
IOIA Co-Sponsored Training KOF-K

By Stanley Edwards

In 2003, Jim Riddle and I were co trainers for a farm inspection course at a Camp Mechuwana in Maine. It was a bible camp with Spartan facilities. Our room was in a basement of the main lodge at the head of which, right where the screen would logically go, was a very large cross, made of 6x6 lumber. Back then, with beard and longer hair, I was reluctant to be seen by Jim, hauling such an object away, so it stayed right where it belonged.

This week, I've been in the company of 10 wonderful Rabbis from the worldwide Kosher certification agency KOF-K. Our training was held in a basement Synagogue. There are no crosses allowed in the Jewish faith but the room was decorated with many pictures of holy sights and objects, books etc. While I was afraid to touch anything, we were able to move pictures for wall space to project on to. On a couple of occasions, the Rabbis ended their long days with short prayer and songs, and bathed the room's regulatory angst with peaceful and spiritual bliss.

The Rabbis taking this course were all Kosher inspectors, reviewers and administrators of the certification program. They demonstrated a keen ability to find information in the regulations. They were a tireless group and very literally interpreted the regulations and the questions on IOIA quizzes and tests. One student objected the use of the greater than symbol for "greater than" (95% organic content) and indicated that really, it should be greater or equal! We will need to file a technical correction to the NOP on that one for sure.



While Organic Inspectors are not required to be present when a line is purged, I found out that much of the audit techniques and audit trail verification is quite similar. Their laws are very strict and inspectors are quite powerful. Some of the differences include:

- ◆ The certification agency helps clients set up their Kosher systems and assists them in solving issues
- ◆ The agency manages the ingredient compliance documents for their clients who cannot deviate from their allowed list of suppliers, without first getting the new suppliers approved.
- ◆ If Kosher laws are violated, companies are required to recall products, destroy inventory and publish notices in certain magazines and publications

I'm looking forward to an opportunity to work for IOIA as a trainer, in a Muslim country, then I will have experienced all the main world religions!

Welcome back to Jamaica!

By Luis Brenes

IOIA was invited by the Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement for the first time in 2002 and again in 2006 and 2007. This was the fourth basic crop inspection training cosponsored by JOAM but the first time in organizing it together with a basic livestock inspection training. Luis Brenes and Garry Lean shared with 26 students from varied backgrounds: most of them were extensión officers from the Rural Agricultural Development Authority but we also had farmers, researchers, postgrad students and even a retired nurse!

Field visits to Durga's Farm and Asante Adonai Farm allowed participants to implement their knowledge and skills in a more practical way.

Hosted at the Eltham Training Center close to Ocho Rios, we have enjoyed Jamaican cuisine and friendship and hope to be able to come back again.

[photos from this training are in the Spring 2011 issue]

IOIA BOD Conference Call - May 10, 2011

Attendance: Hélène Bouvier, Deb Bunn, Jennie Clifford, Silke Fuchshofen, Eric Feutz, Ib Hagsten, Michelle Sandy, and Margaret Scoles – ED. **Minutes:** Dana Miller (note taking), assisting Hélène Bouvier, Secretary.

Treasurer's Report: Eric stated the balance sheet is skewed this first quarter due to expenses and payments outstanding for the Florida trainings at the end of the quarter. Income was mostly received, while many of the expenses were not paid. Eric mentioned IOIA will be doing more webinar trainings in the future, after the new person is added. Ib moves to accept financial reports. Hélène seconds. Motion carried.

Jennie moved that the BOD be given a week's notice and detailed information to the BOD before any programmatic change in the budget is made. Ib seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee Liaisons: Silke: Bylaws and Latin American (connection only); Ib: Editorial Review and Accreditation; Eric: Finance and Fundraising; Deb: Ethics and Scholarship; Michelle: Training Advisory; Hélène: Canadian.

BOD Retreat Date / Grant Writer: It was discussed how the Korea trip will be financed. Discussion regarding hiring a grant writer. Also good opportunity to add this into budget for 2012. Hélène, Silke, and Margaret will propose informational piece for the newsletter and present at the next BOD meeting.

Accredited Certifiers/Association Membership: \$100.00 per year. Ib moves to join, Deb 2nd. All in favor.

BOD Conflict of Interest Policy: Silke and Margaret will draft a COI policy and present to the BOD at next meeting. All agreed.

Inspector Licensing/Accreditation: Discussed that accreditation would go hand-in-hand with IOIA training program. Deb suggested a registration process, with an exam to qualify. We discussed third party licensing. Agreed to be other than government. Ib expressed there is a lack in mentoring. It was agreed IOIA wants to work independently from USDA. Silke states we can make IOIA organization ISO if we want to. All agreed.

IOIA Logo: There was discussion about changing the IOIA logo, which has been a topic of conversation with the previous BOD for two years. It was agreed upon to keep the acronym as IOIA as it is very well-known. Margaret will share with the BOD a few of the top choices made in the past.

ED Report: Draft AGM minutes were approved for posting on the website. All agreed.

IOIA BOD Conference Call – June 8, 2011 *This special meeting was for discussion regarding the RFQ quote.*

Lacking a quorum, the meeting was for discussion purposes only, to assist the ED in preparing the RFQ Proposal and quote. Final decision will be made at the next meeting.

IOIA BOD Conference Call - June 14, 2011

Attendance: Jennie Clifford, Silke Fuchshofen, Eric Feutz, Ib Hagsten, Michelle Sandy, and Margaret Scoles – ED Absent: Hélène Bouvier, Deb Bunn. **Minute taking:** Danalynne Miller (note-taking), Jennie Clifford minutes.

RFQ for NOP Trainer and Reviewer Training: The BOD voted on setting the final Request for Quote (RFQ) price quote. Silke recused herself at 9:26 while the BOD considered and approved Winfried Fuchshofen for potential IOIA contract work if we are awarded the contract, with the need for Silke to recuse herself from any BOD discussions/decisions made around this work. Silke returned at 9:35. No other changes were made to the RFQ. Jennie motioned to send the RFQ, Ib seconded, all members were in favor. ED was given approval to send out quote today. Margaret and Winfried were thanked for their work on the RFQ.

Search Committee: There was a productive Search Committee call at the end of May where the committee confirmed the staff position will be salaried and requested the BOD review the Job Announcement. Also discussed was the assistance by Bob Durst (Chair of Search Committee) to organize and filter through all applications forwarding candidates to the Search Committee, who will select the best applicants for interview. Silke suggested the BOD honor the work of the Search Committee. After lengthy review and concern by the BOD with regard to the title of the new position and salary listing in the advertisement, The BOD agreed to support the announcement as presented by the Search Committee. The BOD also approved the advertising expenditure – from the Second Sr. Staff Position line item.

NOP Proposed Rules re: Residue Sampling – Should IOIA comment on the Residue Sampling Proposed Rule? If so, how? Margaret and Jennie will confer and take the questions to the IOIA Forum for comment. The BOD will make a decision if and how to comment after a week of member feedback. The deadline for comments to the NOP is June 28th. There was much interest from certifying bodies, during the Certifier-Inspector Dialogue, for IOIA to offer “Residue Sampling Training”.

[Minutes continued on page 15]

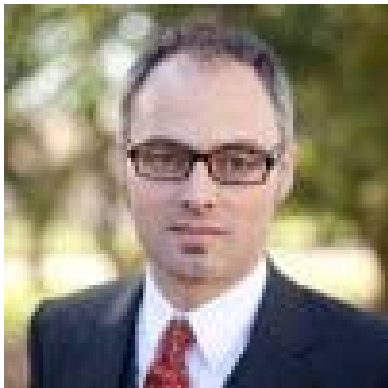
IOIA Scholarships Available for Organic Inspector Training

IOIA accepts applications for the annual Andrew Rutherford Scholarship Award, which provides full tuition for an IOIA-sponsored organic inspector training course during the following year. Both prospective and experienced inspectors are eligible to apply for the Rutherford Scholarship. It is awarded to an individual on the basis of need and potential as judged by the IOIA Scholarship Committee. Applicants can choose to attend any IOIA-sponsored training. The Scholarship pays for tuition, room and board but does not cover transportation or other expenses.

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

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

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



Matt Holmes, Executive Director of OTA in Canada, and current Ambassador to IFOAM's project, Global Organic Market Access (GOMA), is the North American candidate for the IFOAM Board of Directors. As the industry and federal government moved to create Canada's Organic Regulations in 2009, Holmes was a strong advocate for a bilateral agreement of organic equivalency between Canada and the United States.

Holmes says that he "hopes to balance the needs of all regions of the world while ensuring the concerns of the organic sector in North America are still heard in the important projects and discussions IFOAM carries out."

Good luck, Matt, from IOIA!

Minutes, from page 14

BOD Retreat: The 2011 BOD Retreat was confirmed for November 18-19, 2011. The BOD will meet for two full days. We expect to create an agenda, discussing the focus of the retreat at the next meeting. The northeast was settled upon as location.

Notes from the Chair: BioFach China was small but well attended. Michelle noted, of the 26 certifying agencies in China, four are NOP accredited. She indicated there are 40 inspectors from these agencies who are interested in IOIA training to the NOP.

Requests for NOSB nomination support: After thorough discussion the BOD denied the requests based on past BOD practice keeping IOIA in a neutral position. It was noted that support can be given on a personal basis. The sense of the BOD was to stay with previous BOD decisions as to not endorse support.

2012 AGM Location: The BOD discussed the location for the 2012 AGM with a decision to hold it in Vancouver, BC Canada area. Silke motioned, Ib seconded. All in favor.

Finance Committee Report – Progress of Audit (see ED Report): Finance Committee to have a recommendation ready by July meeting. They are collecting list of potential auditors.

Sign – On: The BOD will review the Canadian GMO sign-on request and get back to Margaret with concerns by Friday, June 17, 2011. No comment implies director approval.

Minutes from June and July are pending approval.

ED, from page 5

At those meetings, we wrestled with how to get more formal recognition without losing control of our program. IOIA is an international organization and working under the auspices of any one government doesn't really fit. At the same time, we want endorsement of some sort from the governments where we operate. Do we need a third party to endorse the accreditation program, the training program, or to actually accredit the individual members? Several years ago we explored a third party accreditation scheme with an international company. The added expense for inspectors and IOIA didn't seem warranted. IOIA is already recognized globally as the standard for organic inspector training. How much do we need the endorsement of a third party? But more important, how could we get certifiers to see more value in IOIA accreditation? In every discussion, it came down to the same conclusion – the certifiers. If certifiers don't ask for or value accreditation, inspectors won't need it. And another thing we always agreed on – accreditation should be the norm, not the exception. **IOIA accreditation must become recognized as synonymous** with quality inspection. A significant financial investment might be needed to create a program that would incorporate most inspectors and make it the industry norm. Who will pay for it? Inspector shopping by certifiers, flat rate inspection fees, and competition from lower cost, newer inspectors all make things tough for the professional, full-time inspector. If it costs more to be an IOIA accredited member, that cost must be recouped in the form of higher pay and more competitive credentials. Unfortunately, in the current organic world, certifiers generally use staff or contract inspectors based on a Certificate of Completion from IOIA training, and not always with regard to other experience and continuing education.

How to do it? That is the challenge of this project. Some have suggested that we could modify the basic training program "100 level" so that the test would be later, perhaps after apprenticeship was completed. Perhaps a comprehensive test, a sort of "bar exam", is needed before receiving an IOIA Certificate of Completion. There is a huge need for

training, but not a huge need for lots of new inspectors. Reviewers, administrative support, consultants, NGO staff - all need training and many of those will never become inspectors. Do they really need a Certificate of Completion? The next step could be accreditation. Specific requirements to maintain accreditation should include, as it does now, a requirement for continuing education, evaluation, and a specified number of inspections. It could include other concepts, borrowed from ISO standards, such as witness audits. An ongoing discussion is how to identify clearly different levels of competency. Differentiation can be the key to quality inspections. In 2005, the IOIA BOD envisioned a new world where training, apprenticeship, and accreditation were a continuum, and a new world where inspectors would be rewarded with higher pay for higher competency. The person who inspects a multi-ingredient major company perhaps needs different qualifications than the inspector of a seed cleaning plant or vegetable packer. In 2010, IOIA identified key areas for the missing "200 level" intermediate courses that could be offered via webinar. These are courses that all inspectors should take once they are working, the next step after basic training and apprenticeship. Contributions of certifiers in the Certifier-Inspector Dialogue helped us finalize that list of topics. The prototype (NOP Pasture training) was offered last year. This month, we launched the Crop Input Materials webinars with OMRI as one of the new '200 level' courses. These intermediate courses could be an important component of inspector accreditation in each category. Failure of the accreditation program to thrive has not been for lack of thought or focus.

This exciting project could be the vehicle to move inspector accreditation forward in a quantum leap. Keep tuned for more on the outcomes of this project.

Other notes: What's coming up for IOIA? IOIA Trainers **Harriet Behar**, **Stanley Edwards**, and I will be at the USDA for a week in September doing training with the NOP on the NOP regulations. **Michelle Sandy**, **Silke Fuchshofen**, and **Ib Hagsten** will represent IOIA at **Expo East** in late September. In late September, IOIA

members **Yutaka Maruyama** (Japan), **Sandeep Bhargava** (India), **Mutsumi Sakuyoshi** (Japan), and **Isidor Yu** (Korea) will join me in Korea to staff the IOIA/JOIA/KOIA booth at the IFOAM World Organic Fair and participate in our Workshop at the Organic World Congress. If you plan to attend the events in Korea, please let me know. All inspectors are invited to an inspector gathering on October 2. October 1, unbelievably, is already time to invoice



the membership for the annual dues and start planning the AGM. The fall training schedule in MN and CA will lead us into fall. Please, if you are an inspector, consider taking one of the upcoming advanced trainings in CA and BC.

Celebrations: IOIA has co-signed an agreement with ICUST Co. and Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corp. in Korea. All participants of IOIA/ICUST cosponsored basic processing inspection courses in Korea (Korean language) are now eligible for a significant government subsidy (\$500) to attend. Thank you, Isidor Yu, IOIA Trainer, for making this happen!

Compliance, from page 7

for organic certification. Sample forms may help farmers organize records that will be reviewed at inspection, while organic system plan templates establish the fundamental elements of documenting organic systems.

Pasture for Organic Ruminant Livestock: Understanding and Implementing the Organic Pasture Rule

All organic ruminant livestock producers, whether certified or transitioning, should understand the new recordkeeping requirements of the Access to Pasture Rule, published in February 2010. The reference document provides a thorough picture of what organic producers are required to do to maintain compliance with the rule, in addition to discussing recordkeeping practices and resources for developing a pasture management plan.

The PDF version of the NOP Handbook is [available online](#). Enter 'NOP Handbook' in the search field.

Amici, from page 1

Because of the nature of Monsanto's patented seeds, the individual plaintiffs and the farmer members of plaintiff organizations cannot avoid infringing on Monsanto's patents unless they entirely abandon growing corn, soybeans, canola, cotton, sugar beets, and, as of this year, alfalfa. While Monsanto tries to downplay the threat of enforcement by pointing to its 'commitment' not to sue farmers for 'trace' infringement, this provides no enforceable protections for plaintiffs. Because of the nature of the patented seeds and the realities of farming, it is certain that at least some of the plaintiff farmers already have more than trace contamination, and the number of such affected farmers will only grow over time. While many of the plaintiff farmers are certified organic, not all are, so the simple fact that Monsanto has yet to sue a certified organic farmer has no impact on their standing. Not only does Monsanto's patented technology inevitably lead to infringement through no fault of the plaintiffs, but, by their design, the majority of Monsanto's patented crops only provide the alleged benefits if a farmer applies herbicides, specifically Roundup®, directly to the crop. Monsanto could easily protect its patent rights by agreeing not to sue for unintentional contamination absent an affirmative action by the farmer to make use of the patented traits. By failing to do so, and instead offering an ambiguous and ultimately meaningless commitment, Monsanto has made it clear that it intends to maintain the threat of patent infringement lawsuits against plaintiff farmers and those similarly situated.

"Plaintiff farmers have, by the simple act of farming corn, soybeans, canola, cotton, sugar beets, or alfalfa crops, undertaken meaningful steps towards infringement. Due to Monsanto's decision to release patented seeds and market them for widespread planting, it is now impossible for farmers to remain 100% free of genetically modified crops because of the multitude of ways that contamination can occur. Given the difficulties in minimizing GM contamination, farmers must make numerous decisions about which steps are worthwhile for them and which steps are not. They are not able to make these decisions based on their own and their customers' interests, but must instead make these decisions with the threat of litigation against a giant corporation looming over their heads. The constant threat of a patent infringement suit by Monsanto creates significant, unquantifiable costs for the plaintiff farmers and similarly situated farmers. Unless this Court allows this case to proceed, the plaintiff farmers will face the choice of abandoning growing such crops or risking prosecution whenever Monsanto chooses."

The legal arguments are strong and articulated clearly. The brief presents 5 points:

1. Monsanto Has Taken Affirmative Action to Enforce Its Patent Rights;
2. Monsanto's Pledge Not to Sue for —Trace Contamination is Neither Enforceable Nor Meaningful;
3. Monsanto's Claim to Have Never Sued a Certified Organic Producer Also Does Not Protect the Plaintiffs;
4. Monsanto Could Have Offered Enforceable Protections While Still Protecting Its Patent Rights, and Chose Not To; and
5. Plaintiff Farmers Have Undertaken Meaningful Preparation to Conduct Potentially Infringing Activity

The brief concludes: "By developing a product that is self-replicating, and then marketing it to farmers across the country, Monsanto has ensured that no farmer can entirely avoid infringing. Monsanto has chosen to exploit this problem by an aggressive pattern of enforcement that has left farmers across the country in fear of an enforcement lawsuit even if they have no desire or intent to use the patented seeds. These farmers are placed in the position of abandoning growing valuable crops or investing significant time and effort in protective measures to try to minimize contamination. In the latter case, no matter what measures they take, the farmers still face the threat of a patent infringement lawsuit because of the impossibility of remaining completely GM-free." With the arguments and conclusion presented, the brief then asks the Court to consider the case and provide a clear declaration of plaintiffs' rights.

A win of any one of the counts in the suit would be a monumental gain for the non-GMO interest, including organic.

Filing of the brief was coordinated by FARFA, an alliance that advocates for farmers, ranchers, and homesteaders to assure their independence in the production and marketing of their food. They worked with Michael A. Spiegel, Counsel of Record for the *Amici Curiae*, to get the brief submitted. The full brief is available at their site, at <http://farmandranchfreedom.org/sff/Amicus-brief-filed.pdf> If you want more information about the case, please see p. 20 of the Spring IOIA newsletter, or visit <http://www.pubpat.org>.

New Insights Gained into Honey Bee Viruses and CCD

A team of scientists in California have completed the first comprehensive baseline assessment of viruses plaguing honey bees. The research was undertaken to try to gauge what a "normal" level of bee virus is, so that the impact of viruses on Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) can be more accurately determined. Remarkably, the team discovered four new viruses, never before detected, and furthermore concluded from their extensive testing that two of these previously unknown viruses are among the most prevalent in honey bee colonies.

Despite a heavy pathogen load in all hives studied, the team reported that most of the hives remained healthy. This finding led the team to speculate that other factors such as pesticides, alone or in combination, must be contributing to CCD by, for example, suppressing the honey bee immune system.

Source: Runckel, C. et al., "Temporal Analysis of the Honey Bee Microbiome Reveals Four New Viruses and Seasonal Prevalence of Known Viruses, *Nosema*, and *Crithidia*," *PlosOne*, Vol. 6, Issue 6:e20656, June 2011



How Certification of Kelp Encourages Sustainability and Organic Integrity

By Bill Wolf and Holly Givens

Recent NOP Guidance clarifies that kelp fed to livestock needs to be from a certified organic source. Wild Harvest Guidance 5022 became effective July 22, 2011, providing detailed requirements for inspection and certification of crops including wild blueberries, mushrooms, herbs, and kelp. Draft Guidance 5027 - The Use of Kelp in Livestock Feed is expected to become final later this year and confirms that kelp must be from an organic source if used in organic animal production.

Some certifiers currently require livestock producers to use organic kelp, while others allow non-organic kelp. Formal complaints to NOP could not be resolved without further guidance. A range of issues and interpretations were causing confusion in the organic community. OMRI had allowed non-organic kelp if it was fed as a supplement but not if a feed ingredient. Even after the Wild Harvest Guidance described the requirements for certification of kelp, some claimed that kelp is not agricultural for the purpose of livestock feed requirements. Others claimed that kelp harvesting was a form of aquaculture, for which NOP standards have not been completed.

NOP Organic Kelp Guidance Ends the Debate. In June 2011, NOP issued draft guidance on kelp in livestock feed, with a comment period that ended August 12, 2011. The draft clarifies that kelp is listed as an agricultural product under § 205.606 of the National List. Therefore, NOP considers kelp an agricultural product that must be certified organic to be included in livestock feed. Posted public comment generally supports the guidance, with differing opinions as to whether a 24-month phase-in period is needed.

Certification of Kelp and Sea Plants. Organic standards have always embraced a diversity of crops and growing conditions, provided that the health of the ecosystem is protected, no prohibited substances are applied, and that the production system encourages biodiversity. Kelp harvesting is no exception. In the United States, organic sea plant certification began when the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA) first certified the harvest of Maine Coast Sea Vegetables in 1993.

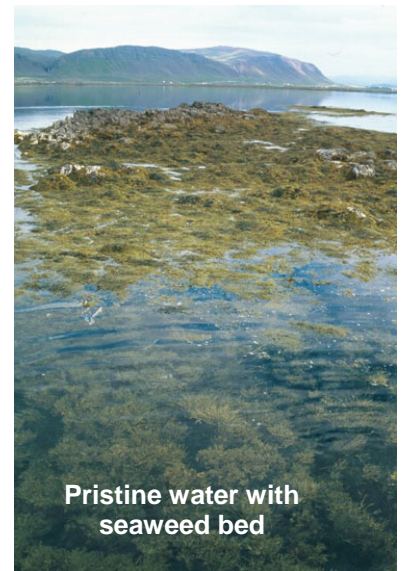
The harvest and processing of aquatic plants can, under certain conditions, be certified to NOP Wild Harvest standards. Similar to organic land plants, organic marine plants such as kelp can only be harvested from sites certified to be clean of any prohibited substances. In addition, wild harvest rules require verification that the harvest is sustainable and does not harm other species or the environment and follow a rigorous Organic System Plan (OSP). Today there are dozens of organic harvest sites around the world being certified to NOP and EU organic standards.

Certification requires scrutiny of the site, the harvest, and the processing. Like crops surrounded by air, crops surrounded by water are certified based on conditions at the growing site. Organic kelp sites are limited to very clean waters with aquatic buffer zones to protect against contamination generally measured in miles, unlike farm fields where buffers are measured in feet. The OSP must document how the harvesters care for the sites to ensure that the kelp beds remain vital year after year, encourage biodiversity, and protect the renewable resource. The inspector and the ACA review how often beds are harvested based on the species, much the way organic maple syrup production limits the number of taps based on the size of the tree.

Benefits of Certification. Organic certification is not only possible for sea plants and kelp, it is preferable. The benefits of organic kelp certification are the same as for any organic claim. It provides assurance to the buyer that, similar to farmed field crops, third party inspection has verified the integrity of the OSP. A Kelp Harvest OSP must include maps and collection procedures, documenting that the site is protected from contamination, sustainably managed without damage to other species, and there are thorough training and recordkeeping procedures.

Organic kelp certification can provide valuable incentives for harvesters to protect and improve the health of the planet. Seaweeds actually make up more than 50% of the bio-mass, carbon fixation, and oxygen production of Earth's ecosystem. Encouraging all sea plant harvests to meet organic standards helps maintain a critical part of the atmospheric carbon-oxygen cycle.

*Wild Harvest § 205.207:
Wild crops must be harvested from a designated area that has had no prohibited substances applied to it for three years immediately prior to harvest, and a wild crop must be harvested in ways that protect the environment and sustain the growth of the wild crop.*



Pristine water with seaweed bed

A Case Study of the Oldest and Largest Organic Kelp Harvest

Thorvin Kelp is harvested from the protected waters of a pristine fjord (bay) in Iceland, a small



Inspector David Konrad aboard a mowing machine cutting kelp.

island country between North America and Europe just below the Arctic Circle. Thorvin's kelp harvest site has been certified organic since 1999 and NOP certified since 2002. Thorvin has been supplying thousands of tons of organic kelp for healthy organic livestock for decades. Protection of the fjord as an organic site and wilderness reserve has been adopted for both the environmental and economic benefits it provides.

The kelp is harvested from protected waters in a sparsely populated area where no prohibited substances are permitted to be applied to the kelp beds. The entire site is monitored by the fisheries institute and the local community.

Consider, for example, one of the farmers who owns some of the harvest beds and participates in the harvest. Johannes Gislason's diversified family farm is located on 60 small islands in the Briedafjord. He and his family raise Icelandic sheep, collect and process Eider down, and harvest kelp, rotating the kelp harvest site around the islands that comprise his farm. Johannes and his family and friends mow kelp the way dairy farmers mow hay. Like more familiar crops such as alfalfa, mowing is followed by time for re-growth to keep the kelp beds healthy and productive for the long term. During kelp harvest, enough of the plant is left so that it can grow back in time for its next harvest in about four years.

After mowing, the kelp is transferred into nets for transport by boat to the geothermal drying facility in Reykholar, where the factory provides sustainable employment for this rural community. Hot air is extracted from natural geothermal water to generate controlled low-temperature drying of the kelp meal in a large, stainless steel, five-layer conveyor belt dryer. At the facility, three kelp species are dried and screened into various mesh sizes, packaged, and shipped around the world for a range of uses. Large commercial quantities of Thorvin Kelp are stocked and re-packaged by certified organic handlers in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Oregon, and California.

Why Kelp is Fed to Livestock. Kelps have been part of the human and animal diet for thousands of years. Kelp is a valuable whole-food source of over 60 trace minerals in a natural, plant-based, bio-available form, including selenium, potassium, and iodine -- essential for healthy thyroid function. Most organic dairies and pastured beef producers feed kelp for overall animal well-being, and report improved feed utilization and production. It is also fed to sheep, pigs, chickens and most other animals, usually in small quantities of 1% to 2% of the dry ration. *[Readers should be alert to any possible changes in the Final Guidance, which is yet to be published.]*

Holly Givens is a freelance writer and communications consultant with over 15 years in the organic community. Formerly the communications director at the Organic Trade Association, she now works with businesses and non-profits on projects such as newsletters, public relations campaigns, grant



proposals and more. Contact her at HollyGivens29@gmail.com, or follow her on Twitter: @HollyGivens.

Bill Wolf is President of Wolf, DiMatteo + Associates, a leading policy and strategic consulting firm in the organic community. He is also past president of the OTA, founding president of OMRI. Bill became involved in sustainable kelp harvests while working for Bucky Fuller 40 years ago and is the founder of Thorvin, Inc. He feeds organic kelp to beef cows on his farm in Virginia and can be reached at bwolf@organicspecialists.com

What Makes Icelandic Kelp So Special? It's the Geology!

By Tony Fleming

All of the world's major kelp beds occur in places where large-scale marine currents provide a steady flow of nutrients and help to regulate the water temperature within a specific range beneficial to seaweed metabolism. Icelandic kelp has a well-earned reputation in the world of sea plants for its extraordinarily high and diverse trace-mineral content, which sets it apart from most other kelp beds. Two geologic processes are primarily responsible: glaciation and volcanism. While many geologic processes can concentrate certain minerals or groups of minerals, glaciation and volcanism are the only ones that typically deliver such a wide spectrum of major and minor elements, and they are the quintessential features of Icelandic geology. The country sits astride the mid-Atlantic rift, a spreading center where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates are pushed apart by the constant upwelling of basalt—the primordial magma from the Earth's mantle that contains an almost perfect balance of major and minor elements. In addition to providing a constant source of fresh, nutrient-rich volcanic rock, the upwelling magma gives rise to abundant geothermal springs and vents, many of them located in submarine settings around the coast, which enrich the dominant North Icelandic-Irminger Current with substantial levels of trace elements. In addition, about 11% of the country is glaciated, with several massive ice caps that feed dozens of valley glaciers. As the glaciers move, they abrade the island's young bedrock into fine particles, chiefly silt, which are readily acted upon by biological processes that release nutrients. Vast quantities of this "rock flour" are discharged to the coast via many large, meltwater-charged rivers, furnishing yet another bioavailable source of abundant minerals.

Codex: countries can call for GE labeling

At the annual Codex Alimentarius Commission summit in Geneva July 4-9, the Commission adopted official Codex text regarding genetically modified (GM) labeling guidance, thus allowing it to move forward to become official Codex text. As a result, any country adopting GM food labeling will no longer face the threat of a legal challenge from the World Trade Organization because national measures based on Codex guidance or standards cannot be challenged as a barrier to trade. The guidance document does not mandate labeling, nor is any country obligated to adopt the guidance. However, the guidance allows countries to make known to consumers via labeling that a food was produced using modern biotechnology.

Bayer to Settle Claims with Farmers over GM rice

Bayer will pay \$750 million to settle claims with about 11,000 U.S. farmers who said a strain of the company's genetically modified rice tainted crops and ruined their export value. The settlement ends scores of lawsuits filed against the Bayer CropScience unit of the company by farmers in Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas and Mississippi. USDA said in August 2006 that trace amounts of the company's experimental LibertyLink strain were found in long-grain rice. Within four days, declining rice futures cost growers about \$150 million, according to a complaint filed by the farmers. News of the contamination caused futures prices to fall about 14 percent.

Appeals Court Dismisses GE Beets Case

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued a summary order on May 20 concluding a long-standing lawsuit over the impacts of genetically engineered (GE) "Roundup Ready" sugar beets. As a result, previous court rulings in favor of farmers and conservation advocates will remain, including the order requiring the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to prepare a rigorous review of the impacts of GE sugar beets, engineered to be resistant to Monsanto's Roundup

herbicide, before deciding whether to again allow their future commercial use.

The Environmental Impact Statement is only the second USDA has undertaken for any GE crop in over 15 years of approving such crops for human consumption. Both analyses were court-ordered. USDA said it expects to finish the GE sugar beets EIS and have a new decision on commercialization in 2012., while the litigation over USDA's interim approval of planting continues.

First Wild Canola Plants With Modified Genes Found in US

Scientists at the University of Arkansas and their colleagues have found populations of wild plants with genes from genetically modified canola in the United States.

Globally, canola can interbreed with 40 different weed species, and 25 percent of those weeds can be found in the United States. These findings raise questions about the regulation of herbicide resistant weeds and about how these plants might compete with others in the wild. The research originated when graduate student Meredith Schafer and Cynthia Sagers, professor of biological sciences at UA, spotted some pretty yellow flowers in a ditch near Warehouse Foods in Langdon, N.D. As part of another research project, they had some portable strips that test for genetically modified proteins found in canola, proteins that convey herbicide resistance to crop plants. The strips work much like those in a pregnancy test; Schafer and Sagers crushed plant leaves in water and added the test strip, which would develop one line if it tested negative for the modified gene and two lines if it tested positive for a modified protein. The test strips could detect the protein that conveys Roundup resistance; they also could detect the protein that conveys resistance to Liberty Link, another herbicide used on canola.

Schafer and Sagers determined at once that the parking lot weeds contained transgenic genes and decided to investigate further.

They filled a car with test strips and set out on a road trip, traveling on highways east and west across North Dakota, stopping every five miles on the highway to look for roadside weeds. They counted canola plants in a 50-meter transect, photographed the locations, took GPS statistics, took a plant sample, and tested

the samples in the front seat. They then collected and pressed the sampled plant and drove to the next location. "We traveled over 3,000 miles to complete the sampling," Schafer said. Some of the sites had densely packed plants, with 1,000 specimens in a 50-meter space. They spray these roadsides with herbicides, and canola is the only thing still growing.

They found wild canola in about 46 percent of the sites along the highway, either growing on the side of the road or in cracks in the highway. About 83 percent of the weedy canola they tested contained transgenic material. Further, some of the plants contained resistance to both herbicides, a combination of transgenic traits that had not been developed in canola crops.

"That's not commercially available. That has to be happening in the wild," Schafer said. "That leads us to believe that these wild populations have become established populations. Technically, these plants are not supposed to be able to compete in the wild."

Current farming practices may quickly make the problem worse. Each year tens of thousands of acres of canola go unharvested in the field. As a consequence, an enormous reservoir of seed is created, which can then spread into wild populations.

"Once this happens, it would be difficult to get rid of these weeds using current herbicides," Sagers said. While the problem looms large in North Dakota, Sagers says the message is a global one. The world recently hit a milestone, where more than 50 percent of the earth is covered in crops used for food or forage. Domesticated plants have wild cousins that often are considered weeds, and sometimes these plants can still cross breed, creating a high potential for herbicide and pesticide resistance to show up where it isn't wanted.

"Things can escape from cultivation, and we need to be careful about what we stick into plants," Sagers said.

University of Arkansas, August 6 2010
<http://newswire.uark.edu/article.aspx?id=14453>

Peru Declares 10 Year Moratorium on GMO's

The Plenary Session of the Peruvian Congress on June 7 approved a moratorium of ten years that prevents the import of GMO's on national territory for

cultivation, breeding or of any transgenic production.

It was sustained by the president of the Agrarian Commission, Anibal Huerta (PAP), who declared that in the face of the danger that can arise from the use of the biotechnology a moratorium must be approved to take care of Peruvian biodiversity.

The approved norm also creates a Technical Commission of Evaluation and Prevention of Risks of Use of GMOs, and in two years will have to issue a report on the subject.

APHIS will not regulate GE Kentucky bluegrass

In two Federal Register notices published July 9 (Pages 39811 and 39812), USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed it will not regulate Kentucky bluegrass genetically engineered for herbicide tolerance either as a plant pest or as a noxious weed. In 2002, the International Center for Technology Assessment and the Center for Food Safety had requested that the agency list glyphosate-tolerant GE Kentucky bluegrass as a designated noxious weed under its Federal Noxious Weed regulations. USDA said that an herbicide-tolerant Kentucky bluegrass being developed by Scotts Miracle-Gro was not subject to federal regulation because its creation did not entail use of any plant pests.

The decision pokes more holes in an already-porous regime for overseeing GM crops - essentially to the point of regulatory collapse.

The July 1 decision frees Scotts to sell the grass, which is meant for lawns, without federal approval. The company also does not need federal permits to conduct field trials, even though a different type of GMO from company test plots in the past and established itself in the wild.

Michael C. Gregoire, who oversees biotechnology crop regulation at the Agriculture Department, said in an interview July 5 that the ruling did not represent "a change in policy or a relaxing or abandoning of the regulation of G.E. crops." He said other genetically engineered crops, like a petunia, had been exempted from regulation in the past, due to their novel (non-food) status.

Scotts was fined \$500,000 in 2007 after its GM bentgrass, intended for use on golf courses, escaped from field test sites in central Oregon and established itself in the wild. More recently the grass, presumably from a field test in Idaho, was found growing in nearby southern Oregon.

In a letter to Scotts dated July 1, Tom Vilsack, the secretary of agriculture, acknowledged concerns that GM bluegrass will contaminate non-GM bluegrass thru pollen drift, and told the company to work with other stakeholders to make sure that the grass did not spread where it was unwanted. Since bluegrass shows up (among other places) in cow pastures, organic dairy and beef farmers now face the risk of suddenly having their animals grazing on fields full of a GM crop, which would jeopardize their organic status.

Vilsack's remarks are significant because no USDA chief has ever acknowledged that GM technology could do real damage to organic agriculture.

Vilsack's letter deftly summarizes the agency's paradigm for overseeing the introduction of new GM crops: Yes, they have the potential to cause serious harm; no, we can't do anything about it. In one sense, that approach represents progress. Before Vilsack, the agency was loathe to admit that GMOs posed any threat to the environment or to farmers. The Roundup Ready™ bluegrass decision also signals an even higher level of *laissez faire*: Whereas before the agency regulated novel crops weakly, it now seems content not to regulate them at all.

The July 1 bluegrass decision, by creating an avenue through which the USDA can avoid conducting environmental impact statements, raises that attitude to the level of policy.

This is a critical change. The National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requires that the USDA conduct an environmental impact study for all the crops it deregulates. But to deregulate a crop, the agency has to regulate it first. USDA has two "regulatory hooks" under which it can regulate GM crops: the "plant pest" status and the "noxious weed" status. In the bluegrass decision, the USDA signaled that it won't be applying

those hooks to a broad variety of novel crops.

That leaves new crops unregulated and not subject to NEPA requirements for environmental impact statements. This is a good time to recall that it was the requirement to conduct such assessments that forced the USDA to acknowledge some of the pitfalls of GMOs in the first place.

Clearly, the USDA has neither the appetite nor the regulatory tools to properly oversee novel GMOs. Industry observers comment that the only foreseeable remedy is congressional intervention, with a new set of laws governing the oversight of GMOs to replace that the failed ones now in place.

Edited from articles by:

Andrew Pollack, *New York Times*, July 6 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/07/business/energy-environment/cries-of-lax-regulation-after-usda-ruling-on-bluegrass.html?_r=1 and Tom Philpott, *Mother Jones*, July 14 2011 <http://motherjones.com/tom-philpott/2011/07/welcome-age-gmo-industry-self-regulation>

Advocates for Labeling of GMO Food Announce Two Week 'Right2Know' March from NYC to White House Oct 1-16

A coalition of organizations, businesses and individuals announced on July 28 a bold mobilization plan to raise awareness about GMOs and stand up for the consumer right to an informed choice.

The GMO Right2Know March will feature daily events between New York and Washington, DC October 1-16 as thousands of marchers are expected to walk part or all of the 313 miles from the United Nations' Headquarters to the White House. The marchers will stop at natural food stores along the way as part of the Non-GMO Month celebrations planned by hundreds of retailers nationwide during the month of October.

Confirmed speakers include Vanda Shiva (pictured at right), Percy and Louis Schmeiser, Andrew Kimbrell, Frances Moore Lappè, Anna Lappè, Michael Hansen, Sara, Snow, Dr. Alan Greene, Joseph Wilhelm, Michael Funk, Megan Westgate, David Bronner and Ashley Koff, RD.

More information is available at: <http://www.right2knowmarch.org/>

IOIA Committees and Liaisons

Accreditation: Chair: Pending. Board Liaison: Ib Hagsten, 816.468.4752. Purpose: To oversee the inspector accreditation program including to review, adjudicate and propose policy and criteria used to accredit inspectors. To formulate accreditation standards and procedures.

Bylaws: Chair: Garry Lean, 705.887.5230. Liaison: Silke Fuchshofen, 518.794.6392. Purpose: Ongoing response to bylaws issues.

Canadian: Chair: Bill Barkley, 613-543-0491. Liaison: Helene Bouvier, 701.219.9231. Purpose: Give voice to Canadian members concerns.

Editorial Review: Chair: Joe Montecalvo, 805-772-3574. Liaison: Ib Hagsten, 816.468.4752. Purpose: Ongoing as needed to review all IOIA publications and materials considered for sale.

Ethics: Chair: Joyce Ford, 507-454-8310. Liaison: Deb Bunn, 603.717.1205. Criteria for membership is past board or alternate service. Created to deal with complaints received by the IOIA office based on the Codes of Ethics and Conduct.

Finance: Chair/Treasurer: Eric Feutz, 660-248-5094. Purpose: Advise board on fiscal matters, combined with fundraising committee.

Fundraising: Liaison: Eric Feutz, 660-248-5094

Latin American: Chair: Pending. Liaison: Silke Fuchshofen, 518.794.6392. Purpose: Give voice to Latin American members concerns.

Membership: Chair: Kelly Monaghan, 416-482-8625. Liaison: Jennifer Clifford, 570.278.3715. Purpose: Develop membership services and numbers.

Nominations: Chair: Chris Kidwell, 530.628.4560. Liaison: Jennifer Clifford, 570.278.3715. Purpose: prepare annual ballot for Board of Directors.

Scholarship: Chair: Margaret Weigelt, 320-974-8751. Liaison: Deb Bunn, 603.717.1205. Purpose: Ongoing review and selection of scholarship applications.

Training Advisory: Chair & Liaison: Michelle Sandy, 540.290.4409.

IOIA Anniversary Cookbook

A FUNdraising project celebrating 20 years of IOIA! We are looking for your favorites including simple, 'on the road' recipes, tips and other tidbits that will make this a very collectible book. Our goal is at least one recipe from every IOIA member.

To submit a recipe for the IOIA Cookbook, email <mailto:lynell@rangeweb.net> with the following information:

- 1.) Your full name as you want it printed. Inspection status (experience/years), social network info (optional)
- 2.) Category of dish (breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert, drink, snack, etc)
- 3.) A few sentences explaining why this recipe should be included in the cookbook: Why did you choose to submit this one? Is this something that you are known for? Where did the original recipe come from? What makes it so special/delicious? Have you served it at any memorable occasions?
- 4.) The recipe, broken down into ingredients and steps. In WORD DOC only. Times New Roman, size 12 font is preferable, single spaced. No PDF, or other formatting, tables.
- 5.) A photo of you, your farm, or home. JPG only.

Please send in the recipe and photo as separate attachments. Please do not embed photos into the recipe document. You may also want to submit a photo of the finished dish.

6.) Other tidbits, IOIA history bytes, humorous anecdotes, quotable quotes, or historical photos are very welcome.

Promiseland Certificate Suspended for Five Years

Suspension of Promiseland Livestock's organic certification went into effect on July 28, 2011.

USDA originally issued its decision to suspend Promiseland's organic certification last year, citing the company's repeated withholding of records from authorized agents that would have allowed them to conduct audits of the company's facilities.

On Oct. 25, 2010, the USDA announced a judicial officer ruling to uphold the suspension of Promiseland's organic certification. The decision followed a series of hearings between Promiseland and the Agricultural Marketing Service of

the USDA, during which the Nebraska-based company appealed their suspension and eventually filed a federal lawsuit to halt the suspension of its organic certification.

On Dec. 2, 2010, Promiseland filed a motion requesting a stay of the decision and order on the grounds that the company was preparing an appeal of the decision in U.S. District Court.

The company eventually withdrew the motion in late June. During the five-year suspension, Promiseland Livestock is prohibited from representing their products as organic.

Organic Egg Producers Flock to Washington

In late July, six OTA organic egg producer members from across the US flew in to Washington, D.C. to meet with representatives from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), USDA, NOP, and Congress to exchange information about the compatibility of the new FDA egg safety rule and organic standards requiring outdoor access for layers. Specifically, they came to address concerns that have been raised suggesting FDA may perceive NOP's outdoor access requirements to be in conflict with FDA's 2009 rule regarding Prevention of Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) in Shell Eggs.

The six producers - Pete and Gerry's, Wilcox Farms, Arkansas Egg Company, Chino Valley Ranchers, Organic Valley, and Hidden Villa Ranchers - together represent the majority of the U.S. organic laying hen population, which, according to the 2008 Organic Production Survey, ranges between 4 and 4.5 million hens and spreads across 49 states and 1,200 farms, including many family farms.

Presenting a unified front, these producers delivered the message to FDA, USDA and Congress that NOP regulations require all chickens to have access to the outdoors, and that organic producers not only support outdoor access but know how to do this well. They also communicated that consumers expect and demand outdoor access for all organic livestock. Additionally, they made clear that they support a strong food safety system and FDA's Egg Safety Rule, and that organic egg producers have exemplary audit systems in place and an outstanding food safety record.

Resources

SARE Learning Center

Have you heard about the new Learning Center at www.SARE.org? It's a treasure trove of books, videos, online courses and other information products about sustainable agriculture from A to Z. Click [Learning Center](#) to access.

Wild Farm Alliance Guide

Wild Farm Alliance and Community Alliance with Family Farmers have just published [Farming with Food Safety and Conservation in Mind](#). This guide explains how farmers can produce safe food without sacrificing responsible on-farm conservation measures.

To download the Guide, go to: http://www.wildfarmalliance.org/resources/fdsfty_brochure.htm

Beyond Pesticides Launches Youtube Channel

The recently launched Beyond Pesticides YouTube Channel features presentations from the 29th National Pesticide Forum held April. This is a great educational resource for individuals and groups working to change pesticide policies.

Featured videos included with the initial launch include:

Pesticides 101: An introduction to pesticide issues (Caroline Cox)

Protecting Pollinators from Pesticides: Stopping the demise of honeybees (Tom Theobald, James Frazier, PhD, Marygael Meister)

Genetically Engineered Food: Failed promises and hazardous outcomes (George Kimbrell)

Health and Science Panel (John Adgate, PhD, Dana Boyd Barr, PhD, Christine Parks, PhD, Changlu Wang, PhD)

Beyond Lists: Where did all those pesticides come from? (Theo Colborn, PhD)

The Polluters: The making of our chemically altered environment (Ben Ross, PhD)

Organic Land Management: From lawns to landscapes and beyond (Chip Osborne, Tom Kanatani, Cook, Timothy Lee Scott, Rella Abernathy, PhD, Lani Malmberg)

Organic: United We Stand (Maria Rodale) Additional videos will be posted in the coming weeks. Individuals and

organizations are invited to submit their own videos to be included on the Beyond Pesticides' channel.

Click the yellow "subscribe" button on the YouTube page to be automatically notified of new content. [Go to the Beyond Pesticides Channel now!](#)

EWG Shoppers Guide

Environmental Working Group has released its latest shopper's guide on produce. The seventh edition of Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce with updated information on 53 fruits and vegetables and their total pesticide loads is available at their site, www.ewg.org/foodnews

Modest fees set to access ATTRA publications

Due to federal budget cuts for fiscal 2011, the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) has been forced to seek other revenue sources to help cover operating expenses for its ATTRA project. Effective July 18, ATTRA website users who wish to access or download copies of its publications may either purchase an annual subscription costing \$50, or purchase individual publications, either in electronic or print format, via the ATTRA website for fees ranging from \$1 to \$10. [Contact NCAT](#).

Scientific research link

Thanks to organic inspector/public librarian Margaret Weigelt for sending along this link to a scientific research tool, which she found while checking out the boron toxicity of "natural" ant control recipes, i.e. boric acid powder + sugar. <http://www.scirus.com/srsapp/>

Apprenticeship Program at UCSC

The UCSC Farm & Garden's Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture is an intensive six-month course in organic gardening and small-scale sustainable farming. Although the program does not begin until April 2012, the application deadline is September 30, 2011. The basic information is as follows: The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz offers the Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture, a full-time, 6-month program that trains adults in the concepts and practices of organic gardening and small-scale sustainable

farming. The apprenticeship blends the virtues of experiential learning with traditional classroom studies on topics that include soil management, composting, pest control, crop planning, irrigation, farm equipment, and direct marketing techniques. Graduates have established their own commercial farms and market gardens, run community gardens for inner city and prison populations, and work on international development projects. The 39 apprentices each year come from all regions of the US and abroad, and represent a wide spectrum of ages, backgrounds, and interests. There are several tuition scholarships available for people of color and/or people from disadvantaged backgrounds. There is also the Simply Organic Scholarship for an apprentice with financial need interested in pursuing a career in organic farming. For further info contact: <http://casfs.ucsc.edu> or email casfs@ucsc.edu.

NOP Organic Insider

The NOP Organic Insider is an e-newsletter intended to inform the organic community on a wide range of NOP functions, including organic standards, accreditation and international activities, compliance and enforcement, the National Organic Standards Board, training events, and the Cost Share program.

To join the Mailing List go to <http://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/emails.jsp?m=1103777415326>

IFOAM Ecology & Farming Magazine Returns

After a gap of one year, IFOAM has re-launched "Ecology & Farming" magazine, now on a bimonthly basis. Please see the [magazine website](#) for information on how to subscribe. IFOAM Affiliates are entitled to a 50% discount.

Food Price and Climate Change

A newly published study from the Journal Science, "Climate Trends and Global Crop Production Since 1980", identifies Climate Change as one of the factors that led to a decrease in global wheat and corn output by more than 3% - and to a 20% higher average commodities price - over the past three decades, compared to growth projections without a rise in temperatures. Read more [HERE](#).



PO Box 6
BROADUS, MT 59317 USA
(406) 436-2031
IOIA@IOIA.NET
WWW.IOIA.NET

Keep IOIA Strong - Lend Your Strength And Get Involved!

2011 Calendar

Sept 7-11 Growing Food and Justice For All Milwaukee, Wisconsin
http://www.growingpower.org/growing_food_and_justice_for_all.htm
4th Annual Gathering has the theme "Sacred Soil: Cultivating Seeds of Community Transformation".

Sept 9-10 "Profits from Perennials" Workshop with Greg Judy Western Minnesota http://www.chippewa10.org/pr/11/news_110520.html Designed to help farmers and other land managers find profitable ways to add diversity to their operations while protecting and improving the environment.

Sept 10 Scaling Up: Producing and Processing for the Larger Regional Market Westminster, Vermont
<http://nofavt.org/events/scaling-producing-and-processing-larger-regional-market>

Sept 11-13 Farm & Food Leadership Conference San Antonio, Texas <http://farmandranchfreedom.org/conference-2011> Keynote address by John Ikerd, and many other speakers.

Sept 12 Hoophouse Cropping for Winter Harvests Holt, Michigan
<http://www.hoophouse.msu.edu/index.php?q=workshops#114>

Sept 12 AERO Farm Tours Moiese and Dixon, Montana

<http://www.aeromt.org/food-ag/farm-tours/>

Sept 13-15 The National Heirloom Exposition Santa Rosa, California
<http://theheirloomexpo.com/>
Enjoy the largest exhibition of heirloom produce in history, from farms and gardens across the country. Over 55 nationally recognized experts like Vandana Shiva, Alice Waters, and Jeffrey Smith will speak. A trade show with 250 vendors, including seed companies, garden and food products, supplies, and more. A poultry and livestock show featuring heritage breeds runs concurrently.

Sept 16-18 International Green Schoolyard Conference: Engaging Our Grounds Berkeley and San Francisco, California <http://www.greenschoolyards.org/home>

Sept 26 - 29 5th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture Brisbane, Australia The conference will provide a forum for scientists and practitioners to discuss current and future developments in sustainable agriculture.
<http://www.wcca.org/index.htm>

Sept 28 - Oct 5 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress Republic of Korea
www.ifoam.org

October 4 - 6 Biopesticide Industry Alliance Semi-Annual Meeting, Portland, OR. www.biopesticideindustryalliance.org

October 27 - 28 2011 Annual Conference of the Arab Forum for Environment and Development Beirut Lebanon Arab Forum for Environment and Development
<http://afedonline.org/conference/default.html>

Nov 11-13 The 11th Annual Fall Harvest Gathering for Women in Sustainable Agriculture, Cedar Valley Resort, Whalan, MN. Contact: staceyleighbrown@yahoo.com.

Nov 14-15 7th Annual Sustainable Ag Expo, Paso Robles, CA. Two-day educational meeting for farmers, ag professionals, and pest control advisors to learn about the latest in research and business trends.
www.sustainableagexpo.org.

Nov 29 - Dec 2 National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Meeting, Hilton Savannah DeSoto in Savannah, GA.
www.ams.usda.gov

Dec 5 - 7 9th Middle East Natural and Organic Product Expo - MENOPE Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE.
http://www.naturalproductme.com/exhibit_or_profile.php

For a complete listing of upcoming IOIA trainings, please see page 3 of this issue

ED, from page 5

At those meetings, we wrestled with how to get more formal recognition without losing control of our program. IOIA is an international organization and working under the auspices of any one government doesn't really fit. At the same time, we want endorsement of some sort from the governments where we operate. Do we need a third party to endorse the accreditation program, the training program, or to actually accredit the individual members? Several years ago we explored a third party accreditation scheme with an international company. The added expense for inspectors and IOIA didn't seem warranted. IOIA is already recognized globally as the standard for organic inspector training. How much do we need the endorsement of a third party? But more important, how could we get certifiers to see more value in IOIA accreditation? In every discussion, it came down to the same conclusion – the certifiers. If certifiers don't ask for or value accreditation, inspectors won't need it. And another thing we always agreed on – accreditation should be the norm, not the exception. **IOIA accreditation must become recognized as synonymous** with quality inspection. A significant financial investment might be needed to create a program that would incorporate most inspectors and make it the industry norm. Who will pay for it? Inspector shopping by certifiers, flat rate inspection fees, and competition from lower cost, newer inspectors all make things tough for the professional, full-time inspector. If it costs more to be an IOIA accredited member, that cost must be recouped in the form of higher pay and more competitive credentials. Unfortunately, in the current organic world, certifiers generally use staff or contract inspectors based on a Certificate of Completion from IOIA training, and not always with regard to other experience and continuing education.

How to do it? That is the challenge of this project. Some have suggested that we could modify the basic training program “100 level” so that the test would be later, perhaps after apprenticeship was completed. Perhaps a comprehensive test, a sort of “bar exam”, is needed before receiving an IOIA Certificate of Completion. There is a huge need for

training, but not a huge need for lots of new inspectors. Reviewers, administrative support, consultants, NGO staff - all need training and many of those will never become inspectors. Do they really need a Certificate of Completion? The next step could be accreditation. Specific requirements to maintain accreditation should include, as it does now, a requirement for continuing education, evaluation, and a specified number of inspections. It could include other concepts, borrowed from ISO standards, such as witness audits. An ongoing discussion is how to identify clearly different levels of competency. Differentiation can be the key to quality inspections. In 2005, the IOIA BOD envisioned a new world where training, apprenticeship, and accreditation were a continuum, and a new world where inspectors would be rewarded with higher pay for higher competency. The person who inspects a multi-ingredient major company perhaps needs different qualifications than the inspector of a seed cleaning plant or vegetable packer. In 2010, IOIA identified key areas for the missing “200 level” intermediate courses that could be offered via webinar. These are courses that all inspectors should take once they are working, the next step after basic training and apprenticeship. Contributions of certifiers in the Certifier-Inspector Dialogue helped us finalize that list of topics. The prototype (NOP Pasture training) was offered last year. This month, we launched the Crop Input Materials webinars with OMRI as one of the new ‘200 level’ courses. These intermediate courses could be an important component of inspector accreditation in each category. Failure of the accreditation program to thrive has not been for lack of thought or focus.

This exciting project could be the vehicle to move inspector accreditation forward in a quantum leap. Keep tuned for more on the outcomes of this project.

Other notes: What's coming up for IOIA? IOIA Trainers **Harriet Behar**, **Stanley Edwards**, and I will be at the USDA for a week in September doing training with the NOP on the NOP regulations. **Michelle Sandy**, **Silke Fuchshofen**, and **Ib Hagsten** will represent IOIA at **Expo East** in late September. In late September, IOIA

members **Yutaka Maruyama** (Japan), **Sandeep Bhargava** (India), **Mutsumi Sakuyoshi** (Japan), and **Isidor Yu** (Korea) will join me in Korea to staff the IOIA/JOIA/KOIA booth at the IFOAM World Organic Fair and participate in our Workshop at the Organic World Congress. If you plan to attend the events in Korea, please let me know. All inspectors are invited to an inspector gathering on October 2. October 1, unbelievably, is already time to invoice



the membership for the annual dues and start planning the AGM. The fall training schedule in MN and CA will lead us into fall. Please, if you are an inspector, consider taking one of the upcoming advanced trainings in CA and BC.

Celebrations: IOIA has co-signed an agreement with ICUST Co. and Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corp. in Korea. All participants of IOIA/ICUST cosponsored basic processing inspection courses in Korea (Korean language) are now eligible for a significant government subsidy (\$500) to attend. Thank you, Isidor Yu, IOIA Trainer, for making this happen!

Compliance, from page 7

for organic certification. Sample forms may help farmers organize records that will be reviewed at inspection, while organic system plan templates establish the fundamental elements of documenting organic systems.

Pasture for Organic Ruminant Livestock: Understanding and Implementing the Organic Pasture Rule

All organic ruminant livestock producers, whether certified or transitioning, should understand the new recordkeeping requirements of the Access to Pasture Rule, published in February 2010. The reference document provides a thorough picture of what organic producers are required to do to maintain compliance with the rule, in addition to discussing recordkeeping practices and resources for developing a pasture management plan.

The PDF version of the NOP Handbook is [available online](#). Enter ‘NOP Handbook’ in the search field.