajeemas Mint (FT)



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Farm-Based Education

Making it Work for Farmers

By Kathryn Spencer, Regional Food Systems Manager for the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF)

The *oohs* and *ahhs* emanating from children never cease to amaze me, especially when all I am doing is pulling a carrot out of the ground. But for many fourth graders, the connection between the baby carrot they've eaten countless times before, scrubbed and devoid of dirt (and a lot of flavor), and the long colorful root that was just growing beneath the ground, is a revelation.

That's the type of connection that farm-based education forges. Whether it's farms hosting school groups, annual fall festivals, summer camps, or canning workshops, connecting community to the farm is a way for people to relearn where their food comes from, and a way for farmers to generate potential revenue.

Hosting visitors on your farm is not just for their benefit and education. Many different models of farm-based education exist and the ones that help farms generate revenue are often the most lasting. In Maine, one farm hosts field trips where school groups learn about the process of making maple syrup, charging each student a small fee of \$2-\$3 for the trip. Another long-time field trip destination is Gizdich Ranch in Watsonville, California, where apple orchard tours, and the delicious crunch of a freshly picked Gala, stick in children's memories 20 years later.

The first step is to decide why you want to open your farm to the community. Is it to teach kids about where their food comes from? Have CSA members become more connected to the farm? Is it to generate additional income or get your farm name out there? Understanding where you're coming from will help inform what type of farm-based education program would best fit your farm operation.

Farm-based education programs come in many different shapes and sizes. Different things work for different farms. Oftentimes, farms want to open up their fields to the community but are worried about liability, how to draw people in and entertain them, and if doing that could make money – all of this on top of running a farm business.

The Farm-Based Education Association (FBEA) is a free member network established to strengthen and support the work of educators and administrators by providing public access to their productive working farms. The FBFA was created because "we didn't want people to reinvent the wheel," says Brooke Redmond, FBFA Communications Director.

"We saw a real interest and need for a network to serve as a place to foster farm-based education programs and connect people who were trying to do this together." Nearly 1,300

Farm field trips make agricultural, environmental, and nutritional concepts come to life.

farm-based education professionals have joined the FBEA website, which serves as a virtual meeting space and database of resources and tips on how to create and run education programs on farms. FBEA programs include webinars, lunchtime conference calls, workshops, regional gatherings, and a biennial conference.

“There are unique and innovative ways people are patching this together,” notes Redmond. By charging a fee for service field trips, harvest events, and other types of activities, farms are making farm-based education work.

One such farm in Carmel, California, took a while in figuring out how to make farm-based education work for them. Jamie Collins, owner of CCOF-certified Serendipity Farms, has always loved sharing the farm and opening the doors to teach kids about farming and connecting to the community. For years, Collins would respond to inquiries about farm visits and tours from school groups and other interested parties. “For nine years, if anyone called and asked to visit, I would try to fit them in.” she says. But with a farm business to run, adding these visits in on top of everything else became too much to do for free. So Collins started charging for her visits, and things have been going pretty well.

“I recently hooked up with a regional parks summer camp that brings their campers out one time a week as part of their week-long program. They stay for an hour tour, pick a case of strawberries, and then leave.” The summer camp pays the farm for providing the site, and a wholesale price for the case of berries they pick. Jamie offers the same type of farm visit program to adults, and has linked up with an agricultural tour company that leads wine tastings and wanted to include more of an agricultural focus to the tours.

Charging for field trips and farm tours makes sense on a lot of levels. “One of the best ways to think about it,” says Redmond, “is to look at a farm-based education program as one of your farm’s business enterprises.” Treat the concept of inviting and hosting school groups, or throwing an annual harvest festival, as you would your farmers’ market enterprise or your wholesale accounts.

Farmers need to value their time and the unique experience they offer to visitors, and figure out a price structure that works for them. “There are a myriad of ways you can do this,” says Redmond. “There are programs set up for youth empowerment, or utilize the resources of entities like retirement homes and boys and girl clubs that already have some administrative elements. We suggest partnering with others on programming in order to not reinvent the wheel or duplicate unneeded administrative activities.” When farm-based education

programming is counted as “added value” in the farm budget, like cheese or salsa production, it’s easier to see if the program is working financially for the farm.

Another way to hone in on creating a farm-based education program is to think of how your program could help meet the needs of your community.

Finding your Audience

Who are you trying to bring onto the farm and why? There are different considerations for different types of programs.

Adults like good food and wine so think of farm dinners co-hosted by local chefs featuring produce from your fields, and the ability to purchase some of your farm’s offerings onsite. With the growing movement of backyard gardens and “mini farms,” community members are also interested in learning from farmers about agriculture and food production through onsite workshops.

Families look for fun experiences that everyone can participate in, but are also flexible and self-guided in case a tantrum ensues and they need to leave early. Think U-picks, self-guided walking tours, larger community events, and festivals.

Young children and toddlers are also a potential clientele to cater to, as moms clubs need places for fun educational outings. This age group will have a ball wandering through the fields, checking out farm animals, and sampling fresh, organic produce.

School groups are typically larger and come with their own chaperones. Farm staff will need to break groups down into manageable numbers by creating a longer field trip schedule that includes multiple stations. Think of a busload of kids, a couple of chaperones, and 3-4 hours of activities, including eating lunch at the farm.

Summer camps, afterschool clubs, and scout troops can stay for longer periods, enabling them to really understand a working farm and engage in meaningful service work. Repeat visitors need much more planning and supervision, so plan accordingly. Again, stations with rotating activities, and/or some type of farm work or longer-term service project they could help with, make for a rewarding trip to your farm.

College students and their professors are often interested in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems. Some farms develop relationships with neighboring universities, and students come out year after year to learn and complete needed service projects on the farm.



Left: Fourth grade students help plant tomatoes on a field trip to Coke Farm in San Juan Bautista, California; right: Students from Monterey Bay Aquarium help pull weeds at Serendipity Farms in Carmel, California

Basic Program Setup & Site Selection

You don't need much more than a working farm and a desire to connect to your community to start a farm-based education program, but there are a few other considerations to getting your program off on the right foot.

Bathrooms are a must, as well as a place for people to wash hands (especially after petting goats and before sampling a farm-fresh treat); port-a-potties work just fine. Having adequate parking for community events or tours, or a place for a school bus to safely turn around, are things to think through as you select the audience you want to engage on your farm.

What your farm offers to community groups could be different, but the basics are the same. Here's what you need to get started:

- A working farm
- A passion and interest in connecting with your community
- Bathrooms (port-a-potties are fine) and hand washing area
- Sufficient parking or space for bus turnaround
- An understanding of your liabilities

Reminding school groups (and sometimes adults) of a few simple rules while on the farm can help avoid potential issues. It is also smart to conduct a simple "hazards" sweep of the area of the farm where people will be visiting. Places that look potentially dangerous, uncovered stream crossings, old tractors, or other pieces of equipment may be irresistible to climb on; identify those spots and either cordon them off or direct people away from those areas.

Speaking of hazards. ...

Liability

Liability and insurance is the thing no one really wants to talk about but can put the brakes on a blossoming farm-based education program. There are a number of ways to limit the potential liability of hosting community members on the farm. For instance, one farm-based education program run by Live Earth Farm in Watsonville, California, created a waiver of liability form people fill out every time there is a field day. An example can be found on the California group page of the FBEA website.

Product liability insurance is different from general liability insurance, which covers you if someone were injured during a U-pick or larger community event on your property. A school district's liability insurance usually covers students and school groups when they go out on field trips, but occasionally either the farm will need to add the school district onto their policy, or the district will need to add the farm location to theirs, ensuring that liability is covered for both parties (i.e. being added as "additional insured"). Asking questions and thinking this through before groups visit the farm is better than dealing with an incident after the fact.

The Farm as a Classroom

What do you do with 65 fourth graders on the farm? Or twelve Girl Scouts itching to earn a merit badge? The farm is a living, breathing classroom, where hands-on experiences can translate to environmental science, language arts, nutrition, math, art, and many other subjects. Depending on your audience, pulling together lessons and activities to engage them isn't as daunting as it seems. There are a number of resources for folks interested in farm-based education. Check out the forum on the FBEA website (www.farmbasededucation.org) or the education resources.

Connecting community to the farm is a way for people to relearn where their food comes from.

Regardless of the activity, thinking ahead and planning for your group will help their trip to the farm be a success. The motto “divide and conquer” applies to large school groups: imagine 65 fourth graders trying to make a six-plant burrito at the same time! Breaking students into groups of no more than 10-15 each helps larger school groups stay focused and keeps activity leaders from feeling overwhelmed. Another trick with groups of any size is using self-guided farm tours or scavenger hunts as a way to have one group be more self-sufficient while another group is engaged in a more hands-on, supervised activity. Preparing a scavenger hunt or self-guided tour can be a little work up front, but saves a lot of time in the end and lets folks explore the farm on their own.

Farm field trips are great experiences that make agricultural, environmental, and nutritional concepts come to life, but keep in mind the importance of meeting the educational requirements of visiting school groups. Each grade level has different curriculum goals that teachers are required to meet so it is important to make farm visits as relevant to other classroom topics as possible to ensure participation, interest, and application of the teacher’s lesson plans. You can investigate the curriculum standards for each grade level published by the state department of education, or you can enlist the help of a friendly teacher who’s familiar with these standards.

Farm visits can easily meet curriculum requirements based on the following concepts:

Science and Math

Food webs, life cycles, habitat, soil exploration, watershed health concepts, photosynthesis, data collection, measuring, problem solving, counting, etc.

Language Arts and English Language Development

Scavenger hunts, letters to farmers, vocabulary development

Nutrition and Health

Farm-fresh snacks, label reading, physical activity

Partnering with nonprofit groups and others who actively promote food systems education is also a way to test out if farm-based education is the right fit for your farm. The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) has been advocating for sustainable agriculture and California family farmers since 1978. CAFF has also brought school groups on engaging field trips out to its members’ farms for over 10 years. CAFF has been moving to disseminate knowledge and know-how of farm-based education to family farmers in California so farmers can connect with their communities and generate revenue. The California Network of Farm-Based Educators has a page on the FBFA website with more information, and links readers to other farm-based education programs.

Whether your farm is in California, Maine, or Georgia, there are resources available to help you educate people from your community who are interested in visiting and connecting to your farm. Check out FBFA and CAFF (www.caff.org) for more information and resources to help you create a farm-based education program that works for you.

Education Resources

A lot of school garden curriculum is adaptable to the farm experience. Here are some great places to start looking:

- *The Growing Classroom: Garden-Based Science* by Roberta Jaffe and Gary Appel
- *Project Seasons: Hands-On Activities for Discovering the Wonders of the World* by Deborah Parrella
- California School Garden Network: www.csgn.org
- Cornell Garden-Based Learning: www.gardening.cornell.edu

Fourth grade students eating lunch in the orchard at Coke Farm in San Juan Bautista, California



Organic Hops in Demand

Organic growers can *hop* to it!

Written by Laura McKissack

As the organic industry has grown, the beer sector has joined in. Small beer crafters have sprung up all over the nation, not just on the homebrew-crazed West Coast. While organic could be seen as a small drop in the overall beer bucket, it is a fast-growing niche fueled by organic advocates and ale enthusiasts alike. According to the *OTA 2012 Organic Industry Survey*, the category grew 15.8% in 2011 to reach \$53 million in sales, up \$7 million from 2010.

Even CCOF has observed the trend in organic beer making as we continue to certify more hops, homebrew kits, and over 73 types of beer. From 2009 to 2011, CCOF-certified organic beer products increased 45%, totaling 133 products from 23 certified producers. For many beer lovers, these are exciting statistics. However, organic brewers now face a new challenge: finding a consistent supply of organic hops. In June of this year, the National Organic Program made the decision to sunset non-organic hops from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances. Effective January 1, 2013, all organic beer must be produced with organic hops. While this decision heightens the organic integrity for beer making, it also puts brewers in a difficult position as they scramble to secure hops in an already narrow supply chain.



As organic brewers continue to seek supply, organic growers can get in on the action.

Finding reliable, quality, organic hops seems next to impossible for many brewers, small and large. According to CCOF-certified brewer Alec Stefansky of Santa Cruz, California-based Uncommon Brewers, "It's going to be a major issue for breweries that don't already have long-term contracts." Not only does the producer need to find long-term contracts but they also need hops in the quantities required to meet the demand for their product.

"In terms of weight, the hops are a very small part of the finished product. In a lightly-hopped beer there may be as little as 0.75 pounds per BBL (31 gallons) of finished beer. That is likely to rise up to 2-3 pounds or more per BBL in a big West Coast IPA," says Stefansky.

Despite the small percentage of overall product, there is still a significant cost and effort associated with organic hops. A small operation might only need 1,500 pounds of hops per varietal for a year of production, but a large portion of hops are sold on the cash market, so price varies wildly. Non-organic hops can price as low as \$3 per pound; organic hops sell for at least triple the price, starting at \$9 and ballooning to an average of \$15 per pound. The price is also determined by varietal with high-alpha hops in high demand.

Smaller producers are able to shift recipes based on price and availability of organic hops, but larger brands will have to pay the premium to keep their products on shelves. In addition, local availability will continue to affect prices. A large supply has not been consistently available in the United States so many producers are forced to import, increasing the cost of their overall product.

So what can be done? Should we all give up our favorite organic brews? Organic producers have proven many times over that industry challenges can present new opportunities. As organic brewers continue to seek supply for their ingredients, organic growers can get in on the action. CCOF currently certifies 10 hops operations, growing 44 acres of organic hops, but the requirement going into effect in January will create even more need for growers to adopt this crop into production. Producers are looking for organic hops in popular and more obscure varieties. According to *The New Brewer*, there are an estimated 75 hop varieties worldwide, with 77% of all U.S. hops grown in Washington and 16% in Oregon. Many hop varieties can be grown in a number of states, with a large production center in the Pacific Northwest. Certain varieties require hotter climates or particular soil types.

While there may be an initial investment in researching varieties and determining what is appropriate for your area, the payoff can be great. The organic beer industry will only continue to grow but needs the help of organic growers. If you already grow hops, consider adding additional varieties. If you don't, check out the list below to see which variety might be right for you.

Hop Varieties to Consider

Keep in mind that some varieties are proprietary and you must first obtain a license to grow them.

AMARILLO	MOTUEKA
CASCADE	NORTHERN BREWER
CENTENNIAL	NUGGET
CHINOOK	PALISADE
CITRA	PERLE
CLUSTER	SAAZ
COLUMBUS	SAPHIR
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Former CCOF President Brian Leahy Appointed to DPR

Brian Leahy spent many years as an organic farmer in California and Nebraska, and several as the president of CCOF. He was sworn in as Director of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) in February 2012. We recently spoke with Leahy about his experience and perspectives.

Zea Sonnabend: How do you feel your background in organic farming prepared you for this position?

Brian Leahy: Farming gave me a profound respect for the culture of agriculture. Understanding the complexities of farming has given me great respect for the whole food chain: farmers, farmworkers, marketers, and consumers. I learned to farm with Richard Harter, a great lover of wildlife and natural systems. Richard's neighbors, the Lundbergs, guided them to the wildlife-friendly approach that could have been considered organic under California organic law in the early 1980s.

To be honest, I got into agriculture because I wanted to help change our relationship with chemistry and organic agriculture seemed to be a great path to helping that change come about. Change is difficult but I have seen incredible change in how we regulate pesticides in California in my lifetime. In the 30-year time period since I started farming there has been a cultural change on the farm on how pesticides are viewed. There has been great progress in increasing the safety of pesticide use to protect human health and the environment.

Organic farming has given me a benchmark to see if we can make overall pesticide regulation better. Many of the staff at DPR have been there for 30 or more years, have seen the improvements, and can be proud of them.



What functions of DPR might be of interest to organic producers and consumers?

California has the most comprehensive state pesticide regulatory program in the United States. We regulate the sale and use of pesticides, including sulfur, oils, biopesticides, and other pesticides registered for use on organic crops. Our registration process includes scientific evaluation of a pesticide's safety and efficacy to ensure it can be used safely without harming people and the environment. Pesticides registered for organic crops go through the same process. DPR conducts extensive monitoring to inform compliance efforts with clean air and water laws. The continuous evaluation of pesticide movement off-site helps determine potential risks to human health and the environment, while preserving endangered species and protecting workers in the field.

Sulfur, which is allowed in organic systems, is one of the most highly used pesticides in both pounds applied and acres treated in California. DPR works with ag commissioners, pest control



“We encourage Integrated Pest Management (or IPM), pest prevention, use of pesticides as a last resort, and using pesticides that are less toxic to people and the environment.”

advisors, and farmworker groups to run educational programs on worker safety for sulfur and other materials. We have a staff member who goes around to farmers’ markets to reach out to smaller growers on worker safety issues.

Our mission includes fostering reduced-risk pest management through research, grants, and recognition. We encourage Integrated Pest Management (or IPM), a strategy that emphasizes natural control, pest prevention, use of pesticides as a last resort, and using pesticides that are less toxic to people and the environment. We give Pest Management Alliance Grants to people and groups to reduce pesticide use and pollution in agriculture and urban environments. We also present IPM Innovator Awards to those who have reduced pesticide use, and share their results with others. These have included organic farmers, such as Russell Lester of Dixon Ridge Farm, in the past.

Are there ways that you and your agency can help organic farmers?

Most organic farmers do use some pesticides and so DPR is charged with making sure they are safe and safely used.

There are four ways that this responsibility benefits organic farmers:

1. **Assuring consumer confidence through residue testing of pesticides in food.** The department spends millions of dollars to support a residue monitoring program. They detect more than 200 pesticides and breakdown products. Testing is performed on produce from retail and wholesale outlets.

2. **Reducing pesticide off-site movement through mitigation requirements and regulations.** The department works to develop ways to reduce the movement of pesticides from field to communities and sensitive sites like schools.
3. **Developing regulations that meet air quality requirements, while preserving allowance for pesticides used by organic farmers that may have volatile ingredients, or VOCs, which may affect air quality.** Some of the so-called “inert” ingredients in organically approved products may contain VOCs and pose an air quality concern. DPR has been able to reduce the amount of VOCs in the air to meet legal requirements.
4. **Ensuring pesticides that are low priority for U.S. EPA and pesticide manufacturers are available for use on specialty crops.** California produces more than 50 percent of the nation’s specialty crops. Many pesticide manufacturers do not bother with the many tests that are required for label registration for each crop species if that crop is not widely grown. Therefore, DPR helps some of these products gain expanded label use for the more minor specialty crops by streamlining the registration process.

Any last thoughts?

This job is challenging but yet enjoyable to see progress being made. The DPR will continue to help move the pesticide industry forward to a safer future. Organic has helped lead the way for the rest of agriculture.



Biodegradable Mulch Film: In the Organic Future?

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) has been asked to review a petition for biodegradable mulch film made from bioplastics. Although products with claims of biodegradability have been on the market for more than 10 years, only this year has the Biodegradable Products Institute been able to submit a petition that fully discloses how these materials are made and how much they biodegrade in soil. This material is on the agenda for the fall NOSB meeting, taking place October 15-19.

Biodegradable mulch products have the potential to be a useful alternative to all of the non-degradable plastic that is in use in organic farming. CCOF currently certifies 2,708 acres of organic strawberries, and information from the California Strawberry Commission indicates that there is about 8,000 linear feet per acre of plastic mulch being used on strawberries. Therefore, CCOF strawberry growers alone use 21,664,000 linear feet of plastic mulch that is removed at the end of each growing season and ends up in landfills! This truly is one area where organic practice is not very sustainable. The petition states a 1999 estimate that 30 million acres of agricultural land worldwide were covered in plastic mulch.

Green chemistry has evolved to the point now where some mulch films truly degrade in soil, becoming carbon dioxide and water. Standards have been established for aerobic biodegradation in soil by several entities, the most common being ASTM D6400 or D6868, ISO 17556, and EN 13432. By these standards, full biodegradation is proven when the percentage of biodegradation is at least 90% of the maximum degradation of a suitable reference substance, such as microcrystalline cellulose, within a six-month time span.

Four forms of biodegradable mulch film meet the standards above as of the date of the 2012 petition. One is made primarily

from cornstarch, with some polymers created from vegetable or petroleum oils. Another kind contains polylactic acid (PLA), in which plant-derived starches and sugars convert to lactic acid by bacteria. Polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHA) are derived from bacterial fermentation of lipids, or can be made with chemical synthesis or through the use of transgenic plant cells and microbe species. The fourth type is made from aliphatic-aromatic copolymers (AAC), which are synthetically produced.

In addition to the basic polymer components, the products contain plasticizing agents such as glycerin or erucic acid derived from mustard seed oil and dyes, such as carbon black or titanium dioxide, to make the mulch either black or white respectively. These substances are either non-synthetic or break down fully in the soil to carbon and oxygen.

One important consideration for the future use of these products is to make sure that they do fully biodegrade in soil. Most of the testing to meet the biodegradability standards above was conducted in conditions similar to composting, providing ample heat, microbial action, water, and air to achieve conditions optimal for breakdown of the polymers. It will be important for growers to mimic these conditions in the field to achieve full biodegradation. Actions such as tillage, providing sufficient moisture and organic matter in soil will help breakdown and contribute to overall soil health by providing food for beneficial microorganisms. Field testing of biodegradation in different climates and soils has started in the last few years, and researchers are starting to provide information indicating that the materials break down better in moist, biologically active soils than in dry, poor soils.

For more information visit www.ams.usda.gov.



A Conversation with Chris Hay of Say Hay Farms

Most people think of mobile homes as a place to live, but not Chris Hay. He uses them for pest management on his eight-acre farm in Woodland, California, where he harvests a variety of fruits, vegetables, and chickens.

For the last two years, Chris has been running what he calls “an integrated farm,” in which each aspect of the land and its inhabitants is cultivated for multiple uses to maximize conservation and functionality. The mobile homes, for instance, carry around his hens, which he uses to feed on insects in his fields. This symbiotic relationship enriches the hens’ diet while providing excellent pest management for the crops.

Chris has much to say about his unique farming practices: “I integrate animal and vegetable culture on the same land, rotating them in a mutually beneficial manner.”

“Conventional farming is extremely heavy on inputs and incorporates a very top down approach. What I’m trying to do is an old-school style of truck farming, by bringing animals and vegetables together and building flavor from the ground up.”

In addition to maximizing the utility of his hens, Chris applies the same careful stewardship to his land and water use. In 2011, he entered into a three year Environmental Qualities Incentive Program (EQIP) with the Natural Resource Conservation

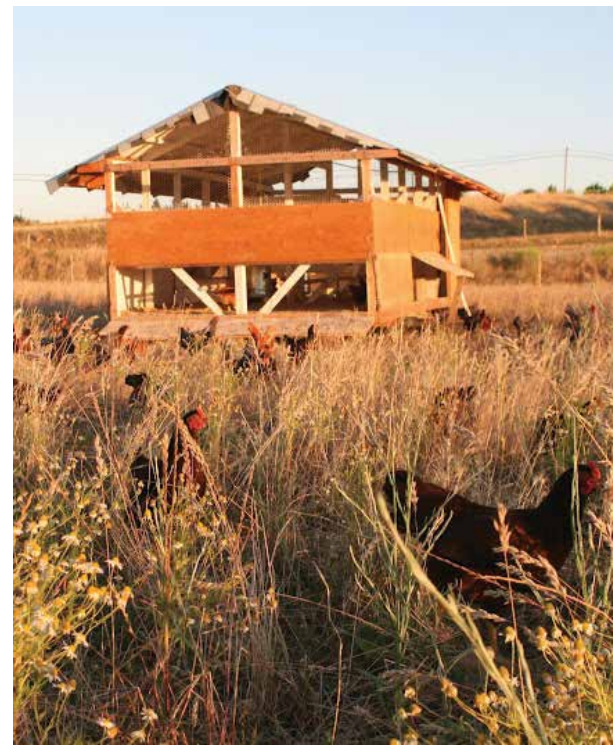
Service, calling on their assistance for irrigation management, hedgerow installation, and mulching work.

“The application process was pretty straightforward,” he notes. “Since it is a government program, there is a fair amount of rigidity in the practices they are able to support, but the local reps were very helpful in explaining and navigating the application for funding of these programs.”

Due to technical and financial assistance from EQIP, Chris installed irrometers to measure soil moisture at different depths, thereby helping him to monitor irrigation and conserve significant amounts of water. “In my case, the irrometers had the biggest impact on crop yield and quality, which in turn affect profitability.”

“They enabled me to gain a better picture of our soil profile and make more appropriately timed irrigations in terms of frequency and volume.” Regarding his experience with EQIP, he declares that “their irrigation management was really helpful!”

Innovation at Say Hay Farms extends beyond chicken mobile homes and careful water monitoring. For last year’s season, Chris planted a sunflower hedgerow that shades the adjacent bell pepper crop, attracts birds to feed on pests in the field, and produces copious seeds that add to the hens’ nutritious



“What I’m trying to do is an old-school style of truck farming, by bringing animals and vegetables together and building flavor from the ground up.”

diet. Together with NRCS, Chris has created a plan to rotate hedgerows and increase biodiversity on his farm. “The technical assistance with the hedgerow was quite extensive. They provided a detailed plan of which species in what intervals I should use. They also helped me source an affordable, local vendor.”

Chris also participates in the National Organic Certification Cost Share program, receiving a full reimbursement. The Cost Share program is designed for small operations like Say Hay Farms, where it can provide the most benefit to organic farmers burdened by certification costs. Chris describes the application process as “pretty easy,” and notes that “it’s a very valuable service.”

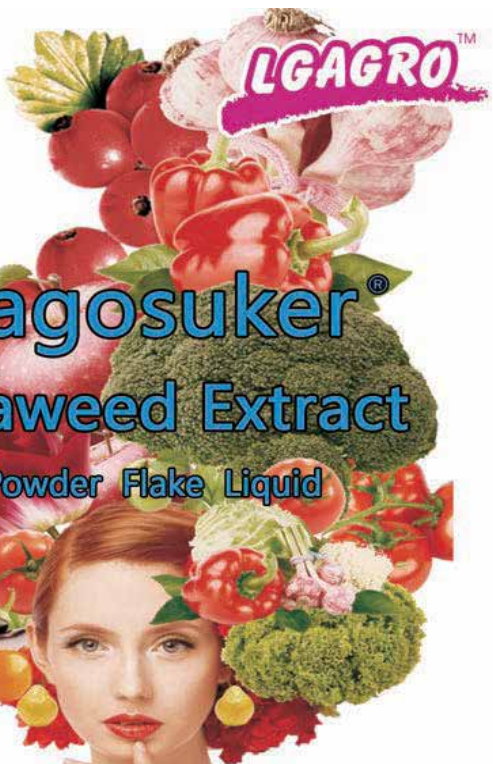
As a farmer, Chris is clearly unique in many respects. He’s young, having graduated college six years ago with a B.A. in philosophy from UC Berkeley. Such a phenomenon contradicts the growing national trend of young people deciding not to become farmers. On April 4, the *Huffington Post* published an article entitled “Average U.S. Farmer’s Age Rising, Young People Needed in Agriculture,” in which the author quotes USDA Secretary Kathleen Merrigan’s interpretation of the situation: “There is a challenge here, a challenge that has a corresponding opportunity.”

Chris seems to be of the same mind. The daily grit of farming does not faze him in the least: “We’ve had some challenges so far, but we’re doing well and I enjoy the challenge of it.”

Say Hay Farm is currently in the process of expanding from eight acres to 20, the result of Chris’ efforts paying off. In his words, “We are increasing production to meet the demand for our type of farming and our products. ... Given that we produce 50 different varieties of vegetables and melons, grains, oranges, eggs, and soon, meat, the additional ground is a welcome relief.”

However, in this expansion, Chris does not see any significant changes in his farming practices. He remains committed to the quality of his water, his land, and his animals. Rather than simply surviving from harvest to harvest, he seeks to improve his work with each new obstacle, remaining committed to conservation principles: “If I reach my goals, our land, vegetables, and animals are in better health than the previous year with each passing season.”

“Conservation is the baseline. We as farmers are charged with stewarding resources and producing from them while not diminishing the capacity of future generations to do the same.”



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Election Year Offers Opportunity for Organic PAC

A milestone year, 2012 marks the first general election since the establishment of the Organic Trade Association's (OTA) Organic Political Action Committee (Organic PAC); it is also an important time on the national agricultural policy front as Congress wrestles with reaching a possible farm bill to cover U.S. food and farm policy for the next five years.

In October 2010, OTA's board of directors authorized the establishment of Organic PAC as part of its commitment to increasing the effectiveness of its U.S. government relations program. Since then, Organic PAC has evolved into a vehicle for OTA and its members, including CCOF, to support candidates for Congress who are aligned with the goals of the organic business community, and provide financial assistance to candidates and incumbents who understand and support issues that affect organic agriculture and trade.

This assistance is more important than ever as the outcome of the 2012 general election could change the political landscape not only in the administration, but also in Congress. In fact, all House of Representatives seats are up for election this November, as well as one-third of Senate seats.

Supporting this Effort

Organic PAC is supported by voluntary, personal contributions from owners and executives of OTA member companies who recognize the importance of the organic industry's voice on Capitol Hill. The PAC operates in a bipartisan manner, helping to develop relationships on both sides of the political aisle.

Organic PAC's current two-year cycle fundraising goal is \$50,500. As of early August, it had received \$31,710 toward this goal. At this critical juncture on the policy front, it is

important for OTA members interested in furthering this work to help meet these goals prior to this election.

So far, Organic PAC has dispersed \$19,000 to various political candidates who support provisions that OTA has identified as important to the future of organic. Dispersals have included funds to 12 senators and representatives who support organic.

By pooling and targeting funds from individuals affiliated with OTA's member companies, Organic PAC makes small political donations go further. However, in order to raise funds for Organic PAC, OTA first must obtain the prior approval of its member companies to solicit their executive personnel and/or stockholders. Authorizing prior approval for Organic PAC to solicit contributions does not obligate anyone at these companies to make a contribution.

Oversight

Organic PAC is overseen by a committee that sets and meets contribution goals, and authorizes contributions to candidates. The current committee consists of Laura Batcha, chair (OTA Executive Vice President); Kelly Shea, co-chair (Vice President of Government & Industry Relations, WhiteWave Foods); David Gagnon (OTA Chief Operating Officer); Christine Bushway (OTA Executive Director and CEO); Samantha Cabaluna (Director of Communication, Earthbound Farm); Tom Harding (President, Agrisystems International); Melissa Hughes (General Counsel, Organic Valley); and Cathy Calfo (Executive Director, CCOF, Inc.).

There are now openings for two additional seats on the committee. Representation from each region of the country is the foundation of the PAC committee. As a result, the two seats now open are targeted to individuals who are based in the northwest and southeast regions of the United States. Persons interested in being considered for these seats are encouraged to contact Laura Batcha at lbatcha@ota.com.

To become more involved, contact current Organic PAC committee members.

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Renewals may be submitted by mail or online by visiting www.ccof.org/renewal.php. All bills may be paid online through the website.

Please complete your renewal in a timely manner. Help us serve you and other operations efficiently, and avoid unnecessary costs by completing your contract and submitting payment by the due date. Completing your renewal on time allows us to ensure timely inspections and group inspections so they are as cost effective as possible.

If you need to set up a payment plan, please contact CCOF's accounting department at accounting@ccof.org. We are happy to work with you.

Renewal Timeline:

November 2012 - Renewals sent by email and followed up by mail.

January 1, 2013 - All renewals and annual payments are due.

February 15, 2013 - A Notice of Noncompliance and a **\$75 late fee will be issued** to all operations that have failed to complete the renewal process. This is also the last day to

withdraw from certification without accruing certification fees in 2013.

March 15, 2013 - A Notice of Proposed Suspension and an **additional \$75 late fee will be issued** to all operations that have failed to complete the renewal process.

April 15, 2013 - All operations that have failed to complete the renewal process will have their certification suspended. If your certification is suspended and you wish to be certified organic in the future, your certification must be reinstated by the NOP after a costly and lengthy process.

FAQ: What if I pay my bill but don't complete the renewal contract or vice versa?

Many operations assume that if they pay their fees they are not required to complete the contract. This is not true. Organic regulations require that all operations complete a Continuation of Certification contract, so failure to complete it will result in suspension of certification. Operations that only pay their fees or only complete their contract will force us to issue a Notice of Noncompliance.

Drought Relief for Organic Ruminant Livestock Producers

Drought conditions across the United States have had serious impacts on organic livestock producers, both in terms of the ability to graze on pasture and find organic feed supplies. The National Organic Program has announced a temporary variance for grazing requirements that will hopefully bring some relief to farmers across the country. Rather than having to provide 30% Dry Matter Intake (DMI) from grazing as an average over the grazing season, the temporary variance allows for 15% DMI from pasture.

This temporary variance applies to producers who graze on non-irrigated pasture in any county that has been declared a primary natural disaster area for 2012.

List of counties: www.usda.gov/documents/all-secretarial-designations-2012.pdf

Map of counties: www.usda.gov/documents/usda-drought-fast-track-designations-081512.pdf

This temporary variance is **ONLY** applicable to operations in one of the affected counties, and applies only to pasture that is grazed upon. The requirement to purchase organic feed remains unchanged.

Updates to National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances

Earlier this year, the National Organic Program published a final rule renewing over 200 listings on the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances that were scheduled to expire this year. The rule also made changes to the substances listed below. CCOF has contacted affected clients directly; however, if you use any of the materials listed below and have additional questions, please contact us.

Crop Production Materials (National List section 205.601)

Chlorine Materials - Effective June 27, 2012: For preharvest use, residual chlorine levels in the water in direct crop contact, or as water from cleaning irrigation systems applied to soil must not exceed the maximum residual disinfectant limit under the Safe Drinking Water Act (4ppm). Chlorine products may be used in edible sprout production according to EPA label directions.

Lignin Sulfonate - Effective June 27, 2012: Duplicate listing removed. Remains approved as both a soil amendment (chelating, dust suppressant) and as a postharvest floating agent.

Streptomycin & Tetracycline - Effective June 27 and August 3, 2012, respectively: Allowance to control infections in organic apple and pear orchards has been extended until October 21, 2014.

Sulfur Dioxide - Effective October 21, 2012: Sulfur dioxide (smoke bombs) will no longer be allowed for rodent control in organic crop production. The only synthetic rodenticide allowed after October 21, 2012, is vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol).

Livestock Production Materials (National List section 205.603)

Formic Acid - Effective August 3, 2012: Apiculture operations may use formic acid as a pesticide solely within honeybee hives.

Processor/Handler Materials (National List sections 205.605, 205.606)

Lecithin - Effective March 15, 2012: You must use organic lecithin in your organic products. Non-organic lecithin may be used if organic lecithin is not commercially available.

Colors - Effective June 27, 2012: You must use organic colors in your organic products. Non-organic colors produced without synthetic solvents and carrier systems, and without any artificial preservatives, may be used if organic colors are not commercially available.

Pectin - Effective June 27, 2012: You must use organic pectin in your organic products. Non-amidated, non-organic pectin may be used if organic pectin is not commercially available.

Yeast - Effective October 21, 2012: You must use organic yeast in your organic products. Non-organic yeast may be used if organic yeast is not commercially available. (This listing does NOT require the use of organic yeast for livestock feed.)

Attapulgate - Effective August 3, 2012: You may use nonsynthetic attapulgate as a processing aid for purification of plant and animal oils.

Hops - Beginning January 1, 2013: You must use organic hops in your organic products. After January 1, 2013, you may not use non-organic hops in any organic product, such as beer.

Flip to page 22 to read our feature on organic hops

Update on Allowance of Sodium Nitrate for Crop Production

Sodium (Chilean) nitrate is currently allowed for use only so long as it is not more than 20% of the crops total nitrogen needs. This material is scheduled to sunset (come off) the list of prohibited natural materials in October. The National Organic Standards Board has recommended that it be relisted as completely prohibited; however, proposed rulemaking has not yet occurred, meaning that final rulemaking will not be achieved before the October deadline. The material will then come off the list and will be allowed without a specific restriction on quantity. The NOP published Notice 12-1 on September 11, 2012, to explain how operations using sodium nitrate should proceed. While sodium nitrate will be allowed in organic crop production after October 21, 2012, the NOP has reminded operations that they must still comply with the requirements to maintain or improve the natural resources of the operation (NOP 205.200) and comply with crop and nutrient and soil fertility requirements (NOP 205.203). If you plan to use sodium nitrate after October 21, 2012, in amounts greater than 20% of the crops total nitrogen needs, you will need to update your Organic System Plan to describe how you meet the other soil and nutrient requirements of the NOP. Please contact the CCOF Grower Department if you have questions.

Requirements for Wine Destined for the European Union

2012 has been a year of change for the export regulations between the U.S. and the EU for organic products. In 2012, the EU and U.S. signed an equivalency agreement for organic products; however, because the EU did not have standards for organic wine while equivalency negotiations were taking place, this equivalency agreement does not cover wine. In July of 2012, the EU implemented organic winemaking standards that must be met for any wine to be sold as organic in the EU. These standards are different from the U.S. standards as the EU prohibits several winemaking practices that are allowed in the U.S., and allows several winemaking materials that are prohibited in the U.S. Additionally, labeling requirements are different. Wines produced from the 2012 harvest will be required to meet this new EU standard if they are to be sold in EU member states, in addition to meeting NOP wine production regulations.

If you are shipping organic wine to the EU (including wine labeled as "Made with Organic Grapes"), or producing or labeling organic wine that is shipped by anyone else to the EU (including wine labeled as "Made with Organic Grapes"), these changes may affect the way you process grapes from the 2012 harvest. Please contact Sarah Reed, CCOF Handler Certification Supervisor (sarah@ccof.org, (831) 423-2263, ext. 14), with any questions you may have.

Less Paperwork for Alcohol Beverage Producers!

On June 12, 2012, the TTB announced that a copy of the organic certificate is no longer required to accompany any Certificate of Label Approval (COLA) application for alcohol beverages labeled as "100% Organic," "Organic," and "Made with Organic (specific ingredients)." You are now only required to submit a copy of the approved label with the "CCOF approved" stamp, along with your COLA application. Remember that CCOF must approve all new labels and formulas for your products, including all vintage changes.

If your product only identifies organic contents in an ingredient statement, you are still required to submit organic certificates for each ingredient identified as organic. You can view the TTB announcement at www.ttb.gov/pdf/organic-documentation-requirements.pdf.



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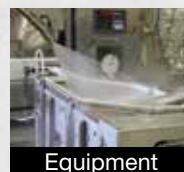
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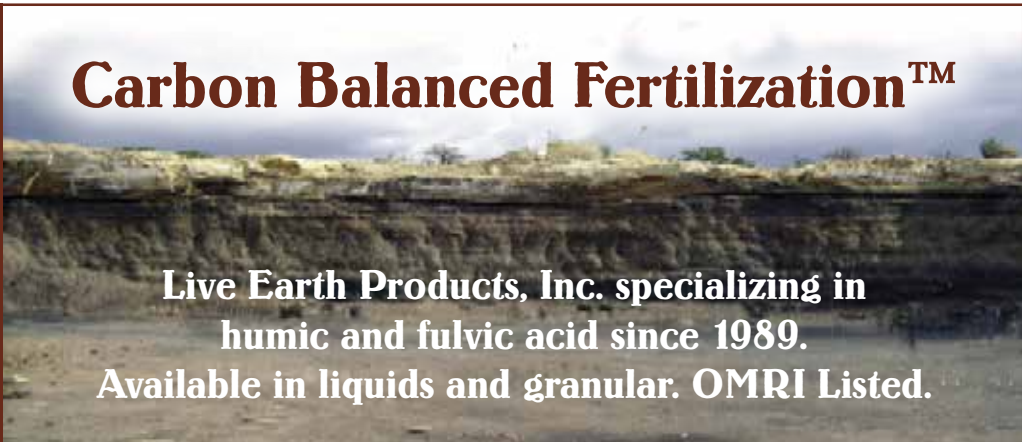
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Bo Thorenfeldt dba Burns Lost Springs Ranch, LLC

Bo Thorenfeldt
Hillsborough, CA
bothorenfeldt@gmail.com
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Gary S. Marshall
Hines, OR
brokencirclecompany@gmail.com
Cattle (Slaughter), Rangeland
www.brokencirclecompany.com
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qa@calpackfoods.com
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carpandcarp@mchsi.com
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tmiller@cascadeinternationalfoods.com
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Jerry Harris
Castle Valley, UT
jharris4@frontiernet.net
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Susan.Abernathy@comcast.net
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Edward Conwell
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dogwoodfarmer@gmail.com
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stephen.nagel@yahoo.com
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downlowco@live.com
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info@freewheelinfarm.com
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troduner@yahoo.com
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chris.romero1977@yahoo.com
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jedseremia@gmail.com
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Barley, Strawberries
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Sergio Salgado Vidal
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Gustine, CA
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Vegetable Transplants
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torimichaelides@rocketmail.com
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Yseisha Organics, LLC

Monique Eau
Phoenix, AZ
monique.eau@gmail.com
Personal Care
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Supporting Members

Contributing Businesses

Certified Kitchens

Marie Banis
PO Box 5542
Walnut Creek, CA
marie@visitcertifiedkitchens.com

Promoting Businesses

WeDoOrganic.com

Susan Neville
2825 NW Pinecone Drive
Issaquah, WA
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www.wedoorganic.com

Collaborating Individuals

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35 acre certified organic turn-key farming operation in the West Valley of Phoenix, Arizona. Looking for someone with organic farming experience for partnership. Seasonal sales over \$500K in local market. All equipment needed for operation in excellent condition on site: 10 tractors; 8,000 sq ft of cooler space; 4,000 sq ft of dry storage; 2,500 sq ft processing room with salad processing line; 800 sq ft processing room for other vegetable processing; fields can be sprinkler or drip, all irrigation equipment is on site; 2 refrigerator trucks for delivery, dock/loading facility. Fields are sub soiled, leveled, and ready for fall planting. Transplants started in greenhouse and will be ready for planting September 1, 2012. 500 additional acres in Yuma County available if desired. Well known brand which has been around for 16 years, seeking working partner. Lease or purchase also considered. Please contact David at purplekarat@gmail.com.

4+ Organic Acres for Lease in La Selva Beach

For lease is a 4+ acre, flat, organic farm with decent water located in La Selva Beach, California. Land owner is looking to lease to a CCOF farmer. Available immediately for \$5,000 per year. For more information, contact mlansdale@dryturf.com.

For Sale

Dairy Goat Kids for Sale

Two purebred Oberhasli doelings are for sale for \$300 each. The parents are ADGA registered and CAE negative. Also for sale are triplet Ober/Nubien crosses; two doelings for \$200 each and one male for \$100. All kids have been hand bottle raised on their mothers' milk. All kids are very people, dog, cat, and chicken friendly. The females will be great milkers and the male can be used as a stud, pet, weed eater, or trained to be a pack goat. For more information call **(831) 464-8543** or email everettfamilyfarm@gmail.com.

LP Gas New Holland Tractor

Hard to find, tractor model S45D, low carbon LP gas powered 66hp 3 cylinder Ford engine, 50 hp PTO, two wheel drive, 8 speed shuttle transmission, three point hitch, cab with heat & AC, 4700 hours, year 2001. LP gas burns cleaner than diesel, leaving a smaller carbon footprint; LP gas engines can be operated indoors as well. Note: we can also change over to CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) for even lower carbon emissions at an additional charge. Price with LPG is \$12,900. For more information, call **(616) 866-6360** or email garyr@westequipco.com.

High Quality Vermicompost for Sale

This living soil amendment is produced by preparing manure based, aerobic compost for transformational digestion by earthworms. Our product is weed and pathogen free, rich in available plant nutrients and humic acids, and OMRI approved. Packed in one or two cubic yard totes. Truckload quantities are available. FOB Salinas, California. Please call **(858) 997-0711** to inquire about price and ordering. Learn more at www.VerimiVision.net.

Crops for Sale

Beardless Wheat Rye Hay

Over 100 tons of beardless wheat rye hay baled. For more information contact Brorganics@msn.com.

Classified Submissions

Reach the organic community today! Post your own classified ad at www.ccof.org/classifieds.php.

November 9-11, Port Townsend, WA

Tilth Producers of Washington Annual Conference

Over 600 growers, researchers, students, and agricultural businesses and organizations attend the Tilth Producers of Washington annual conference. *Growing Forward: Holistic Management for Organic Farmers* will include keynote speaker Allan Savory, president of the Savory Institute. Holistic Management is a decision-making framework which results in ecologically regenerative, economically viable, and socially sound management of the world's agricultural lands and grasslands. Visit www.tilthproducers.org/programs to learn more.

December 3-5, Portland, OR

Strengthening Agriculture's Infrastructure

Nearly 40 renowned speakers, including Fred Kirschenmann of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Ken Meter of Crossroads Resource Center, and Lisa Sedlar of New Seasons Market, are slated to address topics focused on increasing the economic viability of food producers of all sizes at *Strengthening Agriculture's Infrastructure: Adding Value, Breaking Down Barriers, Increasing Profits* from Western SARE. This conference will provide participants with real-world examples of profitable and feasible food enterprises, information on how challenges were overcome, and opportunities to discuss potential new initiatives with speakers and peers. Topics to be addressed and discussed include: Opportunities and Challenges for Ag in the Middle; Trends and Economics for Rural Communities; Steps Needed to Overcome Identified Barriers; Niche Livestock Processing; Farm-to-Institution; Investment in Communities; Adding Value through Food, Fiber and Fuel Processing; Successful Marketing and Distribution Models; and Food Development Centers' Role. Find event details at www.westernsare.org.

December 6-8, Louisville, KY

2012 Acres U.S.A. Conference

The annual Acres U.S.A. conference sets the standards for innovation and learning. It is where you find farmers and consultants from every side of eco-farming who come together to share their experience and expertise. Attend the non-stop event, learn the latest in cutting-edge technology and methods, and return home ready to make your farming operation the best it can be. Conference information is available online at www.acresusa.com.

December 12-13, Pocantico Hills, NY

National Young Farmers Conference

Every December, over 250 young farmers from across the United States gather at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture to learn from agricultural luminaries, peers, and advocacy organizations at the National Young Farmers Conference: *Reviving the Culture of Agriculture*. Stone Barns Center will host the fifth National Young Farmers Conference, providing participants with access to inspiring keynotes and more than 50 unique workshops that address soil science, technical skills, agricultural policy, farm business management, marketing, and more. Visit www.stonebarnscenter.org for more information.

Share Your Event

Visit www.ccof.org/calendar.php for more events or to spread the word about your own!

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visit www.albertsorganics.com

