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“Certified Organic” is published quarterly by CCOF and serves CCOF’s diverse membership base and others in the organic community including consumers and affiliated businesses. Letters to the editor should be sent to peggy@ccof.org. CCOF reserves the right to edit or omit submissions and letters received.
Looking back at 2009, CCOF members have faced enormous obstacles including financial difficulties, wildfires, media stories attacking organic and numerous other personal disasters that we may never hear about.

Amidst these struggles, I am continually humbled by the generosity of CCOF members who freely give their time, talents and treasures to organizations and individuals in need. Our feature article “Organic Gives Back” beginning on page 10 highlights the stories of CCOF members who are making a difference in their communities.

Certified members should be sure to read important certification updates from the California State Organic Program and the National Organic Program (NOP) beginning on page 22.

I’m very excited to announce that Miles McEvoy has been named the new NOP Director. Miles is well known to us at CCOF and the rest of the organic community and is no stranger to government work. He has been employed for over 20 years at the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), first as an organic inspector and most recently as manager of WSDA’s organic program.

With all the players in place under the new Administration – Kathleen Merrigan as USDA Deputy Secretary, Rayne Pegg as Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, and now Miles McEvoy as NOP Director – I look forward to continued good news from Washington, DC!

While the news is rosy in some areas, we still face continuing challenges in other areas. Climate change has become a topic of everyday conversation. The combination of less water and increased temperatures is a recipe for disaster that will hit farmers the hardest. We’ve experienced years of drought in California, and I anticipate we’ll see many more to come.

Fortunately, some organizations are already working on this critical issue. CCOF is a founding member of the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN), which hosted the first California Climate & Agriculture Summit for sustainable agriculture supporters in early October. The conversation will be followed up at CCOF’s Annual Convention February 6 and 7 in Chico (See page 28). Tim LaSalle, Executive Director of the Rodale Institute, will present the keynote speech on “Regenerative Organic Farming: A Solution to Global Warming”. Participants will leave with real-life tips they can put to work on the farm or in the processing facility.

Thank you for supporting CCOF’s work to certify, educate, advocate, and promote organic. If you’re not already a member, please join us at www.ccof.org/support.php. Here’s to a happy ending to 2009 and a prosperous 2010!

Peggy Miers
CCOF Executive Director
New Certified Hotel in Napa
CCOF is pleased to announce our first certified organic hotel vegetable garden. Located in the center of Yountville, in the heart of Napa county, the Bardessono Hotel and Spa hosts 62 suites, a luxury spa and a restaurant that serves food from the hotel's very own CCOF certified organic garden. Bardessono also incorporates a number of energy-efficient and environmentally conscious design elements and practices, which are designed to achieve the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design's (LEED) Platinum certification, the highest standard for environmental design. Eco-conscious tourists now have the perfect place to stay, relax, unwind and eat great organic food while exploring the numerous CCOF certified organic wineries in the region. To find out more about Bardessono Hotel, visit www.bardessono.com.

Alberty’s Organics Wins University Contract
CCOF Supporting Member, Alberty’s Organics, was recently awarded a contract with the University of Colorado at Boulder. The $90,000 contract brought organic produce and other items including vegan salad dressing, meats and cheeses to the university’s eateries. The contract ran for a month with Alberty’s delivering a minimum of three deliveries a week to the campus.

Whole Foods Market Offers Loans to Small Producers
The Whole Foods Market Local Producers Loan Program offers up to $100,000 to small producers. Since the program’s inception in 2006, Whole Foods has committed $2.5 million to businesses trying to succeed. With a goal to reach $10 million the loan program offers no closing fees, repayment fees, or application fees for its recipients. Interest rates vary from 5 to 9%. Applicants attest to the straightforwardness and simplicity of the application and loan process. The application can be downloaded from the Whole Foods Market website at www.wholefoodsmarket.com/values/local-producer-loan-program.php.

Sweet Earth Chocolates Opens Retail Shop
Sweet Earth Organic Chocolates opened its first retail shop in San Luis Obispo on July 11. The shop offers a selection of award-winning chocolates, memorabilia and body care products. Profits benefit small farmers in Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire through Project Hope and Fairness. For more information, visit www.sweetearthchocolates.com.

CCOF Members Develop Innovative Wine Packaging
DeLoach Vineyards has partnered with The Fairmont San Francisco Hotel to develop a Barrel-to-Barrel program, offering their award-winning Pinot Noir in a convenient 10-liter barrel to hotels and restaurants. The barrel, containing the equivalent of 13 standard bottles of wine, reduces the carbon footprint associated with conventional packaging while preserving the wine’s exceptional quality. When re-ordered, the wine arrives in a recyclable 10L eco-bag that fits easily inside of the barrel, protecting the wine from oxidation and maintaining exceptional taste.

Stoneyfield Farm Attacks Cow Burps with New Feed
In an effort to curb greenhouse gas emissions from the burps of their dairy cows, Stonyfield Farm began a new diet regimen with a new feed which includes foods high in Omega 3 such as alfalfa, flax and grasses. Since the program’s inception, Stonyfield has reduced methane emissions from their cows by an average of 12%. The milk produced is also significantly higher in nutritional value. Stonyfield states, “If every US dairy were to adopt this approach, in less than one year, the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we could reduce would be the equivalent of taking more than half a million cars of the road!”

California Natural Products now offers a CalNaturale 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon in a convenient and sustainable Tetra Pak. The liter Pak is 19% lighter than traditional glass bottles and carries 33% more wine. The wine is also offered in a 500mL Pak. The Tetra Pak carton is portable, unbreakable, lightweight and easy to open, offering a convenient alternative to a glass bottle, while using a portion of the energy normally required to produce wine containers. Seventy percent of the product’s packaging comes from renewable resources.
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Uncommon Ground Raises the Roof on Organics

Uncommon Ground has been recognized as the nation’s first restaurant with their own certified organic rooftop garden. Owners, Helen and Michael Cameron, started the restaurant with the idea of testing out organic farming for themselves.

The organic garden is located on the 2,500-square-foot rooftop in Chicago. The produce that Uncommon Ground grows can only be enjoyed in meals at their restaurant. The restaurant has also received numerous awards for their sustainable efforts such as: Chicago Magazine’s 2008 award as Best New Restaurant, Time Out Chicago’s 2008 award as Best New Breakfast Spot, the U. S. Green Building Council’s 2009 Environmotion award and the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce’s 2009 Green Business of the Year award. For more information about Uncommon Ground visit their website at www.uncommonground.com.

Organic Farms as Subdivision Amenities

From Central California to Vermont, developers are establishing residential subdivisions around organic farms. Ed McMahon, a senior fellow with the Urban Land Institute, stated, “There are currently at least 200 projects that include agriculture as a key community component.” He finds that open space improves the return for developers. By living near a farm, homeowners have access to open space for visual aesthetics, wholesome activities for children and trails for recreational purposes. The Prairie Crossing, a subdivision among agricultural land in Boise, Idaho, serves as an innovative model for future developers; the 1,756-acre project repaid a $12 million loan and claimed a $2.8 million pretax profit by selling 785 of 2008 lots by 2008.

U.S Department of Agriculture Releases 2007 Census of Agriculture

The U. S. Department of Agriculture ranked California, Wisconsin, Washington, and New York as the top four states in the nation, touting the largest numbers of organic farms. The 2007 census of agriculture showed that out of the 20,437 nationwide organic farms, California boasts 3,515 occupying 368,934 acres of farmland. California remains a major contributor to the US sales of organic production, which totaled $1.7 billion in 2007. Read the full report at www.agcensus.usda.gov.


The Agronomy for Sustainable Development Journal published a report in May 2009 by the French Agency for Food Safety (AFSSA), which shows the benefits of organic food compared to conventionally grown food. The research also showed organic vegetables contain around 50% less nitrates than conventionally grown food and 94–100% of organic food does not contain pesticide residues.

U. S. Families Increase Household Purchases of Organic Products

The economic recession has not stopped U. S. families from spending the extra dollar on organic products. The 2009 U. S. Families’ Organic Attitudes and Beliefs Study, sponsored by the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and KIWI Magazine, found three out of ten U. S. families are purchasing more organic products compared to a year ago. Seventeen percent of surveyed U. S. families reported an increase in household spending on organics over the last year.

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Numi Tea Launches New Sustainability Projects

Numi Organic Tea Brand launched a new carbon offset program in June that donates money to domestic wind energy and international water treatment projects, while also offsetting its total emissions for a year by purchasing renewable energy certificates from the Wilton Wind Energy Center. In addition, all of Numi’s packaging materials are biodegradable, recyclable, and cello-wrap free. Post-consumer waste or bamboo makes up ninety-five percent of their packaging materials. “We’ve strived to ensure that our values align with the brand, and I think our line extensions and product innovation have been keys to our success,” states the co-founder and CEO of Numi, Ahmed Rahim.
Organic Gives Back
by: Bridgett McGrath

Embedded within the philosophy of organic agriculture and food production is the commitment to protecting the soil and water for future generations and the vision for a food system that fosters a diverse and dynamic landscape. At CCOF, we have seen how many of our members have taken this philosophy beyond the regulations and paperwork and addressed deeper concerns of human health, poverty, education and sustainable living systems. In a year in which many people have suffered economic hardships and challenges, we have chosen to focus on how organic is giving back. The stories featured in this article provide just a few examples of how CCOF members have embraced a broader commitment to their communities, both near and far, in truly remarkable ways.

McEvoy Ranch stands on 550 acres of a former dairy farm in Petaluma, CA. The ranch boasts a longstanding reputation for producing some of the highest quality organic olive oil in the country. “From the very beginning our goal has been to produce the best olive oil” says Jefferey Creque, McEvoy Ranch Operations Manager. “What that means and how we achieve it has made us take a broader community and world view.”

Over the past few years McEvoy Ranch found an increasing number of donation requests coming from various organizations within their community. McEvoy staff members needed to formulate a strategy for responding. They put together a 10% Fund, where a percentage of the fees associated with the public tours of the ranch would be donated to various organizations including the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), UCSC Farm and Garden Program, Strybing Arboretum and the Petaluma Educational Foundation among others. Several staff members were involved in these educational programs before working for McEvoy Ranch, so supporting them is something that remains very close and personal.

“We see our responsibility as agriculturalists through the lenses of an organic farmer, but know that in order to share our commitment we must form a business model that connects our visitors to our mission.”
– Jefferey Creque, McEvoy Ranch

Ehlers Estate winemaker and general manager, Kevin Morrisey wears many different hats in his position overseeing the winery’s operations, but for him all of the long hours are worth it; “You work harder when you know where the money is going and the impact it makes.”

Jean Leducq, founder of Ehlers Estate, had a vision of creating a French-style winery in the heart of Napa Valley. He dedicated his life to producing rich and complex wines and his entrepreneurial success went hand-in-hand with his philanthropic work. As a long-time sufferer of heart disease, Jean, along with his wife Sylvaine, saw a need for more work to be done in understanding.
diagnosing and treating cardiovascular disease. As a result they founded the Leducq Foundation with the intention of encouraging innovative cardiovascular research through international collaboration.

Jean also wanted his passion for winemaking to live on long after him and after his death in 2002, the estate was left in trust to the Leducq Foundation with 100% of its profits used to fund the Foundation’s research. Currently the foundation funds 23 grants in 16 different countries and has provided $170 million since 1999. Unlike many privately funded projects, the research conducted with grants from the Leducq Foundation must be shared publicly throughout the cardiovascular research community. The grants are awarded across international borders to a network of researchers. “The most basic, cutting edge research is often the most difficult to find funding for,” says Kevin. “What sets the Leducq Foundation apart from other research grants is the commitment to transparency and collaboration. Disease and suffering have no nationality and the ability to cross borders has a significant impact, especially for developing nations.”

Trent and Linda McNair, owners of Surf City Growers, both worked in the high-tech industry before they made the decision to quit their jobs and open an organic nursery. The McNairs have developed a My First Organic seed starting kit that encourages parents to teach their children about where their food comes from and how it is grown. The kit includes all of the supplies necessary to produce a variety of organic vegetables as well as a coloring book explaining the process of growing healthy food. For every kit that is sold, a percentage of the proceeds is donated to a school of choice.

Since the launch of the kit, the McNairs have had a wave of positive responses from both parents and teachers. “It is exciting to see the momentum of the grow-your-own movement. Parents are getting outside with their children, away from the computer and video games, and engaging in activities that teach responsibility and understanding of where their food comes from,” says Linda. Yet, although the feedback was great, Linda and Trent felt that they were only scratching the surface. “We saw a big hole in the California education system as science programs weakened due to lack of funds and supplies and we wanted to develop a curriculum that would provide a hands on learning experience” says Trent.

As a result, Trent and Linda have begun creating an all-inclusive K-2 Classroom Kit that will include a Teacher Resource Pack with instructions and lesson plans. They have also teamed up with The National Gardeners Association (NGA), who provide an important distribution channel that allows teachers all over the nation to access the curriculum. “They were the first folks to stand up and say ‘yup we want to be a part of it’” says Trent. “It’s not just about gardening; it’s about making links to earth science, environmentalism and nutrition.”

When asked about their hopes for the future, Trent responded, “we know we will have made a difference when we are able to work and live in a sustainable food system that allows us to produce and deliver organic food within our own county, with that money going back to our local schools and economy.”

In a West Oakland community where families struggle to meet their basic needs, the conversation around organic farming undoubtedly sits on the periphery. Yet the managers of People’s Grocery made a personal decision to have the organization’s three-acre farm in Sunol certified organic, serving as a catalyst to conversations about sustainability while fortifying a passion for community driven agriculture.

Brahm Ahmadi and Malaika Edwards, the co-founders of People’s Grocery, saw that the need for food access remained continually unanswered. After years of working against unjust systems within urban areas, looking at food insecurity seemed the logical jumping off point. They realized that
they needed to take on a holistic vision if they wanted to effectively address health and social justice within their community. The types of health problems they were seeing were directly related to an environment void of grocery stores and access to healthy foods.

People’s Grocery has developed a number of programs that focus on enterprise development, urban agriculture and community outreach and education. Some of their projects include a Peer 2 Peer program in which fellow middle and high school students educate each other about food justice and eating healthy, job training that provides community members with skills to be competitive in the workplace and a modified CSA (community supported agriculture) program called The Grub Box. The Grub Box allows residents to subscribe to a seasonal, culturally-appropriate, affordable bag of organic fruits and vegetables from the Sunol Farm and community gardens on a weekly or bi-monthly basis at an affordable price. Through these programs People’s Grocery has been able to make a significant impact within their community and they have big plans for the future. They are in the process of developing a program called Community HANDS (Health and Nutrition Demonstrators), which trains community members to deliver demonstrations and educate other community members in exchange for compensation. They also are in the early stages of building a fully equipped grocery store in West Oakland. “We hope that through our projects we can help build a new food system” shares Brahm.

Local, community-based food movements gave birth to the concept of integrated food systems, but in today’s global economy it is equally important to recognize the impact that our food choices have on communities worldwide.

Guayakí Yerba Mate began as a senior project of two students, Alex Pryor and David Karr, from Cal Poly University in San Luis Obispo. Their goal was to provide organic and fair trade yerba mate teas through an innovative business model called Market Driven Restoration. Through this business model, Guayakí serves as a bridge, linking consumer purchases of healthy Yerba Mate products with indigenous communities engaged in sustainable agriculture and reforestation. “In the beginning our focus was organic, fair trade and shade grown, but we have evolved and grown, and with that growth we have felt the need to look at not just sustaining what we are doing currently but also towards reparation of lands that have already been damaged,” says Pierre Ferrari, Guayakí’s VP of Marketing. “The most important thing we communicate to our customers is that the price they pay for their Yerba Mate is for more than what they hold in their hand.”

Currently, Guayakí has a team of five employees dedicated to reforestation projects in Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil. The team provides technical assistance and support for farmers by maintaining nurseries of indigenous plants while providing technical assistance in the process of successful transplanting. In addition, Guayakí brings experts on organic farming and local mate growers together in various seminars to talk about the best possible practices. The seminars are open to the entire community, thus encouraging many farmers to adopt organic practices.

Guayakí’s biggest endeavor, 2000 by 2010, is an ambitious project that aims to establish the restoration of 2000 acres of rainforest land by the year 2010. In order to achieve this goal, they have launched a wide variety of new products. “Getting people to try something new that they may never have heard of before can be quite a challenge” says Pierre, “but passion and awareness are infectious. The more you begin to learn about the benefits of Yerba Mate and the impact we are making on the areas where it is grown, the more you see how your choices impact a community thousands of miles away from you.”

Amidst the conversation with each of these individuals there lies a common thread; each member views their choice to grow and produce organically as an integral part of their overall mission. Giving back is not an afterthought, it is an extension of personal values that are carried through every action and decision they make as successful business people.
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Organic Produce Nourishes the Hungry

By Annelise Kelly

In its 19-year history, Ag Against Hunger (AAH) has distributed over 150 million pounds of surplus fresh produce from California’s Salinas and Pajaro Valleys. Due to price fluctuations, picked processed vegetables and fruit from this productive region are often left unsold or stuck in warehouses without a buyer; acres of nutritious crops get scheduled to be plowed under.

The non-profit, founded by Tim Driscoll of Driscoll Strawberry Associates; Jess Brown, Executive Director of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau; and Willy Elliot-McCrae, Executive Director of Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County, is determined to channel abundant excess harvest to the poor, whose diets are chronically short of fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition to distributing donations, AAH organizes gleaning parties to rescue produce left in the field due to cosmetic blemishes or low prices.

Of the 50-60 growers who contribute to AAH, about 10% have some acreage under organic cultivation. According to Abby Silva-Taylor, the executive director of AAH, recipients appreciate both organic and conventional produce. She finds that small organic producers are particularly active contributors to AAH’s gleaning program, and “the organic growers tend to really make a connection with the gleaners. They go out in the fields and share their farm stories with volunteers.”

A number of CCOF certified members are active participants in the AAH program. Earthbound Farm has been contributing to AAH since 2006. Since then, “we have provided almost one million pounds of fresh and nutritious produce” states Hillary Fish, Marketing Associate for Earthbound Farm and a board member of AAH. She finds it “staggering that 20% of people living here in the Monterey Bay area are food insecure.” Fresh produce is particularly valuable because “the low income people in our community also live at the greatest risk of obesity because they don’t have access to healthy food choices.”

Each year, a number of Driscoll farms donate “20,000-100,000 pounds of produce, depending on crop and market conditions” says Greg Anderson, Retail Sales Manager and AAH board member. “It’s so great to see the community come together for such a great cause—feeding the hungry. They [AAH] have a long heritage of helping those in need and I think they’ll be around a long time.”

Dale Coke, of Coke Farm/Jardines, appreciates the gleaning program because “it’s great that people get a chance to do the work and see what that’s like.”

Thanks to the combined efforts of growers, distributors and social service agencies, Ag Against Hunger has become a model for produce recovery and distribution. Executive Director Abby Silva-Taylor welcomes inquiries from anyone interested in pursuing a similar mission. “We’ve helped organizations throughout the country feed the hungry.” For more information on how to get involved, visit www.agagainsthunger.org.

Annelise Kelly is a Portland, Oregon-based food and travel writer. Her writing has appeared in National Geographic Traveler, Pacific Fishing Magazine, The Santa Cruz Weekly, the Salinas Californian, and Portland’s Southeast Examiner. She’s been interviewed on NPR’s Weekend Edition by Liane Hansen and was a prize-winner in Lonely Planet’s “One Tank Getaway” contest. She has traveled extensively in Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and North America, and is perpetually fascinated by food, culture and issues of sustainability.
Education & Promotion

Napa Valley Grapegrowers Organic Winegrowing Conference
This year, CCOF again participated in the Napa Valley Grapegrowers Organic Winegrowing Conference held at Frog’s Leap Winery in Rutherford, CA on July 23. Elizabeth Whitlow, CCOF’s North Coast Regional Service Representative, spoke on the process of becoming certified organic and the pitfalls to avoid. In addition, Jody Biergel, CCOF Director of Handler Certification, gave a presentation on the regulations revolving around organic wine labeling. Of the conference participants, a third were already certified organic wine grape growers and wineries, another third were in transition to organic and the remaining third were looking to learn more about what is involved in organic certification. “This is an excellent, informative event for all those interested in learning about organic wine, grapegrowing, winemaking and new techniques in pest management including the innovative vineyard equipment now available. We are very happy to be involved in the event” states Biergel.

Eco-winegrowing in the North Coast
CCOF also participated in “Growing Even Greener: Eco-winegrowing in California’s North Coast Region” in August in Hopland, California. The two day conference, hosted by UC Cooperative Extension, the Mendocino Winegrape & Wine Commission and California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance, was created to help grape growers learn about green trends and innovations, and to further increase quality and market advantage through sustainable, organic and biodynamic practices in vineyards and wineries. Elizabeth Whitlow, CCOF’s North Coast Regional Service Representative, discussed organic wine labeling along with a panel of CCOF certified wine-makers: Benziger, Mendocino Wine Co. and Bonterra Vineyards. Other inspiring topics at this event included a discussion by Paul Dolan on ‘green opportunities’; water conservation and dry farming in winegrapes, increasing resilience and biodiversity in vineyards, carbon sequestration and innovative pest management practices.

The Organic Summit
CCOF staff members attended the Organic Summit conference in Stevenson, Washington in June to discuss the future of organic, emerging regulatory issues and market trends. Conference attendees were greeted by a video message from USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan. Merrigan continues to voice her commitment to organic and shared her goal to integrate organic into every agency within the USDA. Her comments marked an historic day for the organic sector.

Certification Staff Training Tours
CCOF Certification Staff members took part in a number of tours of CCOF certified processing facilities over the past year. The tours allow our staff to keep up-to-date on various steps and procedures in organic processing and provide a more comprehensive background for answering questions from our certified members. We would like to thank Fresno Cooperative Raisin Growers, Tomatek Processing, Fetzer Winery, Marich Confectionary, and Straus Creamery for taking the time to provide tours through their facilities. If CCOF members are interested in hosting tours please email marketing@ccof.org.

Continued on page 19
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Education & Promotion  Continued from page 16

Organic Strawberry Workshop

CCOF partnered with the Organic Research Network to promote their series of workshops on organic strawberries and vegetables, which took place in Watsonville, CA and concluded a five year study on pest control and fertility management for organic strawberries. The projects were conducted by researchers from UC Santa Cruz, UC Davis and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). With the focus of most of the studies centered in California’s Central Coast, the results proved especially valuable for strawberry farmers in this region. The first day of presentations focused on soil fertility management in organic strawberry and vegetable production. The majority of the trials focused on nitrogen (N) fertility using a mixture of cover crops and timed application of organic N fertilizers. The second day of presentations focused on evaluating the challenges of pest management and the struggle to maintain a vital production level through effective disease control. For more information on these studies, visit www.ccof.org/org_resources_uidcstrawberries.php or visit www.agroecology.com to access presentation material.

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CCOF invites you to join us for our 2010 Annual Convention February 6-7 at the Dairy Pavilion at CSU Chico.

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CCC Certified Organic Magazine—Fall 2009
Jon Grucci, Handler Certification Specialist

Jon Grucci came to CCOF over eight months ago with a Bachelor’s degree in Geography from the University of Delaware. Prior to joining CCOF, he worked with Devine Consultants for eight years, where he designed and took care of custom home vineyards. Jon spends most of his time reviewing new applications for food handling/processing companies and updating organic system plans. He is passionate about organic and sustainable agriculture. Outside of CCOF, he enjoys music, especially percussion, and has a fondness for camping and backpacking. While he would like to travel world-wide, he is happy tending to his plants at home through landscaping and gardening.

Bridgett McGrath, Marketing Specialist

Bridgett McGrath began working at CCOF as an intern in September 2007 while a student at UC Santa Cruz. Bridgett was one of the first members of the CCOF internship program. She graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies in June of 2008. Bridgett was thrilled to return to CCOF as a full-time staff member in October 2008. As Marketing Specialist, she edits the quarterly magazine, maintains the CCOF website, coordinates events and tradeshows, manages the intern team and talks to prospective applicants looking to become certified organic. Outside of CCOF, Bridgett loves the outdoors and enjoys hiking, collecting rocks, gardening and admittedly confesses to being a big architecture geek.

Kelly Lehman, Grower/Certification Specialist

Kelly Lehman came to CCOF just over seven months ago. Before coming to California, she worked for Pennsylvania Certified Organic, also as a certification specialist. She received her post-graduate degree in Law with a concentration in Environmental Law and worked at an environmental law firm. Her current work at CCOF involves reviewing applications from new applicants, handling inquiries over the phone and working with other members of the grower certification staff. Kelly enjoys her job here because she feels that the office is a great and open learning environment (and the location is great, too!). Her hobbies outside of CCOF involve hiking, tending to her backyard garden and cooking.

SAVE THE DATE:

“Healthy Soils, Healthy Food”
CCOF Education Conference

February 6 – 7, 2009
Dairy Pavilion, Chico CA

CCOF’s two-day Educational Conference will include presentations; break out sessions and farm tours aimed at helping participants understand the complex relationship between soil, inputs, resources, outputs and the food system. The keynote speaker, Tim LeSalle, Executive Director of the Rodale Institute, will be discussing new research that shows the positive effects healthy soil can have on our environment. Other participants will include CSU Chico faculty, local growers and processors and regulators. Attendees will also participate in a variety of farm tours in the area, including tours of La Rocca Vineyards, CSU Chico’s vegetable farm and dairy.

For more information, visit www.ccof.org/educationconference.php.

Sponsorship opportunities available, contact advertising@ccof.org.
Certification News

CDFA State Organic Program Prohibits Two Compost Products

On August 5, 2009 the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) State Organic Program (SOP) sent a notice to all registered organic growers and certifiers informing them that Nortech Gold Compost could not be used in organic production. A similar notice was distributed on September 23, 2009 regarding Grover Wonder Grow Compost. The notices state that continued use of these materials in organic production could jeopardize an operation’s organic status. This action is largely unprecedented and may be an indication of future enforcement actions.

New Products and Labels: Seek Approval Prior to Production and/or Printing

During recent National Organic Program (NOP) certifier trainings, the NOP indicated that there is limited tolerance for the use of non-compliant labels in the marketplace. CCOF operations that produce products or new labels that do not meet either formulation or labeling requirements are increasingly likely to receive notices of non-compliance, and may not be allowed to use up existing labels that do not meet NOP standards. Please note that certifiers are required to submit copies of notices of non-compliance to the USDA.

Please submit labels and products to CCOF prior to production to avoid costly errors. CCOF will review your label and/or product as quickly as possible. If you have a compressed timeline, please inform CCOF of your deadline so we can try to meet it. New products or labels that are disclosed during inspections and found to be out of compliance may be considered significant issues. The NOP has indicated a clear preference that certified operations use up labels with minor mistakes within 90 days.

Minor mistakes are categorized by USDA to include:

- Incorrect formatting or location of “Certified organic by CCOF” statement.

Common serious mistakes on labels include:

- Failure to include the statement “Certified organic by CCOF” below information identifying the handler or distributor.
- Use of “100% Organic” on labels when the product does not meet the specific requirements for this labeling category.
- Failure to correctly identify organic ingredients in the ingredient panel or unintentionally representing non-organic ingredients as organic.
- Use of the USDA seal in colors other than the allowed combinations: green and brown or black on a white or transparent background. Indistinguishable variances such as dark navy blue instead of black may be permissible, particularly on labels printed in only one color.
- Identification of a product with 70-95% organic content as “Organic” when it should be labeled “Made with organic (specified ingredient or food group).”
- Use of “Organic” on labels for products that include non-approved ingredients or processing aids.

To view the NOP’s presentation on labeling, go to www.ccof.org and click on “Certification,” then “Updates and Resources.”

International Standards Updates:

Korean Organic Standards Deadline Looms

As reported in past issues, the Korean Organic Standards are scheduled to be implemented on January 1, 2010. As of this writing, the Korean government has been firm that after this date products sold as organic in Korea must be produced and certified to Korean standards and certified by the Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MIFAFF) accredited certifier. The accreditation and certification requirements are problematic for US certifiers, and it appears unlikely that all ingredients can be re-certified to this new standard.

CCOF, along with many other US organic certifiers, several US Senators, the Organic Trade Association, a variety of traders, the Foreign Agricultural Service and the National Organic Program have been working with Korean trade representatives to address this issue. Korea is seeking equivalency with Australia, and US officials are pursuing a similar arrangement for US organic goods. It remains to be seen what will happen when the new standard goes into effect; however, Korean officials have indicated that any product in Korea or shipped prior to January 1, 2010 will be allowed to be sold as organic until the product’s expiration date.

CCOF is exploring options to work with foreign certifiers to provide Korean Organic Standards certification in the US for CCOF clients. This is not a preferable option and may only be viable for those companies with relatively few suppliers who are all CCOF-certified or certified to Korean standards independently. As new standards develop worldwide we sincerely hope to see more equivalency agreements, such as the recent agreement between the US and Canada. If you have specific concerns, work with the Korean market, or have additional questions, please contact export@ccof.org for more information. CCOF depends on feedback from clients to effectively advocate for and meet your needs.
NEW EU Standards in Place - CCOF Applies for Direct Equivalency

Under the new European Union Organic Standards 834/2007 (formerly 2092/91) the EU has revised their regulations and created new options for foreign certifiers and companies. CCOF incorporated the updates in our recent revisions to CCOF Manual III and Global Market Access Program applications. The required practices remain essentially the same, but the standards and citations referenced have changed. There are very few, if any, new requirements for CCOF farmers and processors.

In the current system, certifiers verify that organic operations met EU requirements but importers are required to seek import license derogations for each US-based exporter. This slows down the process, requires significant paperwork and is subject to differing interpretations of various EU member states and certifiers. Now, the EU is accepting applications from certifiers to be recognized as equivalent on a certifier-by-certifier basis. Once implemented, import licenses will no longer be required. CCOF has worked hard during 2009 to prepare our application and will submit it by the October 31, 2009 deadline. We expect to receive a response in 2010, and the first list of recognized certifiers should be published in early 2011. Once listed, CCOF certified companies deemed EU Equivalent will have easier access to the EU and will not require mountains of import license paperwork. Additionally, they will be allowed to produce organic retail products for the EU market and will be able to use an EU organic seal on labels.

CCOF is grateful to the EU Commission for providing this option; we expect these changes to be significant and are working hard to make this a reality. Throughout the process, CCOF will strive to eliminate as many standards differences as possible so that both you and CCOF can concentrate increasingly on the most substantive issues in certification and organic production and less on minor standards or small differences in materials allowances. CCOF clients can expect changes and updates as this process unfolds and can rest assured that CCOF is doing everything we can to simplify organic exports.

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8th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference

December 4-5, 2009

Join Us!
Update your skills, earn continuing education credits and enjoy the beautiful surroundings of San Luis Obispo at the Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference.

Topics include:
- Innovative practices in the management of pests in sustainable agricultural systems
- Certified organic regulations
- Organic and sustainable materials and production practices

A workshop on day two will teach attendees how to identify ant and mealybug species. Information will be included about their biology, pest status and control solutions. Visual aids, handouts and microscopic examination of specimens will be provided. The conference also features a keynote presentation from California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary AG Kawamura on the challenges and opportunities in sustainable pest management in California agriculture.

To Register
For more information or to register visit www.ccof.org
Or call CCOF (831) 423.2263 ext. 25.

Continuing Education Credits
12 Continuing Education Units including 4 Laws and Regulations Units for PCAs have been approved by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (8 units for Day 1 Conference. 4 additional units for Day 2.) 11.5 CEU credits have also been approved for Certified Crop Advisors (CCAs) and 12 RWQCB Ag Waiver units will be given for full attendance.
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We Provide Our Clients Eco-Friendly Label Printing

As label printers we are leading the effort to source and introduce eco-friendly label materials. We have added 100% recycled, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and Rainforest Alliance label papers. We have also introduced a label liner (label backing paper) with 10% recycled content, 90% sustainable forest content, and FSC certification. We are currently working on a biodegradable adhesive.

Sourcing and using the products is not enough however. To attain compliance, our print facilities gained FSC and Rainforest Alliance certification. This certification means that we provide you label papers from a closed-loop supply chain, guaranteeing the sourcing claims.

Select among these materials and we can add the recycled, FSC, and, or Rainforest Alliance logos to your product label. Associations with these institutions help you further promote your brand and company philosophy. Please talk to us about adjusting your label graphics to incorporate the below logos.

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Advocacy

Food Safety Update

CCOF continues to work on food safety legislation and marketing agreements, on both the national and California-state levels. Members of the House of Representatives heard legislation in late spring 2009 that contained some food safety provisions. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-Marin) asked CCOF specifically for our official position on this legislation, which was “oppose unless amend,” and offered to carry our message to the House floor.

CCOF’s position on food safety legislation encompasses the following points:

1. Food safety is a shared responsibility. Organic food producers and handlers of all scales and in all regions must be concerned about providing safe food. The steps taken to assure safety must be customized for each situation, but must incorporate principles discussed below:

2. We support food safety legislation as long as it does not duplicate what organic farmers and processors already do under the National Organic Program (NOP) rule or conflict with existing NOP regulations. This would include any provision that requires “sterile” farming -- i.e. removing wildlife habitat, buffers, hedgerows, etc. -- in order to discourage the presence of wildlife or other organisms.

3. The fees farmers must pay should be kept at a minimum. Any fee assessed for implementing new food safety programs should exist on a sliding scale fee structure, as opposed to a flat fee. The largest segment of farming in America is the small-to mid-size farms, and fees can add up very quickly. Certified organic farmers and processors pay their certifier for the service, and in some cases, pay their state agriculture programs for organic registration. These fees are on top of the fees all farmers pay for various government services and enforcement actions. It isn’t fair that a fee to pay for additional inspections should be the same for a farmer who is working two acres of land as it is for the agri-business working 25,000 acres of land.

4. Food safety legislation should enforce existing laws first. The FDA and USDA and their state counterparts have adequate rules already in place to address food safety. Keeping up with existing inspection protocols and enforcing violations that already exist will go a long way to ensure that our future food supply is safe.

5. Any new regulations should be based on scientific research and should target new research to the core issues. While it is important to look at the entire food production system when determining how to regulate food safety, research emphasis should be placed on areas where there is the most potential for contamination. For example, one area of research – that creating totally sterile farming and food production systems leads to improved food safety – has been called into question. Further research is necessary on this subject, and other research areas must be also be emphasized and pursued.

6. Lastly, organic production has 7 characteristics that make it unique and therefore, a good model for Congress to use when creating individual on-farm plans:

   a. OSP – all aspects of the farm are explained in the OSP and it proves to be a good tool already in place for elaborating food safety protocols.

   b. Traceability – certified organic producers and processors can trace their products from point of sale back to the field of origin, and are required to keep extensive records on this aspect. Many of the traceability requirements in new legislation would not be necessary in an organic system, and would be so costly that they would put many small farmers out of business.

   c. Sanitation – organic production permits anti-microbial steps to be used to lower pathogen contamination (pasteurization, equipment sanitation, steam sterilization are some examples).

   d. Manure and compost – raw manure is not used in organic systems without an extended 90-day or 120-day waiting period between application and harvest. Properly made compost increases microbial diversity in the soil, which leads to the soil’s ability to “fight off” the bad microbes.

   e. Microbial balance – beneficial microbes keep soil in balance, providing good nutrition to crops and keeping pathogens and bad microbes in check.

   f. Biodiversity – creating a more diverse eco-system by adding hedgerows, vegetative buffers and diversified cropping systems will improve microbial balance, water filtration and produce more nutritious food.
g. **Livestock** – Organic regulations do not allow confined feeding operations, considered to be one of the primary sources of E. coli 0157. Nor do they allow routine use of antibiotics that can lead to E. coli strains that are antibiotic resistant.

In addition to Congresswoman’s Woolsey’s support for our position, both Congressman Sam Farr (D-Salinas) and Congressman Dennis Cardoza (D-Modesto) did valiant work informing their colleagues about the important role farming has in America’s economy as well as how food safety legislation needs to focus resources and efforts where they will be most effective and where they will not disproportionally impact small farmers. When the US Senate returned to Washington, DC in late August, they considered adding many “friendly” amendments to their Senate legislation. CCOF is grateful to the many members of Congress who continue to work with their constituents and it is our hope that these amendments will prove palatable to our members.

CCOF also works with the Organic Trade Association and with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, both of whom have a presence in Washington, DC and continue to do great work on behalf of organic and sustainable farmers. For more information and updates on food safety regulations visit www.ccof.org/foodsafety.php.

Along with the work being done in the regulatory arena, many large scale specialty crop organizations such as Western Growers Association, Arizona Farm Bureau, California Farm Bureau, California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement and others, submitted a draft marketing agreement to USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) requesting the establishment of a National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement. CCOF recently participated in a webinar on this process and will continue our efforts to monitor the progress of this process. According to the webinar, it will take between 18 and 24 months for USDA to review the draft, schedule and hold public meetings (which CCOF will attend), release the draft regulations creating the agreement, respond to further public comment on the draft and finalize the regulations. More information on the draft agreement can be found at www.lngma.com.

### California State Organic Program (SOP) Update

CCOF continues to monitor the California State Organic Program’s (SOP) efforts to respond to complaints made by registrants, certifiers and the National Organic Program (NOP). Currently, CCOF sits on the SOP Technical Planning Committee, which reviews all programs and processes of the SOP as well as provides recommendations to the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC). COPAC’s role is to advise the Secretary of California’s Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) on his responsibilities under the California Organic Products Act of 2003 as well as under California’s Health and Safety Code.

Though SOP reform is a slow and lengthy process, CCOF is pleased with the progress that the Technical Planning Committee and the SOP are making thus far in regards to changing their policies, streamlining the registration procedures, and redefining and implementing an effective spot inspection program.

SOP promulgated draft regulations as part of their reform effort this past spring. The regulations would have given certified organic operations the ability to use their organic system plan (OSP) as a reference document for registration purposes, thus eliminating the need to duplicate information contained in the OSP on SOP registration forms. Registrants making $5000 or less would still be required to submit the information requested. Unfortunately, because the information required on the registration forms is required in statute, CDFA’s legal counsel rejected the proposed regulations and notified SOP that they must use the legislative process to streamline the registration process. CCOF remains ready to help in any way we can to make sure this happens.

SOP also recently worked with CCOF staff and other members of the Technical Planning Committee to review the spot inspection program and develop regulations that give the SOP authority to do a much better job in this area. The newly designed spot inspection will focus primarily, although not exclusively, on registrants making $5000 and less,* with the recognition that certified organic operations are already inspected at least once a year by their certifier. SOP acknowledges that they are not certifiers and therefore do not need to duplicate those activities but instead fill the gaps.

CCOF continues to monitor SOP and participate actively in the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC) meetings, to stay informed and to watchdog the actions of the Department.

For additional information on SOP and COPAC visit: www.cdfa.ca.gov.

* The NOP regulations have an exemption clause that states that operations making $5000 or less are not obliged/required to undergo the certification process. While many still do, others do not and are therefore not subject to inspection by certification agencies. So, it is particularly appropriate and beneficial to consumers and the industry for CDFA to be focusing their efforts in this area.
Events Calendar

7th Annual Chico Organic Farming and Food Conference
November 4, 2009, Chico, CA
This all day conference will include breakout sessions on water, energy, climate change, promoting local food marketing, local nutrition and food programs, organic pest management, holistic management approaches, tours of the Organic Farm and Dairy and more. For more information, contact Dr. Lee Altier at laltier@csuchico.edu.

Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference
December 4-5, 2009, San Luis Obispo, CA
Enhance your skills and earn continuing education credits at the 8th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference. The conference will feature presentations on innovative pest management strategies as well as a keynote presentation from California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary, AG Kawamura. Registration includes conference materials, PCA unit processing and meals. See details on page 23. For more information, visit www.ccof.org/pcaconference.php.

35th Winter Fancy Food Show
January 17-19, 2010, San Francisco, CA
CCOF will exhibit at this premier specialty foods show featuring the latest new products in the market. Find CCOF at booth #1664. For more information, visit www.specialtyfood.com.

30th Annual Eco-Farm Conference
January 20-23, 2010, Pacific Grove, CA
Eco-Farm attracts a diverse group of attendees, distinguishing it as a place of connection for farmers, consumers, processors, advocates, distributors, retailers, chefs, academics and policy makers. The conference celebrates its 30th year with the theme: Where the Future is Planted. With over 50 workshops on a variety of topics, the conference provides a forum for the discussion of current issues, trends and policies affecting our food systems. Attendees can find CCOF in the Exhibitor Marketplace, where they can purchase CCOF merchandise and talk to staff members. For more information, visit www.eco-farm.org.

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CCOF Annual Convention

CCOF’s Education Conference: ‘Healthy Soils, Healthy Food’
February 6-7, 2009, Chico, CA
CCOF will be hosting an exciting 2-day educational conference at the CSU Chico Dairy Pavilion. Special keynote speaker Tim LaSalle, Executive Director of The Rodale Institute, will be discussing new research that shows the positive effects healthy soil can have on our environment. The conference will also include presentations and break out sessions aimed at helping participants understand the complex relationship between soil, inputs, resources, outputs and the food system. Day two will include farm tours, including a tour of La Rocca Vineyards, CSU Chico’s vegetable farm and dairy. For more information, visit www.ccof.org/educationconference.php.

CCOF Annual Meeting
February 6, 2010, CSU Chico, CA
CCOF’s Annual Meeting will be preceded by day one of CCOF’s Educational Conference. Contact ccof@ccof.org for additional information.
Introducing Regalia®, a powerful, proven tool for controlling bacterial spot, late blight, early blight and downy mildew on over 100 crops. Regalia switches on natural defense mechanisms so plants produce – and accumulate – higher levels of natural proteins and other compounds that fight disease development. NOP compliant for organic production, with a four-hour REI and zero-day PHI. Find out more at www.MarroneBio.com.

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Learning about Pesticide Exposure

The Pesticide Action Network’s new website, www.whatsonmyfood.org, provides a searchable database aimed at informing consumers about the risk of exposure to pesticide residue on their food. Using figures from the USDA Pesticide Data Program and pesticide toxicology data from the EPA and other authorities, What’s On My Food? allows visitors to compare organic, conventional, imported, and domestic food products in terms of their pesticide residues and toxicity. Visitors can search by food product or by pesticide and the database provides graphs and tables indicating the level of pesticide residue on each food item, in what combinations the residues are present, and information on the associated health risks of the chemicals. The website was created to make public the problem of pesticide exposure and provide consumers with an opportunity to understand the health risks of pesticide exposure without needing to be an expert on the subject.

New Online Green Winegrowing Handbook

With a variety of innovative practices emerging within the wine industry, understanding what’s what can be quite a task. Fortunately Paul Dolan Vineyards along with CCOF Certified Parducci Wine Cellars have published the Green Wine Handbook, an online reference book that provides a comprehensive explanation of organic, sustainable and biodynamic grape growing and winemaking practices. Principles of organic wine grape growing, information on allowed and prohibited substances in organic, the process of certification and how to read organic wine labels are clearly outlined and discussed. In addition to sections on various grape growing practices, the handbook provides a glossary that clearly explains various agriculture terms as well as information on associated certification organizations and related acronyms. To access the Green Winegrowing Handbook, visit www.pauldolanwine.com.

SUCRASHIELD™ KILLS MITES

FAST, EFFECTIVE MITE and insect CONTROL for organic and conventional production.

Effects of SucraShield on Pacific Mite Adults on Grapes*

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Effects of SucraShield on Pacific Mite Eggs*

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**Saracina Receives EQIP Grant**

Certified member Saracina Vineyards received an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) grant to convert some of their last uncertified land to organic as well as to implement conservation practices and planning over the next four years. “This award will offer us the chance to bring life back to some troubled acreage,” says David Huebel, Saracina’s Ranch Operations Manager. David has also offered to answer questions from any growers who are interested in obtaining more information about his experiences in securing this funding. Please contact David via email at dhuebel@saracina.com. For more information on funding for organic, visit [www.ccof.org/classifieds.php#funding](http://www.ccof.org/classifieds.php#funding).

**Earthbound Farm Switches to 100% PCR PET**

In honor of the company’s 25th anniversary, Earthbound Farm announced it would shift 100% of its clamshell packages to post-consumer recycled polyethylene terephthalate (PCR PET). PCR PET is made from recycled plastic products such as water and soda bottles. Virgin PET is produced with natural gas feedstock. The conversion saves 68,000 gallons of water and eliminates 16,000 tons of CO2 annually. The PET clamshells are shatter resistant, recyclable, and light. This shift emphasizes Earthbound Farm’s commitment to the environment as America’s largest grower of organic produce.

**Azomite Mineral Products, Inc Names New Managers**

CCOF Supporting Member, Azomite Mineral Products, Inc., named James Phillips as their Production Manager, responsible for overseeing quality control and all levels of production at their Utah location. In addition, Azomite announced Thetis Sammons as Western Region Director, charged with developing sales and distributorships from the Santa Barbara, CA area.

**UC Santa Cruz and UC Berkeley Listed as “Eco-Enlightened”**

The UC Santa Cruz Farm and Garden’s Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) placed in the top 20 on the Sierra Club’s third annual list of “Most Eco-Enlightened U.S. Universities.” UC Berkeley was also listed as their primary food service provider was the first to be certified organic in the United States.

**Certified Olive Oils Receive Big Awards**

A number of CCOF certified members received special recognition at the 2009 LA International Olive Oil Competition. Pacific Sun Olive Oil received Best in Show for their Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Apollo Olive Oil won a Best of Class Gold Medal for their Organic Sacramento Valley Blend Mistral. Olivas de Oro, Cliff Family Farm, Stone Edge Vineyard and Harris Ranch Napa Valley received Silver Medals while Embry Family Farms and Figueroa Farms were both awarded bronze medals for their various organic olive oils.

**Remembering Kathryn Kennedy**

CCOF certified member Kathryn Kennedy passed away last August at the age of 82. Kathryn began growing grapes in 1973 in the Santa Cruz Mountains after attending the University of California, Davis. The vineyard is renowned for producing full bodied and award winning organic cabernet wines. She will be greatly missed.

**Sustainable Producers Chosen to Present at Investor Conference**

Marrone Bio Innovations has been chosen as part of a group of eight producers to present at the first investor conference to be devoted to sustainable agriculture. The ‘Agriculture 2.0’ conference organizers searched through over 50 companies to find the best representatives in the sector. Speakers at the New York City conference include: Bruce Kahn, of Deutsche Bank, Grayson Hoberg, former CFO of Earthlink and Tod Murphy, President and CEO of The Farmers Diner.
We recognized the need for solutions to organic farming problems which is why we developed a line of organically compliant products.

With over 50 products in the organic product line, and growing all the time, Monterey is now a key supplier of organic farming solutions.
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Isaac Wilson
Lodi, CA
isaac@rivermaid.com
Gift Baskets, Packing, Pears
209-369-3586

Alvie Snow Farms
Ron Snow, Ricky Snow, & Beverly Rogers
Wasco, CA
bsnowfarms@aol.com
Almonds
601-750-3917

American River Ag, Inc.
Craig Walker, Paul Rashing, & Misty McFalls
El Dorado Hills, CA
craig@americanriverag.com
Handling, Storage
916-869-9000

Ametjian Farms (Dinuba Ranch)
Dean Paul Vlazakis & Paula C.
Ametjian & Emmanuel Vlazakis Tulare, CA
Grapes (Raisin)
559-686-5473

Ancient Organics
Matthew ’Matteo’ Girard Maxon Berkeley, CA
ancientorganics@me.com
Ghee
www.ancientorganics.com
510-847-5655

Anomaly Vineyards
Mark Porembski
St. Helena, CA
mark@anomalyvineyards.com
Grapes
www.anomalyvineyards.com
707-967-8448

Aulakh Farms, Inc.
Abraham S. Aulakh
Kerman, CA
aulakh88@gmail.com
Grapes (Raisin), Raisins
559-288-6622

Bad Dog Farms
Bradley Zeve
Carmel, CA
bradley@mcweekly.com
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