



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

Certified Organic

M A G A Z I N E

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Spring 2010

An Organic Road Trip



IN THIS ISSUE

The Age of Enforcement-An NOP Update
Organic & Certification News
Policy & Advocacy

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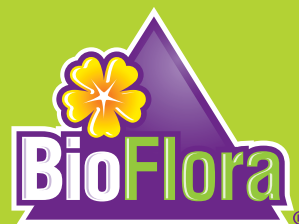
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Feature Article:



Melinda Clark graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a B.A. in Psychology and Environmental Studies. She returned to Santa Cruz, her hometown, to work for CCOF in 2008. After fulfilling a dream of traveling through Europe for three months, Melinda is back in Santa Cruz, working at CCOF and writing for the *Good Times*.

Interested in writing for “Certified Organic”?
Please contact marketing@ccof.org

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www.kaybabineau.com.

First Words



I'm writing this column during my brief time in the office between the Organic Farming Conference in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and Natural Products

Expo West in Anaheim, California. Two very different events serving very different audiences in very different parts of the country. That is what is great about the organic sector. We are a diverse group of individuals with different aspirations and with assorted, and often strong, opinions and personalities. Although that can be painful at times, I know that through respectful dialogue we can all achieve our goals.

In 2010, some of CCOF's priorities include developing a strong platform/position statement for upholding and enhancing the integrity of organic; developing our strategic plan for 2011 and beyond; expanding our educational program for members, prospective

members, and other stakeholders in the organic sector; creating new services for members; and implementing new projects for revenue generation.

It's been a long, cold, rainy winter here in Santa Cruz, and we're itching to get outside. If you are, too, be sure to read An Organic Road Trip beginning on page 12. I was ready to pack my bags after reading about the unique and varied CCOF certified farms and businesses that can be visited in an easy 5-day journey! Create your own organic road trip by going to www.ccof.org/directories.php.

This issue of Certified Organic is packed with other great information. The Certification News section on page 24 highlights improvements in CCOF's wine certification process. Which reminds me...Please join us for our 2nd Annual Organic Beer & Wine Tasting at the Pruneyard Shopping Center in Campbell on June 12th from 5 to 9 p.m. Be sure to check out our Calendar on page 41 for other great events,

including the spring meeting of the National Organic Standards Board and CCOF's reception to welcome them to California.

To stay up to date on policy and advocacy matters, turn to The Age of Enforcement on page 17 to learn about the new and improved National Organic Program and our Advocacy column on page 29 for a candid essay about California's State Organic Program (SOP), the only remaining SOP in the country.

At press time, we've received a copy of the Office of Inspector General's report on the National Organic Program. I've read the full report, and CCOF concurs with the findings and recommendations. We'll report more fully in future publications on this report and NOP's planned strategies for improvement.

Peggy Mias

CCOF Executive Director

Unlock Nature's Energy

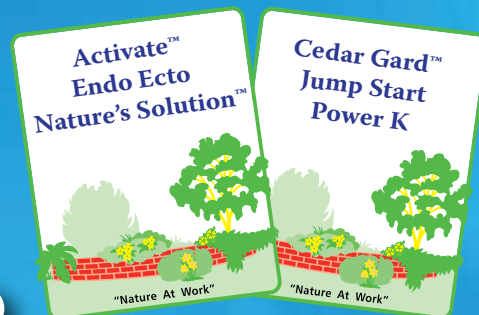
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Member News

CCOF Members Recognized for Environmental Efforts

Fetzer Vineyards Pioneers Waste Reduction

Fetzer Vineyards has been recognized by the Waste Reduction Award Program (WRAP) of the California Integrated Waste Management Board for its outstanding achievements in reducing, reusing, and recycling. Fetzer reduced its landfill waste by 96 percent - from 1,724 tons in 1990 to 58.8 tons in 2008. Part of that success was achieved through Fetzer's comprehensive recycling initiative, which recycles more than 968 tons of glass, cardboard, paper, plastics, metal, pallets, barrels,



and other items. Fetzer also produces approximately 2,500 tons of compost and mulch from leftover grape seeds, skins, and stems and uses it in their vineyards and landscaping. In 2008, Fetzer underwent a major packaging change that converted its entire line of wines to light-weight bottles. The conversion reduced the per bottle weight by an average of 14 percent, resulting in a savings of 2,173 tons of glass per year.

UNFI Distribution Center in Top 25% of Most Energy- Efficient Buildings

CCOF Lifetime Supporting Business Member UNFI's Chesterfield, New Hampshire, distribution center has been awarded the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star rating. To qualify

for Energy Star, the 319,000 square-foot facility had to place among the top 25 percent of the most energy-efficient facilities in the United States. Buildings that earn the Energy Star rating typically utilize 35 percent less energy and emit 35 percent less carbon dioxide into the atmosphere when compared to average buildings.



Organic, Grass-Fed Beef Producer Wins Major Award

Panorama Meats, Inc. announced that one of its founding ranches, Leavitt Lake Ranches in Vina, CA, was awarded the 2009 National Environmental Stewardship Award on January 28 at the 2010 Cattle Industry Annual Convention in San Antonio, TX. Owned and operated by Darrell and Callie Wood, Leavitt Lake Ranches earned the award for its environmental stewardship while improving production and profitability. Panorama's environmental stewardship practices on the nearly 40,000 acres of Northern California rangeland that they own, lease, or manage include restoration of vernal pools and protection of wildlife habitat for native species such as mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and upland game birds. Additionally, they have improved irrigation systems and riparian conditions, conserving habitat for spawning wild salmon.

Benziger Family Winery Leads in Water Improvement Innovation

Benziger Family Winery in Glen Ellen, California, has recently gained attention for creating an almost completely closed loop water system for their winery. The closed loop system works by filtering water through three ponds, which begin with water containing grape sediment and other organic materials and ends with water nearly clean enough for human consumption.

The ponds use natural resources such as organisms living on plant roots in the ponds to filter out impurities. In a normal year, Benziger Family Winery is able to completely irrigate their land without drawing any irrigation water from the ground, an impressive and innovative feat.

Organic Continues to Grow

Jack Neal and Son Continues Organic Expansion

In 2009, CCOF certified another 45 acres of vineyard in Napa Valley managed by Jack Neal and Son Vineyard Management, increasing the number of certified organic properties under their management to more than 25. The Neal Family Vineyards Winery also received its organic production facility certification in 2009. Jack Neal and Son Vineyard Management, following the 2010 harvest, plans to certify an additional 84 acres of vineyard throughout Napa County and is transitioning 131 acres of vineyard for certification in the next three years.

Three Twins Organic Ice Cream Expands Operations

The San Rafael organic ice cream maker opened its third store in 2009,



in San Francisco, and will embark on an expansion plan in 2010 to increase

Member News

production ten-fold. Founding the company with the help of his parents, twin brother and sister-in-law, entrepreneur Neal Gottlieb oversaw a jump in revenue to \$1 million in 2009 from \$375,000 in 2007, a 160 percent increase. "We're trying to grow it into a national brand and get rid of the organic mystique," said Gottlieb. Now, he is poised to open a 4,200-square-foot Petaluma factory that will allow the firm to increase its current production of 30,000 gallons a year to 300,000.

Awards and Recognitions

Jojoba Oil Producer Featured on TV Program "California's Gold"

Recently, the TV program "California's Gold," a show highlighting California's diverse socio-economic and cultural life, featured CCOF certified La Ronna Jojoba Company. On the program, the host, Huell Howser, visited with Larry and Donna Charpiet at their 10-acre jojoba farm located in the Eagle



Mountain/Desert Center of Eastern Riverside County, in the shadow of Joshua Tree National Park Wilderness. The Charpiets took Mr. Howser on a tour of their land and explained their environmental stewardship practices, jojoba seed collection, the pressing of the seeds for the jojoba oil, and the ecology of the high desert region that surrounds their farm.

First Lady Michelle Obama Celebrates with Spottswode Sauvignon Blanc

President Barack Obama threw First Lady Michelle Obama a surprise 46th birthday party at Restaurant Nora in Washington, D.C., one of the nation's first certified organic restaurants. Chef Benjamin Lambert prepared a special lamb dish for the First Lady, as well as seared Maine lobster and saffron risotto, which was complemented by a CCOF-certified organic wine, 2008 Spottswode Sauvignon Blanc.

Guayakí Wins Two Beverage Awards from BevNet Magazine

Guayakí, a CCOF-certified organic beverage vendor, has won two industry awards, one for Best New Tea and another for Best Packaging Design from *BevNet Magazine*. According to the *BevNet* article, "Guayakí's Lemon Elation was not only the company's first product to be packaged in aluminum, but it was also the first ready-to-drink yerba mate to go into this format. [...] Ultimately, this is Guayakí's best product to date, as well as the best can design for any tea entry that we've seen in a long time."



Marketing Initiatives

Organic Coffee Roaster First to Launch Facebook Storefront

Equator Estate Coffee & Teas, Inc. announced it is the first food company to launch a storefront on Facebook, allowing consumers to shop for its organic, fair-trade, and Rainforest

Alliance-certified coffees without leaving the social media site. The San Rafael, California-based coffee roaster, tea purveyor, and coffee farm owner sells micro-lot coffees and rare teas to restaurants, hotels, and retailers. The company said it is using iFanStore technology provided by San Francisco-based startup Milyoni to allow fans to stay within Equator's Facebook page during the entire transaction and then to share their activity with friends across a wide range of social networks including Twitter. "Social media is rapidly becoming a critically important vehicle for talking with our customers," said Helen Russell, CEO and co-founder of Equator. "Now, with our new iFanStore, we've opened up an entirely new sales channel for our seasonal, specialty blends."

Whole Foods Unveils New Marketing Campaign

In lieu of traditional New Year's resolutions, Whole Foods Market is encouraging shoppers to share their culinary aspirations for 2010 through in-store declarations and a new Facebook application. The Austin, Texas-based retailer said the Facebook application encourages shoppers to declare "This is my year to..." choosing a food-related mantra that best describes their aspirations for the year. Shoppers and fans of Whole Foods' Facebook page can update their status by announcing their "This is my year to..." aspirations while voting in support of one of the three selected non-profit organizations: the Non-GMO Project, The Organic Center, and GrowingPower.



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In The News

Gradual Recovery in Store for Organic Food Industry

According to a survey by market research firm Mintel, nearly 40 percent of consumers claim they have not changed organic product purchasing habits because of the recession and only 3 percent have stopped buying organic products altogether.



With a slight decline in supermarket sales in 2009 (-0.3 percent), industry consulting firms expect the organic food and drink market to recover gradually during 2010-12.

California Agriculture Receives Millions to Fight Pests and Disease

More than \$13 million will be available for California agriculture to address plant pest and disease issues. The funding is part of the 2008 Farm Bill. In all, \$45 million has been released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with California receiving the largest share of the funding. It is being made available to state agriculture departments, universities, and other organizations in support of 200 state projects that seek to address pest and disease issues.

Pesticide Use Declines in California

Pesticide use declined in California for a third consecutive year in 2008, according to a Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) report. The report, an annual summary of data compiled and published by the California DPR, shows 162 million pounds of reported pesticides were applied statewide, a

decrease of nearly 10 million pounds -- or 6 percent -- from 2007. Pesticide use in production agriculture fell by 9.6 million pounds and in most other categories as well, including structural pest control and landscape maintenance. Warmerdam says pesticide use varies from year to year depending on a number of factors, including weather, pest problems, economics, and types of crops planted. Sulfur use decreased by 12 percent from 2007 to 2008 and accounted for most of the reported pesticide reduction. The data showed a significant decrease in pounds applied to wine grapes, table and raisin grapes, cotton, lumber, and oranges. An indexed summary of the report's data is available at the DPR website, www.cdpr.ca.gov.

Court Rules For Organic Farmers, Against USDA in Approving GMO Beets

A 20-month legal battle between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and plaintiffs represented by Earth Justice Attorneys has ended in favor of organic farmers. In December, 2009, the U.S. District Court for the northern district of California ruled that by neglecting to file an environmental impact statement for Monsanto's genetically engineered sugar beets before prematurely deregulating them, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) violated federal law. The lawsuit was filed in January 2008 on behalf of various groups including the Center for Food Safety, Organic Seed Alliance, and the Sierra Club. The genetically engineered beets were developed by Monsanto to be "Roundup Ready," or resistant to Monsanto's Roundup herbicide. Almost half of the sugar in the United States is made from beets, and in 2009, 1.1 million acres were planted with genetically engineered sugar beets. In March, Earth Justice sought an injunction against the planting of all GMO sugar beets in the U.S. until a full environmental review can be completed; however, a San

Francisco federal district court judge denied the request for the reason that a lack of conventional seed might lead to a sugar beet shortage. A full injunction against the GMO seeds is still being sought.

Britain's Largest Organic Certification Body Issues Organic Carbon Report

Organic farming produces 28 percent higher levels of soil carbon compared with non-organic farming, according to the results of a research project issued by the Soil Association, Britain's largest organic certification body. "The widespread adoption of organic farming practices in the UK would offset 23 percent of UK agricultural emissions through soil carbon sequestration alone, more than doubling the UK government's target of a 6-11 percent reduction by 2020," the Soil Association said, adding that "a worldwide switch to organic farming could offset 11 percent of all global greenhouse gas emissions." The full report is available at www.soilassociation.org.

New EU Organic Logo

A German student won the competition to design a new label for pre-packaged organic food in the EU. Dusan Milenkovic received a prize of 6,000 euros (\$8,163) for his design. Some 130,000 people voted online to choose the symbol and Milenkovic's entry gained 63% of the overall vote. The competition was organized by the European Commission. The new EU-wide "Euro-leaf" logo will be mandatory for all pre-packaged organic food produced in any of the 27 EU member states, beginning in July. Final EU regulations on logo use for imported organic products are forthcoming.



New USDA Office To Help Small Farmers

In December 2009, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the opening of the Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO). The goal of the office is to improve access to USDA programs and enhance the viability and profitability of small, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Working to transform the USDA into a more productive and engaged organization, Vilsack has engineered a host of new outreach efforts to engage community groups and minority organizations throughout the country and provide them opportunities to meet with senior USDA officials to discuss potential partnerships and learn more about the department's services.

Organic Trade Association Appoints Legislative and Advocacy Manager

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) has hired Will Telligman to fill the new

position of Legislative and Advocacy Manager in the organization's new Washington, DC, office. Telligman most recently served as Legislative Affairs Coordinator for the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) in D.C. after a year-long position as Legislative Affairs Assistant with IDFA. Previously, he served as a congressional



intern in D.C. for Representative John Spratt. In his role at OTA, Telligman will assist Laura Batcha, the OTA's Chief of Policy and External Relations, and OTA's Executive Director Christine Bushway, in building and coordinating relationships with key political staff, government officials in the Administration and Congress, and allied organic groups regarding organic agriculture, industry, and trade. Telligman will also educate congressional staff on the potential impact of proposals on organic agriculture and

trade, monitor legislative developments, and provide timely alerts, summaries and analysis to OTA staff and OTA membership.

Farmers Meet to Discuss Virtues and Future of Organic Farming

Farmers across the country gathered in Columbia, Missouri, last February for the Missouri Organic Association's annual conference to find ways to increase the number of Midwestern organic farms. Over 250 people from eight states talked about the virtues of organic food. While still a minority among farmers, (the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a study earlier this month confirming that fewer than 200 Missouri farms were organic), the Missouri Organic Association is ready to make its cause known. The conference brought more than twice as many people as last year, signaling an increasing interest in organic farming in the Midwest.

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An Organic Road Trip

By Melinda Clark

Summertime in southern California is quickly approaching, and more than ever, travelers are looking to get down and dirty – on the farm, that is. California agri-tourism has taken off in recent years as more tourists hope to gain a closer connection with their food.

Organic farms, wineries, and food processors are taking this consumer interest as an opportunity to share their passion for agriculture, promote their products, diversify their incomes, and educate the public about farming, organics, and life in the field. CCOF members across the country host a variety of activities including farm tours, U-pick produce, harvest festivals, and cooking classes as well as on-site venues such as restaurants and B&Bs.

Southern California* is a major participant in the agri-tourism boom, attracting out-of-state visitors and locals alike. That is why CCOF decided to take a five-day road trip through five southern California counties to see what our members have to offer. Read about our Organic Road Trip, then grab friends and family and have your own adventure!

** Though there is some controversy about where 'southern California' actually starts, Wikipedia identifies the northern borders of San Luis Obispo, Kern and San Bernardino counties as the boundary line. And who are we to argue with Wikipedia?!*

Day 1: San Luis Obispo County

1st Stop: Thomas Hill Organics Market Bistro & Wine Bar, Paso Robles

Start the day with lunch at the **Thomas Hill Organics Market Bistro & Wine Bar**. CCOF certified Thomas Hill Farm provides much of the produce for the bistro, while the meat, fish, and bread are brought in from local providers. The produce appearing in the bistro dishes depends on the season and what is being grown on the farm. "I've planted all



the things that I like to eat," laughs Joe Thomas, who owns the farm with wife Debbie. "I also have a lot of things I've planted that I can't get anywhere else – like donut peaches, white nectarines, eight varieties of pomegranates, including heirlooms." While the focus is on the food, the bistro also serves a number of local Central Coast wines. "We really try to feature some of the boutique smaller wineries," says Joe. "We choose wineries that practice organic and sustainable wine practices and we hope to start serving our own wines – Italian varieties such as Barbera and Sangiovese – in a year."

In addition to their Market Bistro, Thomas Hill Farm will soon become an education hub in their community. They are partnering with a nearby winery to create an education center with an expo garden, market, and seminars. A restaurant/café on the winery property will develop its menu around what's growing on the farm. "We would like to be an education farm, where we introduce people to all of these different types of food," says Joe. They are planning a big public opening in May – a good time to start a road trip! 1305 Park St., Paso Robles; tel. (310) 804-5091; thomashillfarms@earthlink.net; www.thomashillorganics.com

What might be growing at Thomas Hill Farm?

Last year the farm was renowned for their Heirloom tomatoes. Throughout the year, fields are filled with Italian greens, broccoli rabe, black kale, chicories, Asian greens, different types of Japanese mustards, and flowering broccoli. In summertime, they are known for their 15 varieties of figs; multiple varieties of persimmons, pluots, plumcots, apriums, plums, and apricots; three varieties of quince, heirloom apples; and table grapes to name a few!

Bonus Stop!

7th Heaven

For just a bit of extra driving, 7th Heaven in Cayucos is definitely worth a stop. Email Jennifer and Chuck Lenet to see if they are holding any of their summer cooking or canning classes or set up an appointment to come pick raspberries (usually August) or take a tour of their farm. tel. (805) 995-1436; pacificfarm@yahoo.com; www.7thheavenorganics.com



2nd Stop: Joebella Coffee Roasters Coffee, Tea & Espresso Bar, Templeton

After dining at the bistro, head south to **Joebella Coffee's** organic coffee, tea & espresso bar, where they brew and serve their own organic coffees. "We can make you a custom cup of any of our coffees on the spot," says Joseph Gerardis,



who owns Joebella Coffee with his wife, Isabel. From roasting for family and friends with a five pound commercial roaster to their first commercial roastery in Atascadero, to showcasing their roasted beans and brews in their own coffee

bar, Joseph and Isabel have maintained their commitment to purchasing only fairly traded and organically grown coffees. 1121 Rossi Rd., Templeton; tel. (805) 434-2479; customerservice@joebellacoffee.com; www.joebellacoffee.com.

3rd Stop: Cal Poly Organic Farm, San Luis Obispo

Located on the beautiful Cal Poly San Luis Obispo campus, the **Cal Poly Organic Farm** provides students and the community with a place to experience organic and sustainable farming hands on. "We're a university farm, so our main mission is to educate the next generation of farmers about organic farming, and we love having visitors!" says Farm Manager Cindy Douglas. Visitors will find between eight and ten different crops growing all year as well as chickens and a library full of resources. Official farm tours include sampling of produce grown on the farm and can be arranged by appointment. If you can't make a tour, feel free to stroll through the grounds. The farm is open to the public year round Monday thru Thursday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. HCS Department, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo; tel. (805) 756-6139; orgfarm@calpoly.edu; www.calpolyorgfarm.com



Thursday night Farmers' Market in downtown SLO

One of California's largest Farmers' Markets is held on Thursdays from 6 to 9 p.m. in the heart of downtown San Luis Obispo. Two blocks of Higuera Street are closed off to make room for over 70 farmers, including many CCOF members, as well as bands, food booths, children's activities and other treats. The restaurants lining the street wheel out massive barbecue pits and start grilling. A savvy shopper can find everything from pizza to warm cookies to hand-pressed cider. It's a party and a market all in one.

Day 2: Santa Barbara County

1st Stop: Hearth in the Cottonwoods, Los Alamos

Arrange to arrive in Los Alamos on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday evening for dinner at **Hearth in the Cottonwoods**, 'Full of Life Foods' much-acclaimed restaurant. What is by

weekday their production bakery for handmade organic frozen flatbreads by weekend night becomes a full restaurant serving local and organic delicacies, including 15-18 varieties of pizza. Full of Life flatbread fans rave about the fresh pizzas, which include most of the flavors carried in their frozen line as well as two specials every weekend - one vegetarian and one meat - featuring seasonal toppings. Sales & Marketing Director Kara VanCorbach is a big fan of their chanterelle pizza when it's in season, as well as their "7 Lily Flatbread" featuring leeks, caramelized sweet onions, spring onions, green garlic, garlic, chives, asparagus, and wild arugula. All of their pizza is handmade and full of "a lot of love and care," says Kara. The restaurant also features a number of local wines. 225 West Bell St., Los Alamos; tel. (805) 344-4400; clark@fulloflifefoods.com; www.fulloflifefoods.com



2nd Stop: Santa Barbara Wine Loop

What southern California trip would be complete without a stop in Santa Barbara wine country? The following wineries all use organic grapes from their CCOF certified vineyards in some of their wines.

Begin the loop with some Syrah and Chardonnay at **Rancho Bernat** in Los Olivos. Tastings at Ranch Bernat are by appointment only, so be sure to call or email ahead of time. Los Olivos Wine Merchant & Cafe, 2879 Grand Ave., Los Olivos; tel. (805) 794-5217; sam@buysantabarbarawine.com; www.bernatinwines.com.

Next, visit **Sunstone Vineyards and Winery** in Santa Ynez. Check out the wood-burning oven in the kitchen and the stone barrel-aging caves built into the hillside. Taste their renowned Rhone varietals (including Viognier) and unique Syrah between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. daily. 125 N. Refugio Rd., Santa Ynez; tel. (800) 313-9463 or (805) 688-9463; fredrice@sunstonewinery.com; www.sunstonewinery.com.



Lastly, stop into **Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards** in Buellton for a late picnic lunch and some of their Burgundy-style wines. Their specialties include Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, as well as Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Noir - Vin Gris (a dry rosé). Richard Sanford, who founded the winery and vineyard with

Continued on page 14



his wife Thekla, describes the winery and surrounding area as “a rustic country setting” and encourages visitors to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy with their wine at one of the creek side picnic benches. Tasting room is open 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. 7250 Santa Rosa Rd. Buellton; tel. (805) 688-9090; info@almarosawinery.com; www.almarosawinery.com

Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards Trivia:

>> Chris Burroughs, Alma Rosa’s tasting room manager, appeared in the movie Sideways – in the scene where Paul Giamatti’s character tastes Sanford’s Vin Gris and says there is “a flutter of like a nutty edam cheese.”
>> In Spanish alma means soul, so the name Alma Rosa reflects the Sanfords’ view that their wines are a reflection of the soul of the rancho.

Day 3: Ventura County

1st Stop: Oxnard Lemon Company, Oxnard

Anyone who is curious about how food travels from farm to grocery store will want to visit **Oxnard Lemon Company**. Email General Manager Sam Mayhew to set up an appointment to tour their packinghouse. The tour starts in the receiving area, then shows how the lemons are washed and sorted, placed in cold storage, packed, put in the cartons and shipped out – everything “from when it arrives here until it goes out to the dock,” says Sam. He adds, “We enjoy doing the tours and it’s important for people, especially ones from urban areas, to see what happens in agriculture so they can appreciate it.” Since the company processes conventional as well as organic lemons, be sure to arrange to tour on an organic production day. 2001 Sunkist Circle, Oxnard; tel. (805) 483-1173; smayhew@oxnardlemon.com; www.oxnardlemon.com

2nd Stop: Bennett’s Honey Farm, Fillmore

After coffee tasting in SLO and wine tasting in SB, now it’s time to honey taste at **Bennett’s Honey Farm**. The tastings take place in the “tasting room” of their store, which also has a live, working bee hive. The whole family is welcome to visit and taste some of their award-winning sage, orange, and avocado honey. Other available honey choices are clover, wildflower, buckwheat, eucalyptus, and cactus. Bennett’s Honey Farm prides itself on extracting honey from local bee keepers and taking it “all the way from the hive to the bottle,”

says Office Manager Susie Alvary. “We take it directly from the farms, orchards, and groves.”

Travelers interested in alternative energy will also want to arrange a tour of their 100% solar-powered facility. Make sure to check in advance for available dates and times. 3177 E. Telegraph Rd. (Hwy 126), Fillmore; tel. (800) 521-2889 or (805) 521-1375; susie@bennetthoney.com; www.bennetthoney.com

Day 4: Riverside County

1st Stop: Glen Ivy Farm/Glen Ivy Hot Springs, Corona

CCOF-certified **Glen Ivy Farm** is owned and operated by a spiritual community that puts on various spiritual workshops and retreats as well as runs a day spa, Glen Ivy Hot Springs, which offers massages and various treatments.

For the spiritual explorer:

The Glen Ivy Center offers self-guided personal retreats. Stay in their historic building, go on a meditation walk and, in their words, “take time from the ordinary and nourish

yourself.” 25005 Glen Ivy Rd., Corona; tel. (951) 277-8701; glenivycenter@glenivy.org; www.glenivy.org



For the farm enthusiast:

Contact Sergio Gutierrez to take a short tour of Glen Ivy Farm. “We get in the truck and go around the loop – see the avocados, grapefruit, stone fruit,” he says. Or call him to make an appointment to come pick navel oranges, weekdays from 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. 25005 Glen Ivy Rd., Corona; tel. (951) 675-0774; www.localharvest.org/farms/M20765



For the leisure lover:

“People are seeking relaxation and a little soothing these days,” says John C. Gray, founder of Glen Ivy Hot Springs, where a Swedish massage or a soak in the mineral baths may be just the thing to soothe stress. The day spa offers a range of massages, mud and clay treatments, and pools and mineral



baths. Many of the facilities are outdoors, in a lush garden setting with citrus trees planted in the 1880s. They also have a café that features avocado and citrus from Glen Ivy Farm. Try the Glen Ivy Sandwich or the grapefruit and avocado salad during grapefruit season. 25000 Glen Ivy Rd., Corona; tel. (888) GLENIVY; info@glenivy.com; www.glenivy.com

2nd Stop: 123 Farm's Annual Lavender Festival, Cherry Valley

Though the majority of this road trip can be done anytime, lavender enthusiasts will want to schedule their travel plans



around **123 Farm's Lavender Festival** taking place on June 12-13 and June 19-20. Take a horse-drawn hay ride through the lavender fields and find out "what we do, what organic means, about lavender, how we

produce it, and what we do with it," says Farm Coordinator Jan Kielmann.

Foodies will enjoy the numerous lavender desserts – ice cream, custard, cheese cake – and various entrees seasoned with lavender. Wash it all down with homemade iced lavender green tea. There will also be demonstrations on how they make essential oils out of the flowers, presentations on the benefits of organic, a festival marketplace, musical performances, and a massage tent.

Turn to the Calendar Section on page 41 for a list of spring and summer festivals hosted by CCOF members.

Can't make the festival? Come by another day to eat at **The Grand Oak Steakhouse** or stay at **Highland Springs Resort**, which started 123 Farm in 2001. The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner and uses lavender and other herbs, as well as meat, from the farm. They also use olive oil made from their own trees. At the resort, meander about the wooded footpaths or wander among majestic oak trees, towering cedars, rows of olive trees and rose and cactus gardens, or take a hike on one of the nearby trails. 10600 Highland Springs Ave., Cherry Valley; tel. (951) 845-1151; jan.k@hsresort.com; www.123farm.com; www.hsresort.com; www.thegrandoak.com



Around since 1884, **Highland Springs Resort** was once a waypoint during the early stage coach line connecting California to the rest of the nation, which led to development of the surrounding town Cherry Valley and was at one point a health resort frequented by Albert Einstein!

Day 5: San Diego County

1st Stop: The Blue Heron Farm Bed & Breakfast, Fallbrook

After a whirlwind week, relax at The Blue Heron Farm Bed & Breakfast. Nestled in the hills just seven miles east of the Oceanside Pier,



the organic farm is a hidden gem in the agricultural land of Fallbrook. Andrea Peterson, owner of the B&B and CCOF certified **Peterson Specialty Produce**,

invites travelers to escape to her country oasis out of the city. "We have all sorts of wildlife and wildflowers. When you're in the rooms, you don't look out and see anything with wheels on it. People really feel like they're getting away when they come here," she says.

Breakfast is, of course, one of the main attractions of a B&B, and Andrea delivers, serving meals which use organic products from the farm. She can also cook made-to-order breakfasts to accommodate any special dietary needs. As for the farm, visitors are welcome to tour it themselves or ask one of Andrea's grandkids to show them around. Reservations required. 5910 Camino Baja Cerro, Fallbrook; tel. (760) 643-0092; andrea hp3@sbcglobal.net; www.blueheronfarmbandb.com

Looking for more CCOF members along the way?

Be sure to search the CCOF online directory at www.ccof.org/directories.php.

2nd Stop: Bird Rock Coffee Roasters, La Jolla



Stop by **Bird Rock Coffee Roasters'** coffee bar any Friday morning at 10:30 a.m. for a free cupping. For those less experienced in the ways of the coffee world, a coffee cupping is "like a wine tasting, only more energetic," according to Bird Rock staff. Owner Chuck Patton says "each cupping focuses on either one country, or one form of processing, or talks about the effects roast degree has on a coffee. We use cuppings not only

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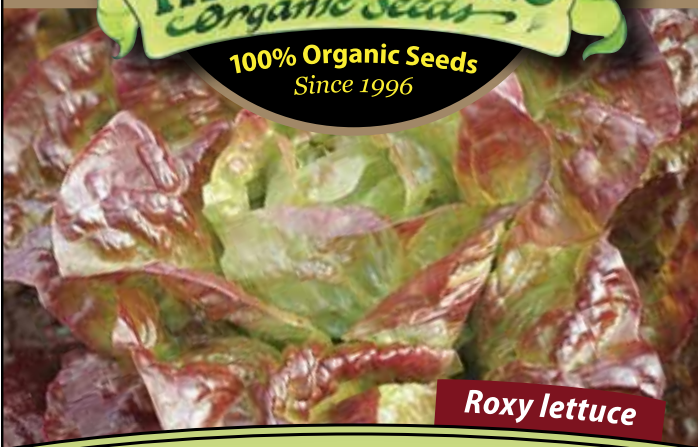


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The Age of Enforcement



Consumers and certified organic businesses rely on enforcement of the National Organic Standards to uphold the integrity of products in the marketplace. Since the National Organic Program (NOP) was launched in 2002, it's been operated on a shoestring budget with minimal staff and, frankly, not much attention paid to it within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Despite its lack of resources in those early years, the NOP was able to close dozens of complaints each year, making a positive impact on the organic community.

New Players, New Attitude, New Era

I'm writing this article still jazzed with the Olympic energy. We cheered for Team USA and got to know the individual Olympians, their dreams and their passion. Similarly, regular readers of *Certified Organic* have become acquainted with the new players for Team Organic – USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Administrator Rayne Pegg, and Deputy Administrator of the



NOP Miles McEvoy. Clearly, Kathleen and Rayne deal with much more than organic in their work, yet they understand, appreciate, and support the work of our organic community.

The new attitude in Washington, DC, is refreshing and inspiring. Dedicated individuals who have worked in the organic sector for

decades are now leaders in our nation's capital where the White House and the USDA headquarters proudly display their organic gardens, where the NOP is now an independent program within the AMS, and where organic is being incorporated into every branch of the USDA.

It's a new era at the NOP – the "Age of Enforcement" according to Miles. Organic consumers everywhere should welcome this positive change because enforcement is at the heart of keeping organic organic. The NOP's goals to clarify and enforce standards, collaborate on market surveillance, require unannounced inspections, and create a penalty matrix that includes civil penalties indicate a true commitment to enforcing the organic rule.

New NOP

It's both amazing and appalling when you consider how much work the NOP was expected to accomplish with few staff and little money. Imagine trying to grow more and more crops on your farm each year with the same amount of labor, land, and money! It's no wonder it seemed to us on the outside that NOP's work flowed like molasses in the middle of winter.

In 2002, the NOP limped along with 6 employees and a \$1.6 million budget. The number of staff remained fairly consistent through 2007, including the period of the greatest growth of organic in the United States (for comparison, CCOF tripled its staff and increased its budget by more than 55% during that time.) Finally, healthy increases in 2008, 2009, and 2010 brought the NOP's budget to nearly \$7 million and a staffing plan to reach 31 employees this year. Be sure to check out NOP job postings at www.usajobs.gov.

Miles has embraced transparency, open communication, and a genuine concern for organic farmers, processors, and consumers that we haven't seen in the NOP before. He's communicated clear founding principles and values of the NOP:

- Collaborative
- Clear and consistent
- Transparent
- Strict and sensible
- Organic – biological, interconnected, true to organic principles

Last fall he announced NOP's priorities, some which have already been accomplished. The long-awaited Access to Pasture rule was finally published and was followed immediately with training sessions for certifiers and producers. New employees have been hired and jobs continue to be posted (Lars Crail, former CCOF inspector and volunteer, was lured to Washington, DC, by the NOP and loves living there, attending staff trainings, and learning more about what the NOP does, in preparation for his work in the Accreditation and International Activities Division.) Equivalency discussions with other countries have continued, rulemaking is proceeding on old NOSB recommendations, new policies have been



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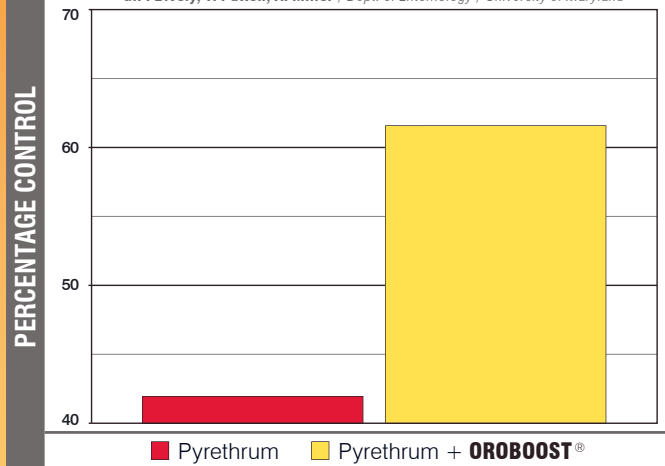


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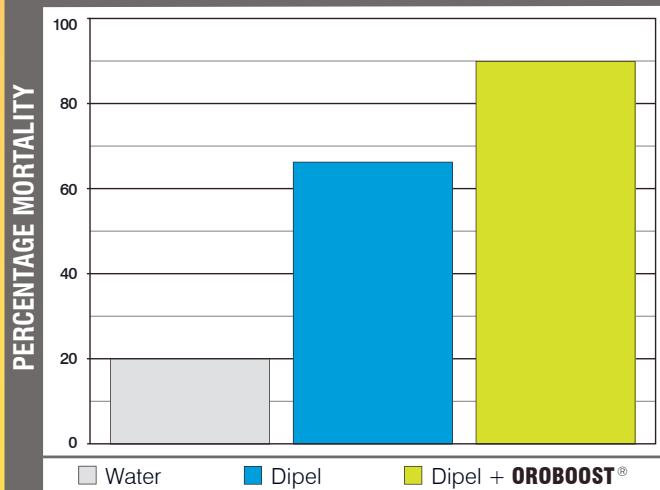
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The Age of Enforcement

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published, more training sessions have been held for accredited certifying agencies, and the NOP website continues to improve. A work plan is in place and it's clearly being accomplished.

The NOP remains accountable by issuing monthly reports on achievements in the work plan, staffing updates, training updates, equivalency reports, policy reports, and policy issues under development. The NOP has embarked on a National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) assessment of the NOP accreditation program with the intent to undergo an annual review with a report and work plan presented at each Fall NOSB meeting.

New NOSB

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) is also evolving and becoming more accessible to the people. Five new members joined the board this year, bringing fresh perspectives to the table to work in collaboration with the ten seasoned members. This board receives public input, reads volumes of information, researches, discusses and recommends changes and updates to the National Organic Standards. This is one of the most powerful groups in the organic community, and we all have access to them. They are also probably one of the most tired groups because their workload is unbelievable. Consider that they have to evaluate, discuss and vote on more than 150 crop, livestock, and processing materials over the next two years, along with a myriad other issues besides inputs!

The reality is that not everyone has the capacity to serve on the NOSB. It eats up a lot of your life, so a small family farmer is unlikely to serve. But some do, and you should make your comments known to them. The NOSB is comprised of four farmers/growers, two handlers/processors, one retailer, one scientist, three consumers/public interest advocates, three environmentalists, and one USDA accredited certifying agent. If you're a consumer, let the consumer reps know what's on your mind, and if you're a processor, make yourself available to those board members to help educate them about your particular ingredient or product. Contact policy@ccof.org if you're unable to locate contact information.

For the last two years, I've attended NOSB meetings in Washington, DC, and have been privileged to represent CCOF in these critical discussions. I always felt, though, that if CCOF members had the opportunity, they'd want to comment themselves. So, each time I had the opportunity

to address the NOSB, I'd request, "Please hold a meeting on the West Coast so you're more accessible to farmers in other parts of the country."

Now, here's your opportunity! **The NOSB will meet April 26–29 in Woodland, California**, and the agenda was just posted as I write this article. CCOF has notified our members about how you can participate. By the time this magazine is published, the deadline to comment will have passed. But, you can still attend! You don't have to register, and you can simply stop by to observe how the organic rules are created. It's an educational experience you won't forget.



Be sure to join CCOF at our reception on Tuesday, April 27, to welcome the NOSB to California! Join us at the Heidrick Ag History Center in Woodland to network with CCOF members and NOSB members, enjoy delicious organic hors d'oeuvres and beverages, and tour the amazing museum filled with dozens of specimens of antique farm equipment. See page 41 for more information on the NOSB meeting and CCOF Welcome reception.

Stay for the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC) meeting on Friday, April 30. This committee advises the California State Organic Program (SOP), which is responsible for enforcing the National Organic Standards in California. Since Utah withdrew as an SOP earlier this year, California remains the only SOP under the NOP. Public comments are also accepted at this meeting, so make your voice heard!

I'll end this article the way Miles McEvoy ends his presentations – with a quote from farmer and author Wendell Berry. *"An organic farm, properly speaking, is not one that uses certain methods and substances and avoids others; it is a farm whose structure is formed in imitation of the structure of a natural system that has the integrity, the independence and the benign dependence of an organism."*

Education & Promotion

CCOF Annual Convention

Education Conference: "Healthy Soils, Healthy Food"

The CCOF Annual Education Conference proved to be a great success, with more than 150 individuals in attendance. Held at the Chico State University Farm in Chico, California,



Keynote Speaker Tim LaSalle

February 6th and 7th, the Conference, titled "Healthy Soils, Healthy Food," focused on the role that soil plays in climate change policies and how healthy soil can help mitigate climate change.

Keynote speaker Tim LaSalle of the Rodale Institute gave a presentation titled "Regenerative Organic Farming: A Solution to Global Warming." He also participated in a panel discussion with Jeanne Merrill, Ricardo Bayon, and Eric Holst addressing how current carbon emission cap and trade policy goals may affect agriculture.

Participants joined speakers in breakout sessions focusing on the implications of climate change policy for organic farmers, processors, retailers, and consumers, as well as learning about some steps currently certified organic operations are taking towards sustainability. Although current climate change policies do not directly regulate agriculture, conference attendees agreed that agriculture has a key role to play in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

On day two of the conference, participants toured the Chico State University Farm's organic dairy operation and horticulture unit, and then chose between tours of CCOF certified organic operations Lundberg Family Farms and LaRocca Vineyards and Winery. With a common goal of sustainability, both Lundberg Family Farms and LaRocca Vineyards demonstrated how large-scale commercial operations can integrate sustainable processes in their organic operations. CCOF thanks all of our members and guests who attended the Education Conference and contributed their ideas.

Annual Meeting

CCOF held our Annual Meeting at the end of the first day of Education Conference activities. After an overview of CCOF's achievements in 2009, participants broke up into four groups to discuss areas that can be



CCOF Policy and Programs Director, Claudia Reid

strengthened, focusing on policy and advocacy, marketing and promotion, education, and member benefits. CCOF greatly appreciates the members and guests who provided valuable feedback for our strategic plan. The meeting was followed by a reception hosted by CCOF's North Valley Chapter featuring a live band, organic food and beverages donated by CCOF members, and celebration after a long day of collaboration. To suggest future educational topics for CCOF events, please contact programs@ccof.org.

CCOF would like to thank all of the Annual Convention Sponsors for their Support as well as the CCOF members who donated their organic products to the event.

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Education & Promotion

Fancy Food Show

The Winter Fancy Food Show in San Francisco January 17-19 brought together a variety of specialty food producers, food lovers and even Food Network stars, including a large number of businesses and entrepreneurs interested in becoming certified organic. CCOF staff members talked to a number of specialty foods producers about the process of becoming certified as well as the availability of 2010 cost share funding.

There was a notable increase of new producers walking the show compared



Rosemary Quinn at CCOF booth.

to previous years, many of which had a strong interest in getting their pilot products certified organic. The availability of funding for organic certification cost reimbursement proved

to be a big incentive for individuals looking to become certified in 2010. The most common question asked was, "Where can I find organic ingredients?" Attendees quickly found their question answered with the CCOF 2010 Organic Directory and Resource Guide. CCOF promoted our certified members and their organic products by distributing over 200 copies of the Directory to potential buyers, retailers and wholesalers looking to source organic.

Eco-Farm Conference

The theme of the 30th Anniversary of the Eco-Farm Conference, held January 20-23, "Where the Future is Planted," inspired an optimistic perspective toward the future of organic. CCOF was excited to see a number of certified and supporting members along with agricultural advisors, policymakers, and organic advocates participating in a variety of sessions and workshops focusing on organic and sustainable agriculture and food systems.

CCOF Executive Director Peggy Miars moderated two sessions. The first session, titled "Growing the Organic Market Despite a Tough Economy,"



Organic ag consultant Bob "Amigo" Cantisano mingles with CCOF staff at the Eco-Farm Organic Wine Tasting.

looked at the opportunities and challenges facing the organic marketplace, featuring speakers Laura Batcha of the Organic Trade Association and Melody Meyer of Albert's Organics/UNFI. The second session, "Social Responsibility as Practiced by Farms and Processors," focused on what some large-scale producers are doing to make their practices more sustainable. CCOF Chief Certification Officer Jake Lewin presented at a session titled "Liquid Organic Nitrogen Fertilizer: Update on Regulations, and What Growers Can Use." In addition, CCOF certification staff and interns met with members and answered questions at the CCOF booth in the Exhibitor Tent as well as attended valuable sessions on organic production methods, new pest management strategies, and emerging standards.

World Ag Expo

CCOF, once again, had a booth at the World Ag Expo in Tulare, California, February 9-11. CCOF was one of the 1,600 exhibitors on more than 2.5 million square feet of show grounds showcasing the latest in agricultural technology and farm equipment. Expo participants attended seminars on a variety of topics important to dairy producers, farmers, and agribusiness professionals.



CCOF member stops to say hello.

Although CCOF and other organic exhibitors were somewhat dwarfed by the massive scale of the event focusing mainly on industrial agriculture, CCOF staff saw more interest in organic than ever before. The CCOF staff was busy answering a constant stream of questions from show attendees, ranging from the steps required for certification to a curiosity about the overall concept of organic agriculture. "We saw definite increase in the number of inquiries about organic when compared to previous years, especially with the younger generations who attended the show with their parents who farm conventionally," says Bridgett McGrath, CCOF Marketing Specialist.

New Interns Join CCOF

Congratulations to CCOF's most recent intern graduates, Rosemary Quinn and Sarah Watters! We are so grateful for their endless dedication and passion for organic. Although they are a hard act to follow, new interns Lance Webb and David Novick and graphic design volunteer Kay Babineau are up to the task as they join returning interns Matt Auerbach and Megan Heskett. Recently, the intern team joined informative tours of CCOF certified organic operations



Interns tour Far West Fungi.

Good Earth Teas and Far West Fungi. These tours have been instrumental for the interns who work with CCOF staff to help farmers and processors understand the steps to becoming certified organic. Interns also helped staff several of CCOF's recent events, including Fancy Food, Eco-Farm, and the Annual Convention. We are so thankful for the time and dedication from our interns and volunteers! For more information about CCOF's intern program, visit www.ccof.org/intern.php.

Certification News

CCOF Improves Wine Certification Process

In response to client requests and in an effort to streamline the certification process for many CCOF-certified wineries, CCOF has created new Organic System Plan (OSP) documents specific to the organic wine industry. On April 15, CCOF released the new V2.0 and V2.1 OSP sections that will dramatically decrease the paperwork required for organic wineries.

Organic wine certification is often more complex and time consuming than certification for other organic sectors. The addition of new vintages every year has meant that clients must submit wine formulas on a regular basis.



However, formulas are often not finalized until close to bottling time, leaving winemakers with tight timelines for formula and label review. Most wineries need to have labels approved by both CCOF and the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) every year, which is a lengthy process,

particularly if corrections must be made. This makes nearly every wine product/label review urgent for our clients. In addition, wines may be handled by several independently certified operations and often involve multiple nonorganic processing aids, factors which often slow down the review process.

The new V-OSP documents represent a fundamental shift in CCOF's approach to certifying wineries and will help our clients with faster label reviews, as well as reduce the paperwork required to add products to winery OSPs. The V2.0 and V2.1 forms are currently optional for wineries, but CCOF's goal is to eventually use them to replace all H2.0 forms in winery OSPs. The review process for wineries using these forms is as follows:

V2.0 Winery Profile – Wineries will use this form to describe domestically-distributed wine made only from organic grapes. It requests information about grape sources, processing aids, and other production details. Approval of a V2.0 form in a winery OSP means that as long as the winery uses only the practices outlined on the form, wine formulas do not need to be recorded in the OSP. Inspectors will spot-check formula records for wineries at their annual inspections.

V2.1 Wine & Label Approval Form – This form will be used for label approval and to add specific wines to an operation's Client Profile. The form asks the winery to verify that each wine requesting approval was made using the practices outlined on the V2.0 form and that this can be verified through an audit trail.

CCOF will still require H2.0 Product Profile forms for wines that contain nonorganic agricultural ingredients and international compliances, as these products are higher risk and require additional verifications.

To access the forms, visit www.ccof.org, click on certification, then client forms. Please send questions, concerns, and requests for assistance in completing these forms to: jody@ccof.org, (831) 423-2263 ext. 26.

Important New Pasture Standards Update

To the delight of most of the organic dairy community, on February 12, 2010, the National Organic Program (NOP) published the long awaited final rule on "Access to Pasture."

This rule was years in the making, with input from a large number of interested parties and over 26,000 comments submitted to NOP. The final version had the support of the three regional Organic Dairy Producers Associations and has seen an overall enthusiastically positive response from all sectors of the community, including producers, processors, watchdog groups, and consumers.

The new Access to Pasture rule is a marked improvement from the proposed rule issued last fall, and has removed references to "sacrificial pasture," the requirement for fencing of water bodies, and any changes to Origin of Livestock. **The rule will become effective on June 17, 2010. After that date, certified operations will have one year to be verified as being in full compliance.**

The new rule is lengthy and detailed, and contains explicit instructions for record-keeping requirements and pasture management plans. Very few CCOF producers will need to make changes to their management practices in order to comply. However, there are a number of additional record-keeping requirements that will need to be implemented and new OSP sections to be completed in the coming months.

The NOP staff is busy developing worksheets and instructions to help livestock producers appropriately calculate Dry Matter Intake (DMI) and Dry Matter Demand (DMD)

The organic dairy sector has seen trouble and turmoil over the last few years as market supply outpaced demand, and prices have fallen dramatically. Dairy farmers across the nation are feeling the pinch of reduced prices of fluid milk coupled a reduction in the amount of milk required by the processors. Many members of the organic community are hoping that this new Access to Pasture rule will help bring farm-gate prices back up.



Certification News

and implement appropriate pasture management systems. Additionally, the NOP has announced training sessions on the new rule that are open to the general public. **A training session will be held in Woodland, CA on April 26, 2010. We strongly encourage organic dairy producers to attend this training session. To reserve your space in this training session, please email Judith Ragonesi, NOP Training Manager, at Judith.Ragonesi2@ams.usda.gov.**

Some highlights of the new rule include:

- All animals must receive 30 percent of their DMI from pasture during the grazing season. This will need to be calculated and documented based on averages of each type of animal over the grazing season.
- It is up to the producer to develop a plan for calculating DMI and DMD, and to submit these plans to CCOF for approval.
- The grazing season is a minimum of 120 days per year, but may be up to 365 days depending on weather conditions.
- There are specific limitations on confinement of animals from pasture, including that lactation is not a reason for confinement.
- Calves must be provided access to pasture at 6 months of age.
- Confinement from pasture is allowed only for one week for dry off, three weeks prior to parturition, and one week post-parturition.
- Roughages used as bedding must be organic.
- A Pasture Management Plan will be required to be developed by each ruminant operation and submitted for approval to CCOF.
- Beef animals are exempt from the 30 percent DMI requirement during finishing for the final 120 days or 1/5th of their life, but must be provided access to pasture during finishing. A 60 day comment period was left open on this topic to provide an opportunity for additional feedback.

CCOF is working to revise our Livestock Organic System Plan (OSP) to include sections relating to these new requirements. All CCOF dairy operations will be required to complete these new OSP sections in 2010, and 2010 dairy inspections will focus on determining compliance with these new regulations.

For more information from the NOP, including the full text of the new regulations, a Q&A, and supporting documentation, including DMD and DMI worksheets, please visit www.ams.usda.gov/nop and click on "Pasture Rulemaking Information" on the right-hand side.

My Inspection is Over: What's Next?

We have found that many CCOF clients are confused about what occurs after their inspection is over. It's important to understand that your inspector does NOT make the final certification decisions. You may need to take additional actions to complete the inspection and review process.



What happens after the inspector leaves your property?

1. Your inspector will write a report of the inspection and will submit it to the CCOF office within 15 business days (or 2 business days for Expedited inspections). A copy of the report will be sent to you.
2. A CCOF Certification Specialist will review the inspection report for compliance with the standards. The review will likely occur within 3 months after your inspection (or within 5 business days for Expedited inspections).
3. Once the review is complete, CCOF will send you a letter with the results. You will receive one of the following three letters:
 - i. **Continuation of Certification** – No noncompliances were found, and no additional information is needed. Your operation is in continued compliance with NOP regulations. No additional action is needed until the following year, unless your organic practices change.
 - ii. **Request for Information** – More information is needed to complete the review of your inspection report. You will need to submit specified information by a certain date. When the outstanding issues are resolved, you will receive a Continuation of Certification letter.
 - iii. **Notice of Noncompliance** – All or part of your operation did not comply with the NOP regulations. This letter will require that you submit corrective actions by a given date.

Please be sure to carefully read each letter sent to you by CCOF and respond by the date noted in the letter, if a deadline is given. Further action is required if you receive a Request for Information or a Notice of Noncompliance from CCOF. If you need additional time, please contact CCOF to request an extension.

Thank you for your participation in CCOF organic certification!

CCOF Certification Services

An Organic Road Trip Continued from page 15



to expose people to the complexity that coffee contains, but also to teach about the journey coffee beans take from seed to cup.”

Bird Rock specializes in micro-lots, small batches of coffee grown in the micro-climate of a particular farm. These specialty coffee roasts express the unique terroir of the farms in which they are grown. The gutsy business opened across from a Starbucks and, while it took a little while to get going, “people have really responded to the quality of

our product,” says Patton. “We now have a very strong following. I think a lot of coffee businesses might get intimidated by opening next to a large chain, but people really appreciate quality and if you can offer that on a consistent basis, you can match or exceed what a high-volume coffee place can do.” 5627 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla; tel. (858) 551-1707; brcoffeeroasters@san.rr.com; birdrockcoffeeroasters.com



That brings us to the end of our journey. Thanks to our readers for joining us and to all of our awesome members for sharing their farms, facilities and stories! We hope we’ve inspired you to get away from the beach, get closer to the land, and take a journey of exploration to find the source of California’s great food and beverages.

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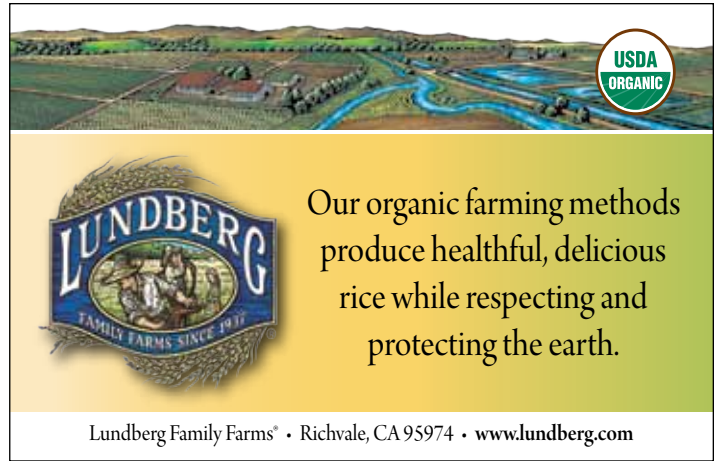
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CCOF Works to Reform the State Organic Program

CCOF staff members continue to spend significant time working to improve and streamline the California State Organic Program (SOP) so that CCOF certified members can do business with as little regulatory constraint as possible. This process, however, takes a long time and continues to require substantial patience from stakeholders and an ongoing understanding of the mysterious workings of the state legislative and regulatory processes.

Since 2008, CCOF has been encouraging the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to make several changes to the SOP. In August 2008, CCOF sent a letter of complaint to the National Organic Program (NOP) outlining our problems with how the SOP was being run, and with some of its actions (www.ccof.org/nop.php; scroll to the bottom). The SOP took immediate action, creating a Technical Planning Committee (TPC) to look into the problems outlined in CCOF's letter as well as to deal with many other complaints that were raised by others in the organic industry. The TPC reported to the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC), which was charged with reviewing the TPC's recommendations and, if appropriate, forwarding them to the Secretary of Food and Agriculture, A.G. Kawamura, for implementation. Claudia Reid, CCOF's Policy and Program Director, represented CCOF on the Technical Planning Committee, and Robin Allan, CCOF's Director of Grower and Livestock Certification, served on one of the subcommittees. The committee began its work in December 2008 and completed its work in the fall of 2009. You can find a complete list of COPAC members and TPC members, as well as notes and minutes from meetings at www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/i_&_c/organic.html.

SOP Accomplishments and Ongoing Efforts

The TPC's work is now complete. The committee presented all their recommendations to COPAC, which in turn accepted all recommendations and requested the Secretary of Food and Agriculture to implement them. The implementation process, which is currently underway, has resulted in several notable accomplishments and improvements as well as highlighted the need for the State of California to undertake both regulatory and legislative action. Some of these actions are outlined below.

Creation of an SOP Quality Systems Control Manual

The TPC worked diligently from December 2008 through fall 2009 to help the SOP write a Quality Systems Control Manual (QSCM), which included a great deal of valuable input from CCOF and other certifiers. This manual captures almost 20 years of business practices which, until 2009, were passed verbally from one SOP employee to another or never articulated at all. The manual creates a step-by-step process by which the SOP will work with California organic

registrants to register their businesses. For the first time ever, all SOP and related CDFA staff now have clear guidance and direction on how to implement the SOP requirements. Although the manual is an internal business document, you can request to see a copy of it from the SOP by contacting SOP Acting Director Dave Carlson at dcarlson@cdfa.gov.

Integration of National Rule into California Regulatory Language

Through the course of the TPC's work, CDFA's legal counsel determined that the SOP was operating without complete regulatory and/or legislative authority. CDFA proceeded to promulgate regulations to fully incorporate the language of the NOP rule into the California code of regulations. CCOF testified at one of several listening sessions on the proposed regulations, continually reminding the SOP about the many problems and issues that are important to our members and to California's organic consumers. Having the national rule incorporated into California regulation not only provides the SOP with its required authority, but allows outside groups to hold the program accountable to the law.

On a related matter, the recently released Office of Inspector General (OIG) report dated March 10, 2010, and titled Oversight of the National Organic Program, notes that "NOP officials need to address ongoing issues with California's State Organic Program." The report goes on to detail CDFA's application for an SOP, acknowledges the NOP's desire, since 2005, to allow the SOP time to develop the legally required policies and procedures, and admonishes the NOP for allowing the SOP to continue without meeting these requirements. CCOF is pleased that the OIG report captures this evidence and holds NOP accountable for its part in the process of continuing to improve organic production in the United States.

Ongoing Improvements for California Organic Registration Requirements

A major recommendation of the TPC was to streamline the registration process in California by allowing certified operators to submit their Organic System Plan (OSP) during registration, thereby eliminating costly and time-consuming duplicative effort. CDFA's legal counsel determined that because existing law – the California Organic Products Act (COPA) of 2003 – required specific information that is outlined on the current registration form, the SOP could not simply allow certified operators to submit their OSP along with a shorter, simpler registration form. So, although the number of forms for registering has decreased somewhat, registrants are still required to provide information that duplicates what they already provide to their certifier, such as maps and land history. CDFA submitted a legislative proposal to the Governor's office in January 2010 asking for clean-up legislation that would have ameliorated this problem, but the Governor turned down the Department's request to sponsor this bill. Subsequently, CDFA approached California's agriculture industry through CCOF, California Farm Bureau

Federation and Western Growers Association, suggesting that they sponsor the legislation. As this magazine goes to print, it appears that AB 2612, the omnibus bill authored by the Assembly Committee on Agriculture will contain the necessary clean-up language to allow SOP to streamline the registration process. CCOF will continue to monitor this situation closely. To view a copy of AB 2612, please go to the Official State of California Legislative Information website www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html.

Reform Efforts Continue After COPAC Seat Setback

Simultaneous to serving on the TPC, CCOF sponsored legislation in 2009 to add a certifier seat to COPAC. The fact that COPAC's membership does not include representation by organic certifiers is a serious oversight that has troubled accredited certifiers and others for a long time. Many certifiers and organic industry representatives feel that adding a certifier seat to COPAC would align that committee with the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), thereby improving the professionalism and representation of COPAC for California's organic industry. Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed the CCOF sponsored bill AB 557 (Caballero-D-Salinas) in the fall of 2009, despite having unanimous support in both houses of the California legislature. CCOF may take up this matter again in 2011 or beyond.

Though this was a major setback for improving the California organic program, CCOF staff continues to challenge, question, encourage and cajole SOP by attending all COPAC meetings, sending numerous emails, and placing frequent phone calls to CDFA and SOP staff. As one COPAC member put it, not having a certifier seat on COPAC allows CCOF to play the gadfly role quite effectively, as a member of the wider organic community of certifiers, organic producers, and consumers.

Future Reform Efforts

CCOF's future plans regarding reforming how the organic industry is regulated in California includes an effort to work with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Just as organic farmers must register with CDFA, organic processors must register with CDPH. CCOF aims to have that department accomplish the same business practice improvements that SOP accomplished, and to make their process transparent. We are still concerned that complaints and appeals, often in the processor end of the business, take so long to resolve, leaving certifiers and the State vulnerable.

The Bigger Picture: Should the SOP be Eliminated?

For years, many CCOF members and staff have expressed their belief that the simple solution to all of the problems with the SOP is to eliminate it. CCOF staff researched and discussed this possibility candidly with CCOF board members, representatives of other ag organizations such as the Farm Bureau, elected officials' staff, and CDFA SOP staff on numerous occasions. Through the varied and numerous discussions, CCOF acknowledges that there are some practical effects, as well as some possible unintended consequences,

that need to be considered with the elimination of the SOP.

Eliminating a program that has its authority both in existing code (such as the COPA), and in regulatory language is a very time-consuming process. Although the State can close down a program at will, if the program owes its existence to legislation, it will always be necessary to work with and/or counteract the efforts of those people who feel the program should continue to exist. There are many people/organizations who feel that the SOP still has an important oversight role in the state that produces more organic products than any other state in America. Consumer protection groups especially like to see additional levels of scrutiny involved in the regulation of any food.

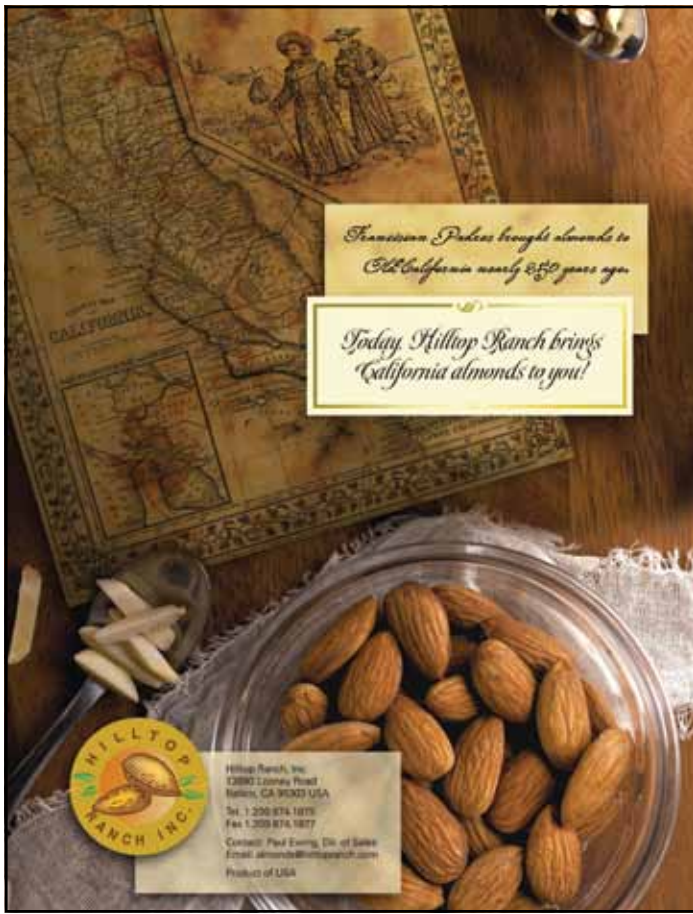
In addition, there are suggestions that it is inappropriate for an accredited certifier to sponsor legislation to eliminate an oversight body that essentially regulates an industry from which we benefit. This awkward dynamic was raised during the debate on the certifier seat legislation, and could be raised again. CCOF needs to determine if we would sacrifice our reputation for excellence and integrity in a battle with opposing groups over eliminating SOP. Our objectivity could certainly be challenged during any effort to sponsor legislation to eliminate the SOP. CCOF operates in a very complex role, protecting the integrity of organic for the consumer as well as advocating for economically viable regulatory systems for the organic producers we certify. We will seriously consider all sides of this issue before moving forward on such legislation.

CCOF believes key questions need to be asked before moving to eliminate the SOP. For example, would inspections, suspensions or revocations take even longer if they were initiated by USDA and outsourced to CDFA and then to the County Agricultural Commissioners? Would appeals take even longer? What regulatory process would replace the role SOP currently plays? Would the "new world" be any better than the current one? Furthermore, does CCOF have the political clout and resources to make this effort successful? We did not succeed in getting the Governor to sign the bill to add a certifier seat to COPAC, even with unanimous support. Does the organic segment of California agriculture, which constitutes anywhere from 1% – 5% of the total California agriculture industry, have the ability to push this political agenda through the Legislature? Such action would require hours of time, lots of money, and staff capacity. Are CCOF's resources better used elsewhere?

All of these questions continue to be on the front burner of CCOF's policy work in California, and we welcome input and suggestions from our members and other stakeholders in the organic community.

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Book Review

The Organic Farming Manual: A Comprehensive Guide to Starting and Running, or Transitioning to a Certified Organic Farm

As the title claims, *The Organic Farming Manual* by Ann Larkin Hansen is indeed a comprehensive guide into the world of organic farming. Providing guidelines for every step of the farming process, Hansen's book is a valuable resource for both the novice farmer intending to learn basic organic practices, as well as the experienced farmer wishing to increase farm biodiversity and sell products under a "certified organic" label. From choosing agricultural land and purchasing farm equipment, to looking at legal factors such as zoning laws and property taxes and marketing organic products, this book covers a wide breadth of topics that will benefit farmers at any stage of production.

In addition to outlining organic practices for garden crops, field crops, orchard crops, and livestock for both dairy and meat, the manual describes the federal rules for organic agriculture and the certification process. Hansen

explains that the documentation of farming practices is crucial in making the certification process go smoothly, and even describes common mistakes that farmers make when applying for certification.

Throughout the book, Hansen stresses the importance of making decisions that benefit both the land and the surrounding environment, while also increasing profitability. Resources for farmers interested in transitioning from conventional to organic farming are provided along with helpful tips and tools for farm management. Hansen makes

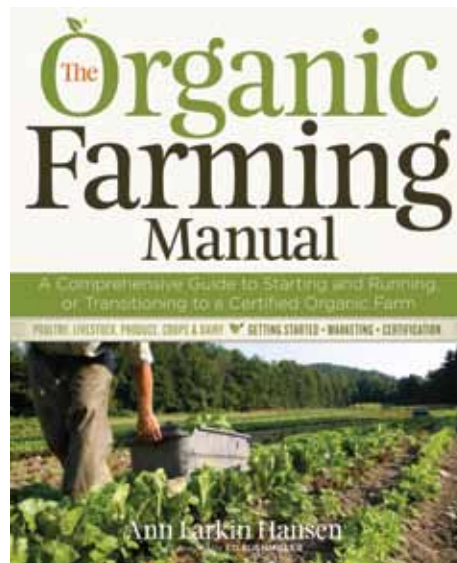
a point to highlight the invaluable resource that fellow members of the organic farming community can provide through their expertise on local soil and climate as well as working within the organic marketplace. Several profiles of

thriving organic farmers, many of whom are pioneers of the organic movement, give an inspiring and passionate voice to organic farming. Jim Riddle, who has been farming organically for nearly 20 years; Jeff and Lori Fiorovich of CCOF certified organic Crystal Bay Farm, and

Bob Scowcroft, Executive Director and co-founder of the Organic Farming Research Foundation are among the featured profiles.

The Organic Farming Manual is available through Storey Publishing. Ann Larkin Hansen runs her own farm in Wisconsin, is a past president of the Wisconsin Women's Sustainable

Farming Network and is the author of several books, including *Beef Cattle: Keeping a Small-Scale Herd for Pleasure and Profit* and *The Farm*, a children's six-book series.



SAVE THE DATE:

CCOF's 2nd Annual Organic Beer & Wine Tasting

The Pruneyard, Campbell, CA. June 11, 2010, 5–9 PM



Join CCOF at our 2nd annual Organic Beer and Wine Tasting event in Campbell, CA. Sample premium organic brews and wines and learn about the benefits of organics.



View event details at: www.ccof.org/ccoftastingcampbell.php.

Want to participate?

CCOF is seeking event volunteers and CCOF certified members interested in sharing their organic beverages. For more information, contact Patrice Riley at patrice@ccof.org or call (831) 423-2263 ext. 48



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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Quick Guide to Farm Bill Funding

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition has compiled a list of Federal Farm Bill programs and grants available for farmers, ranchers, food entrepreneurs, agricultural researchers, educators and community groups. Opportunities include technical and financial assistance for transitioning to organic, local food enterprise loans, financial assistance for conservation stewardship programs, and funds for installation of renewable energy systems. Visit www.sustainableagriculture.net for more information.

Classified Ad Submission

CCOF certified members and supporting members may run classified ads for free online and in *Certified Organic*, the CCOF Magazine, as space permits. To submit your ad please email ccof@ccof.org or fax your ad to CCOF at (831) 423-2365 with a subject line of "CCOF member classified ad".

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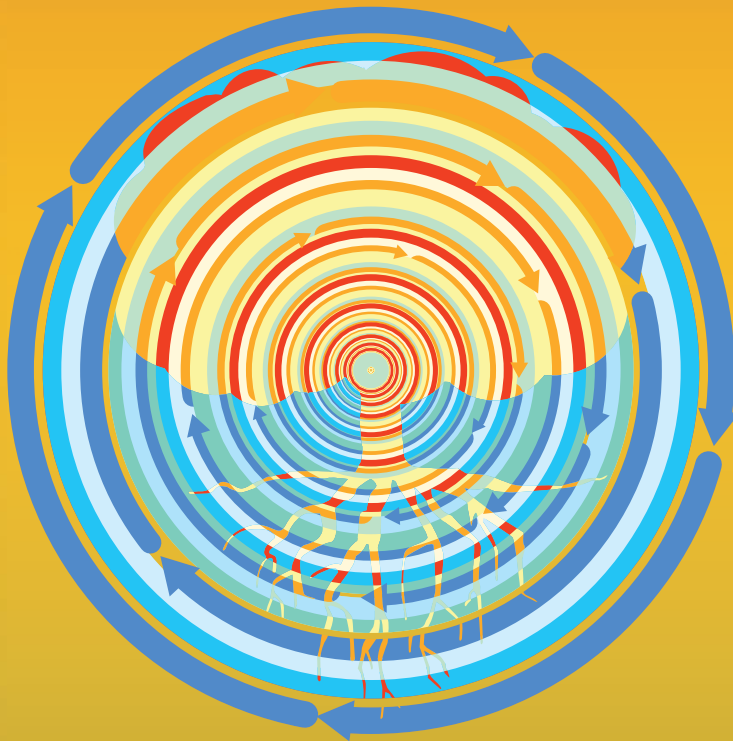
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Events Calendar

Join CCOF in Welcoming the NOSB to California!

April 26, 29, 2010, Woodland, CA

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will hold its semi-annual meeting in Woodland, California, April 26 through 29. CCOF members are encouraged to attend to see how the National Organic Standards are amended and to learn what issues the board will discuss in upcoming meetings. Certified operators will want to keep a close eye on the multitude of materials going through sunset review in 2011 and 2012. Read more about the NOSB and "The Age of Enforcement" on page 17.

Location:

Heidrick Ag History Center
1962 Hays Lane
Woodland, CA 95776

Monday, April 26

3:00 p.m. Introductions, announcements, and NOSB Secretary's report

3:30 p.m. National Organic Program report and proposed guidance documents

5:00 p.m. Recess

Tuesday, April 27

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Public comments

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. CCOF Reception

Wednesday, April 28

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Committee discussions

Thursday, April 29

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Continued committee discussions and voting on agenda items

5:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned; next meeting Fall 2010

CCOF NOSB Reception



April 27, 2010, Woodland, CA

Join CCOF from 7-9 p.m. at the Heidrick Ag History Museum as we welcome the NOSB to California. Don't

miss this opportunity to network with NOSB members, National Organic Program staff; CCOF board, members, and staff; and other stakeholders in the organic sector. Enjoy complementary

organic refreshments and live music while browsing the museum, which is filled with antique farm equipment.

CCOF's 2nd Annual Organic Beer & Wine Tasting at the Pruneyard



June 11, 2010 Campbell, CA

Celebrate the start of summer with an evening of all-organic beer and wine tasting, live music, and silent auction at the CCOF Organic Beer and Wine Tasting at the Pruneyard Shopping Center. Enjoy award-winning organic beer & wines while talking direct with CCOF certified organic brewers and

vintners. Tickets for this event are \$30 per person, including a commemorative wine glass. For more information, visit www.ccof.org/ccoftastingcampbell.php.

Dirt to Dining: Organic Food & Wine Tasting

June 27, 2010 Palo Alto, CA

The Ecological Farming Association and Chef Jesse Cool of CoolEatz restaurants will be hosting an afternoon of organic food and wine in Jesse Cool's garden in Palo Alto. Local organic farms, restaurants, and wineries will be sponsoring the event and providing their finest food for you to taste. Visit www.eco-farm.org for more details.

CCOF Member Festivals and Open Houses

Celebrate the bounties the season with CCOF certified farms and wineries. Many of our members are hosting some of the summer's best agriculture events and festivals.

Baia Nicchia: Open House

May 22, Sunol, CA

Celebrate the end of spring with Baia Nicchia's Open House celebration, which will include farm tours, samples, and a sale on end-of-spring seedlings. Check out their Field Day in August, hosted with Seeds of Change. www.baianicchia.blogspot.com

123 Farm: Annual Lavender Festival

June 12-13 & 19-20, 2010 Cherry Valley, CA

Enjoy all things lavender at the Annual 123 Farm Lavender Festival, with two weekends of tours, live music, and a variety of lavender food and desserts. Be sure to check out the lavender workshops, which will range from gardening to health & wellness. www.123farm.com

Mokichi Okada Association:

Organic Stone Fruit Jubilee

June 19, 2010 Clovis, CA

If you love stone fruits, don't miss the Organic Stone Fruit Jubilee this summer. Enjoy music, workshops, farm tours, and the opportunity to taste over 60 varieties of stone fruits from local organic farms. www.moawellness.org

The Heartland Festival

August 14-15, 2010 Stevinson, CA

Come out to support the Ecological Farming Association at their Heartland Festival, hosted at Double T Acres. This festival celebrates the San Joaquin Valley traditions of farming and food with music, farm tours, organic food, and a draft horse driving class. www.eco-farm.com for more details.

CASFS: Harvest Festival

September 25, 2010 Santa Cruz, CA

The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) will host their Harvest Festival and "Food For Thought" Forum on September 25, which will include live music, food, and hay rides! CASFS also offers a variety of weekend classes on topics from fruit tree pruning to raising chickens in a suburban environment. Visit www.casfs.ucsc.edu for the CASFS event calendar.

Full Belly Farm: Hoes Down Harvest Festival

October 3-4, 2010 Capay Valley, CA

Be a part of 20 years of tradition, and visit the Hoes Down Harvest Festival. Farm tours and hand-on workshops will be hosted alongside live music and organic food, with the opportunity to camp overnight and enjoy a second day of harvest festival fun. www.hoesdown.org for more information.

change scenarios predict that water supplies will become increasingly constrained. Warming temperatures also threaten to shift the kinds of crops that can be grown in the state. These and other predicted climate changes could severely strain important agricultural industries.

Though California agriculture faces some huge challenges as a result of climate change, it also has the potential to make a significant impact in helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Research funded by the California Energy Commission suggests that some agricultural practices, including many practices adopted by organic farmers, not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but may also sequester atmospheric carbon.

CCOF is a founding member of the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN), a coalition that advances policy solutions at the nexus of climate change and sustainable agriculture (www.calclimateag.org). In 2010, Cal CAN is sponsoring a bill, SB 1241, authored by Senator Lois Wolk (D-Solano). SB 1241, also called the Agriculture Climate Benefits Act, requires that if state or federal climate change programs generate funds that some portion go towards:

1. Research and demonstration to examine the farming practices and systems that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester atmospheric carbon.

2. Technical assistance that communicates research findings into real opportunities for California farmers and ranchers to provide greenhouse gas reductions.
3. Incentives to overcome barriers to agricultural practices that mitigate climate change and offer environmental co-benefits, including improved air and water quality, enhanced wildlife habitat and water conservation.

CCOF helped plan a farmer field day in April 2010 to launch the advocacy effort on SB 1241. Farmers and policy makers visited two CCOF operations, Dixon Ridge Farms and Rominger Brothers Farms.

For more information on SB 1241, contact Claudia Reid, CCOF's Policy/Program Director at policy@ccof.org.

For more information/questions on the issues outlined in this article or to learn more about CCOF's policy work, contact policy@ccof.org.

CCOF relies on the generosity of our supporting members to undertake our advocacy work.. Find out more about how to support CCOF by visiting www.ccof.org/support.php.

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