



# CCOF

Organic Certification Trade Association Education & Outreach Political Advocacy

For Immediate Release

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## CCOF Welcome National Organic Standards Board to California

**(April 15, 2010) Santa Cruz, CA.** CCOF, one of the nation's largest and oldest organic certification agencies, will be welcoming the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to California. The NOSB will meet April 26-29, 2010 at the Heidrick Ag History Center in Woodland, California. The all-volunteer NOSB, which meets every six months and is responsible for evaluating, discussing, and recommending standards improvements to the National Organic Program (NOP), last met in California 10 years ago. CCOF Executive Director, Peggy Miars, will give opening welcome remarks at the start of the public comments day Tuesday, April 27.

CCOF will also be hosting an evening reception where NOSB members, the California Secretary of Agriculture, elected officials, certified organic operations and others stakeholders in the sector will have the opportunity to meet, talk and network.

"We are very pleased to be welcoming the NOSB back to California," says Miars. "The organic movement took root here in California with CCOF leading the way. Today, the State is home to more certified organic farms than any other state in the country."

The NOSB is comprised of 15 members who advise the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and USDA on implementation of the NOP. Board members include four farmers/growers, two handlers/processors, one retailer, one scientist, three consumer/public interest advocates, three environmentalists, and one USDA accredited certifying agent. Members sit on various committees and come from all parts of the country. CCOF certified members John Foster of Earthbound Farm and Joe Dickson of Whole Foods Market are among new NOSB members, who will take their seats for the first time this April. Steve Muir of CCOF certified Campbell Soup is serving the fourth year of his five year term.

The work of the Board is invaluable and includes responsibility for reviewing new materials petitions, organic standards interpretations, and recommendations on development of new organic standards. Recommendations by the NOSB are not official policy until they are approved by the NOP. The organic sector is characterized by openness and transparency and a commitment on the part of its constituents to uphold and protect the integrity of the organic seal as the industry expands and grows.

"The NOSB meetings are democracy in action," states Claudia Reid, CCOF Policy and Program Director. "The organic community is represented by a diverse group of individuals, companies, and organizations with different objectives and with assorted, and often strong,

passionate, opinions and, although that can make the democratic process more difficult at times, it is through respectful dialogue that we achieve our mutual goal to protect the integrity of organic standards and principles,” Reid explains.

#### About CCOF

*CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers), a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1973 and is one of the nation’s oldest and largest third-party organic certifying agencies. CCOF certifies, educates, advocates and promotes organic through:*

- *A premier organic certification program for growers, processors, handlers, and retailers.*
- *Programs to increase awareness of and demand for certified organic product and to expand public support for organic agriculture.*
- *Advocacy for governmental policies that protect and encourage organic agriculture.*

*CCOF certifies more than 2,160 organic operations in 34 states and three foreign countries and serves over 350 supporting members - consumers, suppliers, businesses and individuals - interested in supporting its work.*

*More information on CCOF can be found at [www.ccof.org](http://www.ccof.org).*