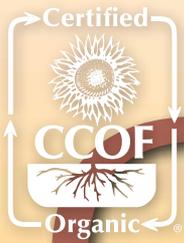


Organic News, Events, Certification Updates, Member Profiles, and More!



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Natural Resource Conservation Funding in Action

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maximum productivity, and maximum value."*

– Mike Noonan, Noonan Farms

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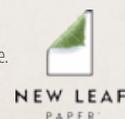
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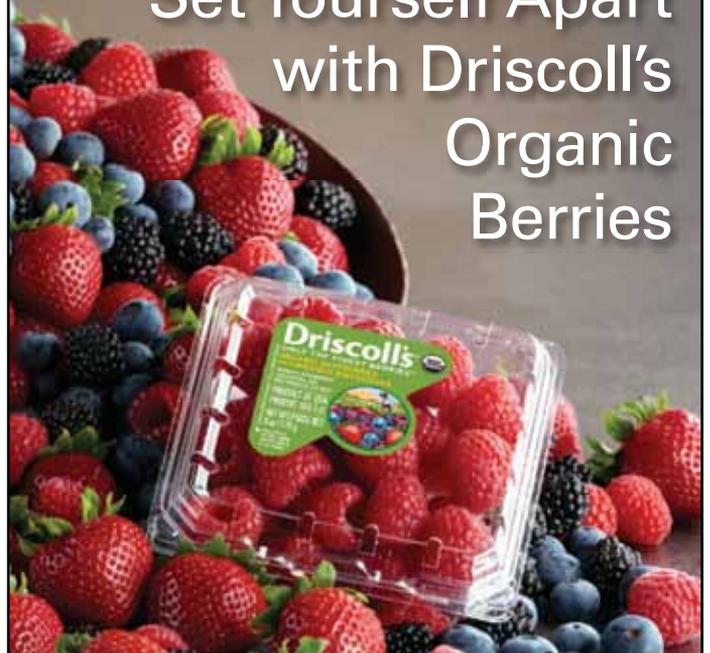
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Stewarding a Steadier Future Course

We are raised on the lessons of previous generations. My parents were born at the tail-end of America's Great Depression, and I heard stories about how my father scrubbed grocery store floors instead of playing with friends after school, and how my mother and her cousins worked on my great-grandparents' farm. Their stories of hard times - saving scraps and sharing milk with neighbors - didn't resonate with the spirit and style of the Los Angeles suburb where I was later raised, but their lessons of frugality and kinship did make a powerful impression. These are the lessons that lie at the heart of this month's conservation issue of *Certified Organic*.

As our economy stabilizes from the most recent economic downturn and we think about how to chart a steadier future course, CCOF highlights the work of organic farmers whose practices are preserving land and resources, producing good healthy food, and delivering it to homes, markets and retailers. We learn how organic agriculture, integrated with wildlife habitat, can strengthen soils and ecosystems. Organic operations are more cost-effectively and responsibly powering themselves with solar and other renewable sources of energy. It is clear that the next generation of organic farmers, ranchers, processors, and handlers are inspired by the notion of building an economy with wealth that is based on sustainability, stewardship, and community.

Among the CCOF members profiled in our feature story is Mike Noonan of Noonan Farms in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Mike's self-described "out of the box thinking" created a system for rotation flooding of hundreds of acres to rebuild soil, creating wildlife habitat and improving water quality. With the backing of a federal Conservation Innovation Grant, Noonan Farms has created a seasonal home for more than 10,000 migratory birds and improved its own operations (Natural Resource Conservation Funding In Action, page 32).

Jan Kiemann, the farm coordinator at Southern California's 123 Farm tells CCOF how the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is helping her to improve grazing and mulching processes on the 900 acre resort property which houses the farm. Part of a historic property in the Cherry Valley, 123 allows wildlife to roam freely among plants, feeds crops with natural spring water, and by virtue of its largest crop, lavender, boasts natural resistance to squirrels, rabbits, birds and bears. Organic food raised on the farm is served to guests at the resort's Grand Oak Steakhouse & Bar.

At Leavitt Lake Ranches in Vina, California, Darrell Wood's family manages 40,000 acres that are home to his 100% grass-fed cattle herd. Because of the Woods' commitment to strong conservation practices, the land, its waterways, and vernal pools are also home to endangered plant and animal species and to migrating schools of salmon. But Darrell acknowledges that the family could not have made environmental stewardship a part of everyday life on the ranch without 15 years of continuing technical support and grants from a range of public initiatives, including the Wetlands Reserve Program, EQIP, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service.

This issue also shares information regarding an array of effective - though endangered - federal research, conservation, and technology initiatives that can support organic production. These include the Natural Resource Conservation Service programs that put boots on the ground to help farmers and ranchers implement conservation practices; EQIP, which provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal and air resources; ATTRA (the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service), which provides technical assistance to support sustainable farming practices, and houses the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, and the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, which has lead sustainable farming research for the past twenty years.

Sadly, as this magazine goes to press, Congress is poised to cut conservation programs called for in the current Farm Bill by more than \$1 billion, on top of a \$500 million cut made this past April. If approved, these cuts will undermine and eliminate many of the conservation practices that organic farmers and ranchers are undertaking across the country. Learn more about the Farm Bill, and advocacy for it, on page 24. CCOF, along with many of you, will be out there during the weeks and months ahead making the case for continuing and expanding the conservation programs that will create future stories - like those of Noonan Ranch, 123 Farms, and Leavitt Lake Ranches.



Cathy

Cathy Calfo
CCOF Executive Director



Organic Sector Valued at \$29 Billion in 2010

The Organic Trade Association reported this spring that the organic sector grew at a rate of nearly eight percent in 2010, despite the relative one percent growth for overall United States food sales. Additionally, 40 percent of organic businesses surveyed reported positive full-time employment growth. Said OTA CEO and Executive Director Christine Bushway: "The good news is that even as the economic recovery crawls forward, the organic industry is thriving - and hiring." Organic fruits and vegetables represented 39.7 percent of total organic food value, and nearly 12 percent of all U.S. fruit and vegetable sales. Organic dairy reached a nearly six percent total of all U.S. dairy sales. Organic supplements grew by 7.4 percent, organic fibers grew 16 percent, and organic personal care products grew 6.6 percent since 2009.

Pesticide Exposure in Pregnancy Can Lower Children's IQ

On April 11, 2011, *Time* magazine featured the conclusions of three separate studies published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* documenting findings that a mother's prenatal exposure to chemicals sprayed on fruit and vegetable crops can affect the cognitive development of her child up to nine years after birth. These studies are the first of their type to follow groups of mothers and their children over time and document changes in the child's cognitive development. They are also the first to look at low levels of prenatal pesticide exposure at typical everyday levels. The conclusions of

pesticide effects on IQ are meaningful when taking into consideration the fact that the levels of pesticides found in the study participants are slightly higher than the national average but still fall within the range of acceptable exposure levels in the United States. The *Time* article notes that the study conclusions support the idea that mothers can reduce their pesticide exposure by, among other things, eating organic and thus avoiding crops treated with chemicals.

Prince Charles Uses Political Celebrity to Promote Organic

On May 4, 2011, Prince Charles visited Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. to speak to students at the Future for Food Conference about the benefits of organic farming, while decrying the tens of billions of dollars the United States spends each year in big agriculture subsidies. "Only by safeguarding nature's resilience can we hope to have a resilient form of food production and ensure food security in the long term," said the heir to the British throne.

A longtime champion of environmentalism and organic, Prince Charles created in 1990 the organic line Duchy Originals Limited, which produces over 200 products by sourcing from small farmers and producers across the British Isles, and uses organic and seasonal produce wherever possible. The Home Farm of Duchy Originals, on Highgrove estate in western England, was converted to a completely organic system in 1986 to promote organic food

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and farming and to help protect and sustain Britain's countryside and wildlife. The farm now serves as one of the 12 demonstration farms of the Elm Farm Research Centre for those interested in converting to organic production.

In sharing his personal experience with the "surprisingly high yields of a wide range of vegetables, arable crops, beef, lamb and milk" on his own organic operation, Prince Charles challenged the standard argument of conventional agriculture proponents that organic farming cannot sustain a growing world population. He referenced the United Nations' 2008 International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development, which drew upon evidence of 400 scientists worldwide to conclude that small-scale, family-based farming systems adopting agroecological approaches were among the most productive systems in developing countries. Prince Charles implicated farm subsidies, which overwhelmingly favor conventional agricultural techniques, for the failure of the conclusions of such an exhaustive report to make a deeper impact on the world's attitudes toward food systems.

Prince Charles noted that a direct relationship exists between the resilience of the planet's ecosystems and the resilience of our national economies, and his speech served as a platform for calling upon the redirection of public finance to reward producers who base their farming systems on sustainable principles, and for the creation of policies that focus funding on strengthening economic and environmental diversity.



Ultimately, the library will help to keep seeds in the hands of the people, and not big corporations.

New Seed Library to Nourish Central Coast Farms and Gardens

Central Coast members will be interested to learn of the work of UCSC history major Andrew Whitman, who secured a \$10,000 grant from the Strauss Foundation for his proposal to start a seed library that will catalog the Central Coast's plant diversity.

Recognizing that biodiversity plays a key role in keeping any ecosystem healthy, Whitman sees the importance of a seed library as a counterweight to the strains placed on our food system by massive monocultures and the industrialization of agriculture. Whitman's plans allow growers to borrow seeds from the library for planting with the only stipulation being that they allow some of their plants to seed, and return twice as many seeds to the library as they borrowed. Ultimately, the library will help to keep seeds in the hands of the people, and not big corporations.

The seed library will be a place where plant genetics, in the form of seeds, are stored for research purposes. The library will also provide the public with an avenue for obtaining seeds to start local community gardens and urban farms. Whitman looks forward to the role that the new seed library will serve in facilitating research, promoting community, saving treasured genetics and stockpiling diverse seeds.

Whitman, who just completed his junior year at UCSC, seeks both commercially available and unavailable seeds, and is concentrating his search on heirloom varieties that thrive in the Central Coast climate. Geared toward small to mid-sized organic farms and gardeners alike, the library will not intend to compete with existing seed libraries, but rather to complement their work and harness the potential synergy.

The seed library will eventually include an online database where potential borrowers can easily browse the catalog of seeds and place orders; Whitman is looking for a UCSC student to execute the design. In the next six months the library will have its own website and email address. For the time being, interested seed savers and lenders can contact Whitman directly at awhitman@ucsc.edu.

Former CCOF Volunteer Blazing Organic Research Trail

Organic Brussels sprouts and other cole crop producers will soon benefit from the research of longtime CCOF volunteer and friend Sean Swezey, extension researcher at the University of California Santa Cruz, who has been awarded a grant of \$14,990 from the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) for a renewed year of funding to study pest management in organic Brussels sprouts.

Swezey, who has the distinction of being awarded more OFRF grants than any other individual, is conducting an on-farm study that is the first and

only project ever to develop organic biological control strategies for key Brussels sprouts pests: the diamondback moth and cabbage aphid. Swezey acknowledges that approximately 90 percent of Brussels sprouts are grown in California, and because the crop grows in the field for nine months before harvest, it is highly susceptible to insect attack. Grant-funded experiments on implementing a biologically-based, whole-systems approach to organic Brussels sprouts production are being conducted on five acres of sprouts at Rodini Farms in Davenport, California, and on another five acres of sprouts at Jacobs Farms at Wilder Ranch in Santa Cruz.

A final report describing the results of this project is expected in July 2012. Swezey's research aims to fill the knowledge gap for improving organic

production techniques, thus facilitating the ability of more farmers to grow Brussels sprouts organically. Swezey asserts that great potential exists for an effective biological control program in organic Brussels sprouts to diminish the damage incurred by pests and improve fresh market yields for growers.

Since 1992, OFRF grants have empowered farmers to conduct their own research and helped numerous researchers gain additional funds for organic research. The only source of small grants to fund organic research on a nationwide basis open to all applicants, OFRF estimates that over \$5 million additional funds have been leveraged by their grant recipients to date. The next deadline for OFRF grant proposals is November 15, 2011.



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CCOF Members Receive NRDC Awards

Jim Cochran of CCOF certified member Swanton Berry Farm received the 2011 Food Producer Growing Green Award from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in honor of his commitment to both organic agriculture and fair labor practices. Swanton Berry Farm is the first 100 percent unionized organic farm in the country, offering an employee stock ownership plan, health coverage, and other benefits to its workers. Visit www.swantonberryfarm.com to learn more about Swanton's remarkable farming and labor practices.

CCOF supporting member Marrone Bio Innovation's CEO, Pam Marrone, was awarded the 2011 Business Leader Growing Green Award to acknowledge her role in developing environmentally-responsible biopesticides. Marrone Bio Innovations seeks to bring natural alternatives to conventional chemicals and pesticides to organic and conventional growers. Learn more about Marrone Bio Innovations at www.marronebioinnovations.com.

The NRDC Growing Green Awards "recognize extraordinary contributions that advance ecologically integrated farming practices, climate stewardship, water stewardship, farmland preservation, and social responsibility, from farm to fork." Both Marrone and Cochran were selected from hundreds of nominees by the distinguished panel of judges, which included Michael Pollan, *New York Times* best-selling author of "The Omnivore's Dilemma"; Maria Rodale, chairman and CEO of Rodale Inc.; Dan Barber, executive chef and co-owner of Blue Hill Restaurant in New York; and Dr. Tom Tomich, Director of the Agricultural Sustainability Institute at the University of California Davis.

Two Dog Organic Nursery Harvests Rooftop Cover Crop

Rather than hauling 50 cubic feet of new potting soil up to the top of a building, certified member Two Dog Organic Nursery planted Cool Season Soil Builder cover crop from certified member Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply in its numerous rooftop tomato trial containers. The cover crop, which was planted to protect the soil over the winter and provide nutrient rich "green manure" in the spring, grew up to 30 inches and attracted plenty of bees and lady bugs. Two Dog harvested the cover crop at the end of April by turning the most tender parts into the soil and composting the remaining harvest. The residues broke down within three weeks and the revitalized soil is now being used to grow Two Dog's rooftop organic tomato trials. Two Dog will be offering organic cover crop seed this fall at their local farmers' markets for those who want to try it at home. What a great idea for organic gardeners with little space! Visit www.twodognursery.com for location, market schedule, and online store.



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MarketSpice Celebrates 100th Anniversary

MarketSpice's history can be traced back to a small tea and spice shop established in Seattle's historic Pike Place Market in 1911. The company, which offers CCOF certified organic Rooibos teabags, has been a staple in Seattle ever since. To celebrate its 100th anniversary, the company awarded a celebratory "Cooking with MarketSpice" gift basket to each 100th customer throughout the month of May. MarketSpice offers a large assortment of bulk teas and spices, including MarketSpice Tea, their signature blend of black tea with spices and cinnamon-orange flavorings. Each tea blend is made daily in small batches to ensure optimum freshness. MarketSpice continues to serve its customers with an ever-growing product line, including their organic Rooibos teabags, which come in six flavors. Visit www.marketspice.com or their Pike Place storefront and celebrate 100 years of MarketSpice.

Kathleen Merrigan Speaks at Cal Poly CAFES

USDA Deputy Secretary, Dr. Kathleen Merrigan, spoke on May 19, 2011, at Cal Poly San Louis Obispo as part of the CAFES Center for Sustainability's Spring Sustainable Ag Lecture Series. Dr. Merrigan is known for co-authoring the Organic Foods Production act of 1990 and helping to establish standards for organic food labeling and certification. She was named one of *Time* magazine's 100 Most Influential People for 2010. Dr. Merrigan spoke on career opportunities in food and agriculture and about the USDA's "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" campaign.

"On every college campus I visit, participants are shocked to find out that nutrition assistance—not farm subsidies—makes up the majority of the USDA budget (almost 4.5 times the amount of any other expenditure). In fact, I've never had an audience correctly answer my question of what makes up the largest share of the USDA budget. This, to me, underscores the necessity of this national conversation. The next generation needs to better understand agricultural policy if they hope to provide solutions to the challenges of our future."



The 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress, the first in Asia, will be held in the Republic of Korea in 2011.

Program

The Organic World Congress (OWC) consists of a main conference with two tracks called a systems values' track and a research track and will be held in the Paldang Region, Gyeonggi Province from 28th September to 1st October 2011. The OWC also includes various thematic pre-conferences, held in different locations around the Republic of Korea from 26th to 28th September 2011.

Topics of the pre-conferences

Jeju Island	Tea
Pocheon City	Ginseng
Yangpyeong County	Wine
Goesan County	Seed
Namyangju City	Textiles, Cosmetics
Hwaseong City, Namyangju City	Urban Agriculture
Uljin County	Aquaculture



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World Organic Fair 2011

The World Organic Fair 2011 will held in conjunction with the 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress under the theme "Organic+Fair". The fair will provide an ample opportunity for buyers and the public to come into contact with the diversity as well as the latest trends and developments in the organic sector.

For more information, please contact

The Korea Organizing Committee for the 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress 2011
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The Sustainable Ag Lecture Series is a free public lecture series that highlights topics in sustainable agriculture, food, or resource management. Visit www.sarc.calpoly.edu for lecture series dates and details. The Cal Poly CAFES Center for Sustainability is a co-host of the CCOF Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference, an annual education event held in December in San Louis Obispo. Visit www.ccof.org/programs.php for Pest Management Conference information. The Cal Poly Organic Farm is an 11 acre, CCOF certified production unit in the Horticulture and Crop Science department with the mission of providing students a place to experience hands-on learning in organic and sustainable farming practices. Visit www.aeps.calpoly.edu/organics to find where to buy their organic vegetables!

Monterey Bay Aquarium Cooking for Solutions

The Cooking for Solutions event, hosted annually by the Monterey Bay Aquarium, brought together more than 70 chefs and 60 wineries to promote sustainable eating for the health of soil, water, and ocean wildlife. The event, held May 20 - 22, featured many CCOF members and Supporting Members, who offered food and knowledge to attendees. CCOF is proud to see our members participating in meaningful and educational activities and events. CCOF member and Supporting Member participants included: The Penny Ice Creamery, Earthbound Farm, Whole Foods Market, BARRA of Mendocino, the Homeless Garden Project, Alfaro Family Vineyards & Winery, Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards, Fetzter Vineyards, HALL wines, Hallcrest Vineyards/The Organic Wine Works, Silver Mountain Vineyards, Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards, Benziger Family Winery, Bonterra Vineyards, Chappellet Vineyard, Neal Family Vineyards, Turley Wine Cellars, and Volker Eisele Vineyard. What a list!



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Quarter Acre Farm via Facebook: "edamames are in the ground, 800 ft. worth"

We love hearing what our farmers are planting! These posts help everyone keep track of what's in season and reminds gardeners to get their seeds and transplants in the ground. Thanks for the updates.



Tutti Frutti Farms via Facebook: "What's in a name? We named ourselves TUTTI FRUTTI FARMS because we set out to grow many different types of fruits and vegetables, in a Mediterranean climate (hence the Italian), with a little bit of rock 'n' roll in the background...and this is what first comes to mind over here: a silly erotic TV show from the 90s (no, I'm NOT going to post a video...)"

Haha! What a fun way of describing how your name came to be! Speaking personally and lightly about your farm is a great way to build on your community of fans and customers.



Alvarado Street Bakery via Facebook: "Alvarado was honored with a visit from California State Assembly Member Jared Huffman and presented with a Sustainable North Bay Award for our commitment to over 30 years of producing healthy, organic, whole grain breads in a worker-owned cooperative, and for our solar project that offsets over 40% of our power usage."

Congratulations! CCOF, and your fans, are proud to hear of your accomplishments.



Homeless Garden Project via Facebook: "Taste the Strawberry Sorbet at the Penny Ice creamery made with our delicious strawberries!"

Yum! We are so glad to see our certified and supporting members working together. These collaborations help to further the organic movement and develop a strong, local, food-based community.



Harris Seeds via Facebook: "Harris Home Garden Tip - beans are a great item to include in your garden. Because of their short growth period, you can make small plantings every two weeks for a fresh supply through the summer..."

Thanks for the advice. This short but effective post casually informs your fans while directing them to your products.



Organic Attracts New Fans at Local Earth Day Celebration

.....

On April 16, CCOF staffers and interns spread organic enthusiasm at Earth Day Santa Cruz 2011 by sponsoring a CCOF booth on a sunny spring afternoon in San Lorenzo Park. The enthusiastic CCOF representatives engaged passersby in discussions regarding how organic is defined, what organic certification entails, and what organic food means to them.

Acting on CCOF's mission to advocate for and educate about organic, CCOF interns came face to face with consumers who wanted to learn more about what lies behind the organic label. They drew children and adults to the booth to learn about CCOF and organic by creating a prize wheel. After answering a question about organic, visitors were invited to spin and win prizes. The interns asked the adults to share the definition of "organic," and were happy to receive an encouragingly correct range of answers. Younger guests were asked to name their favorite organic vegetable (amusingly, organic broccoli and carrots were most popular) and were given CCOF organic coloring books.

CCOF gave away a heavy stack of member directories at the event to consumers interested in finding organic producers in the Santa Cruz area and beyond. Many consumers inquired about where to find available farm volunteer or apprenticeship opportunities and they were directed to the Classifieds page on CCOF's website, which is available for CCOF members to post their listings at no charge.

The event was a valuable, morale boosting, and inspiring day for both long-time organic enthusiasts and those who are just beginning to understand the benefits of organic. Interested in starting a similar event in your community? Visit www.ecocruz.org for details and tips on organizing your own version of Earth Day.

CCOF Executive Director to Serve on Board

.....

Since arriving at CCOF in early April, Executive Director Cathy Calfo has elevated CCOF's presence on the national stage with her recent appointment to the Organic Summit Advisory Board, a group tasked with planning the 2011 Organic Summit to be held at the Hilton Baltimore Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 21, 2011. Organized by New Hope Natural Media and held annually since 2007, The Organic Summit provides a visible platform for the organic movement and a forum for discussion and learning around challenges and opportunities that face the organic sector.

As the sole advisory board member from an organic certifier and trade association, Calfo will act as the voice of CCOF's members: the 2,400 farmers, processors and ranchers and 300 Supporting Members whose livelihoods are impacted every day by the political, economic and environmental factors affecting the organic sector.

The Advisory Board's role is to determine the topics and speakers for the 2011 Organic Summit event. The board is currently prioritizing between a myriad of hot topics such as engaging biotech, the state of organic access to all socioeconomic levels across the nation, the 2012 Farm Bill, and strategies to engage the next generation of organic farmers.



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CCOF Carries Organic Message to Sacramento

CCOF Executive Director Cathy Calfo, joined by Chief Certification Officer Jake Lewin and Policy Director Claudia Reid, spent a day in Sacramento in early May, meeting with Cabinet members, program administrators and representatives of the State and Assembly Agriculture committees.

Karen Ross, who was recently appointed secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), hosted CCOF leadership in an engaging conversation with representatives of her staff regarding the importance of promoting "California Organic" to benefit farmers and the state's economy. Ross was appointed to lead CDFA in January of this year by Governor Jerry Brown. Previously, Secretary Ross was chief of staff of U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Ross grew up on a farm in Nebraska and served for thirteen years as the executive director of the California Wine Grape Growers Foundation.

Department of Natural Resources secretary John Laird, a longtime friend of CCOF, also took time to meet with Calfo, Lewin and Reid, discussing opportunities to work jointly to preserve conservation and other programs that support organic farming. Prior to his recent cabinet appointment, Laird served for six years in the state legislature and as chair of the powerful budget committee.

The CCOF contingent also visited the manager of the CDFA's federal grants program to discuss opportunities for CCOF and partners to compete for funding through programs such as Specialty Crop Block Grant. These programs are designed to enhance the competitiveness of crops that include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops. The day ended with visits to the offices of the Assembly and Senate committees on agriculture. The work of these committees is key to supporting CCOF farmers, ranchers, processors, and handlers who produce and package healthy foods, create new markets for California agricultural products, and employ sustainable farming, processing and retail practices. Much gratitude, as well as offers for educational farm tours were expressed to all along the way.

New Organic Marketing Webinar Series

Are you new to organic and overwhelmed by how to market your business - or maybe you just need to brush up on the basics of what to do to thrive? Either way, we are listening! Building off CCOF's *Growing the Organic Market* annual convention this past winter, CCOF Program and Member Services Specialist Tina Cosentino teamed with 30 year organic retail/wholesale veteran Dina Izzo to launch a *Marketing 101* webinar in May. Registrations quickly reached the 60 participant capacity set by CCOF, resulting in the scheduling of a second webinar, for which over 100 participants registered. The publication "The Packer" featured an announcement of this *Marketing 101* webinar, and the enthusiastic response that followed convinces us more than ever that members would value a CCOF marketing education series. To that end, over the next few months CCOF will be busy developing a series of webinars and field days to help you, the organic producer, to market your products effectively. The *Marketing 201* webinar will launch this summer on Tuesday, July 26, from 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. and Thursday, July 28, from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. If you missed the first *Marketing 101* webinar and are interested in participating, watch for new dates to be listed on CCOF's website as we will repeat the training again during fall 2011.

CCOF thanks Organic Valley for their CROPP Cooperative Grant, which allowed us to offer this webinar to our members with a \$4,900 funding award to help finance our new farmer training efforts. The project goal is to develop and implement a hands-on training program for organic farmers and those transitioning to organic, along with agricultural advisors who wish to expand their knowledge of organic production.

Please check the CCOF education webpage for full calendar and details of upcoming webinars: www.ccof.org/programs.php.

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2011 Member Education Survey Results

Thank you to the 206 CCOF members who participated in the member education survey April 21 - May 5, 2011, and thank you to the 44 staff, inspectors and advisors who participated in the staff version of the survey. 80 percent of survey participants stated they would like to see CCOF offer more educational opportunities in their area. Here are a few highlights: survey participants included 55 percent growers, 25.8 percent processor/handlers, 7.8 percent ranchers, 10 percent other (mostly combinations of grower, processor/handler, retailer), and one sole retailer. The top picks for grower education topics include pest management, soil management, and weed management. Processors/handlers rate organic labeling and maintaining organic integrity through the supply chain the highest priority for future educational programming. Ranchers rate pasture rule for ruminants, and health care material evaluations and approval processes as their top priorities. As for the certification process, that record keeping and materials review are rated the highest is not surprising. Survey participants overwhelmingly support an "Ask a CCOF technical expert" and "Ask fellow CCOF members" web portal as a potential educational format. Webinars rate slightly higher than field days and workshops for potential educational formats. CCOF staff will use this feedback and incorporate it into the design of our new education program. For a full list of survey results please check CCOF's education webpage: www.ccof.org/programs.php.

Envirotoken Donations - Saving Bags Gives Back to Organic

Have you ever wondered if those 10 cent tokens you donate to nonprofits really add up to anything when you bring your own bag to a natural foods store? For CCOF, those tokens do add up, so much so that they have become a significant source of our annual donations! Every time a customer brings his or her own bag to Santa Cruz-based New Leaf Community Markets, he or she receives an Envirotoken, which represents 10 cents that New Leaf will donate toward the customer's choice of one of six featured non-profit organizations. In 2010, the New Leaf Envirotoken program raised almost \$6000 for CCOF, and these funds helped us finance crucial education programs such as our 2011 CCOF Annual Convention, *Growing the Organic Market*.

Throughout the month of May, New Leaf conducted its annual poll to determine which local non-profits would be included as donation recipients for the upcoming year, and CCOF needed to receive enough votes from customers and supporters alike to remain on the New Leaf Envirotoken board. To promote CCOF and to generate votes, interns set up a CCOF booth outside each of four New Leaf locations during the busy lunch hours and spoke with customers about CCOF's work to certify, promote, and advocate politically for our organic members, as well as to provide education about organic to members and consumers alike. We are proud to announce that CCOF won the elections at three of the New Leaf stores. Thank you to all who voted!

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chapter UPDATE

CCOF chapters can play a critical role in raising awareness of the CCOF brand and the importance of organic through activities such as: offering workshops or field days on regional topics; hosting networking sessions to connect producers with markets; conducting consumer education activities, reaching out to educational institutions; and mentoring newly certified or transitioning producers. Below is a spotlight from the Fresno-Tulare (FT) Chapter, from Chapter President Mike Braga.

The FT Chapter meets four times per year, usually a few days before the CCOF board meeting so that our board representative can inform the chapter of CCOF board topics. This also gives us a chance to share our ideas for the board with our representative. At meetings, we feature topics that would be of interest to the chapter such as nutrition or food safety. Members are notified by email and mail of the meeting agenda and we usually have 30 to 40 attendees. Cynthia Ortegon, our RSR, is instrumental in keeping the chapter meetings efficient and informative. We always invite inspectors so the growers can ask questions about materials or procedures. Some additional chapter accomplishments include:

1. Financially co-sponsoring the organic farming student internship program at California State University, Fresno. Several chapter members hosted apprentices on their farms including Mike Braga (Braga Organic Farms), Richard and Katherine Crowe (Black Crowe Vineyard), and Ted and Frances Loewen (Blossom Bluff Orchards).
2. Providing certification assistance to the Fresno State Student Operated Organic Farm (FSSOOF). The farm began with 0.8 certified organic acres in summer 2008 and is planning to expand to 15 in the fall. Our chapter worked with the school to support farm plans.
3. Our chapter is currently working with our local farm advisor, Richard Molinar, and Dr. Sajeemas "Mint" Pasakdee, advisor of FSSOOF, to help them conduct a one-day seminar on organic farming in the Central Valley at Fresno State. We have hosted two very successful field days at Reedley College with over 300 attendees. Topics for field days covered nutrition, tree fruit, grapes and almonds, and included visits to local farms.

As part of the chapter innovation process, CCOF encourages chapters to support local efforts that help educate, advocate, and promote organic. Consider sponsoring an apprentice this summer or donating chapter funds to local organic school gardens! Do you have your own chapter highlights to share? Write to programs@ccof.org.

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CCOF is gearing up to ensure that the elected representatives who shape farm policy understand the real value organic production brings to our economy...

Fighting for a Food Bill

The primary tool for shaping U.S. agricultural policy is the Farm Bill which is passed about every five years and is due for consideration again in 2012. CCOF will join with our membership and supporters to educate the public and advocate on behalf of organic during this very important upcoming farm policy discussion. Following is background and information regarding exactly how the Farm Bill affects organic agriculture and America's entire food system. Stay tuned, or to get involved, contact Claudia Reid, CCOF's policy director, at policy@ccof.org.

Background

Currently, U.S. food policy and programs are shaped by the 2008 Farm Bill, the continuation of a program that began with passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 during the Great Depression. This act was aimed at supporting farmers during tough times while keeping food affordable. Today, many lament the course of this massive U.S. investment which, primarily, supports a system of conventional agriculture that often works against small farmers and organic producers.

What's in the 2008 Farm Bill?

The 2008 Farm Bill sets current U.S. farm, food, and rural policy priorities through the federal investment of \$300 billion over five years (The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, H.R. 2419; Public Law 110-234). \$200 billion of this investment supports food stamp and associated nutrition programs. Of the remaining \$100 billion, about \$50 million annually supports organic production.

Farm Bill chapters (or titles) include: Conservation and Environment; Farming Opportunities; Local and Regional Food Systems and Rural Development; Organic Production; Sustainable and Organic Research; Renewable Energy; and Competitive Markets and Commodity Program Reform. Programs that directly support organic production are sprinkled within these various chapters, among them are the National Organic Program (NOP), Organic Certification Cost Share Program, EQIP Organic Transition program, organic research, and crop insurance.

CCOF is gearing up to ensure that the elected representatives who shape farm policy understand the real value organic production brings to our economy and communities in the form of jobs, nutritious foods, secure food supplies and environmentally sustainable practices.

2012 Farm Bill Advocacy

Like any other federal legislation, the Farm Bill authorizes various programs, some with mandatory or baseline funding and some with no mandatory or baseline funding. However, the legislation alone does not provide the money to pay for the programs. The process of allocating funding for federal programs is done through an appropriations process. Congressional members who serve on both policy committees and appropriations committees are powerful in deciding what is in the Farm Bill and whether or not it is funded.

CCOF's Farm Bill advocacy will be implemented through our strategic alliance with the Organic Trade Association (OTA) as well as in cooperation with a coalition that includes the National Organic Coalition, and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. Together, we will all be stronger in our representation of the organic community.

In addition to important programs cited in the earlier discussion of the current Farm Bill, CCOF will work during the upcoming Farm Bill debate to preserve the following initiatives that are of particular importance to organic farmers, such as the:

- Organic Data Initiative, which collects and disseminates critical production and sales data that are needed by organic producers for risk management tool creation, market stability, and increasing exports.
- Organic Transitions Integrated Research Program, which

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- o Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA), which provides valuable information to farmers. CCOF, OTA and other organic organizations frequently refer inquiries to ATTRA.
- o Conservation Stewardship Program, and EQIP, whose programs provide critical services such as improved air and water quality, water and energy conservation, and protection of soil and farmland. CSP and EQIP help farmers to improve production practices and improve soil fertility. The EQIP Organic Transition program specifically targets farmers who are undergoing the three-year transition period required by the NOP.

Research Service study indicated that between 2005 and 2008, organic cropland increased by 51 percent, and organic farmland increased by 11 percent.

In California, the story is even more compelling. Karen Klonsky, UC Cooperative Extension specialist in agricultural and resource economics, and member of the CCOF LLC Management Committee, recently released her analysis of California organic agriculture production showing that California dominates the nation in organic production of agricultural commodities. Dr. Klonsky analyzed data from a nationwide survey of organic producers, which found that California leads the U.S. in number of organic farms, amount of land in organic production, and in organic sales. California is home to 19 percent of U.S. organic farms and accounts for 36 percent of the country's organic sales. California is most prominent in organic fruits, vegetables, nuts and berries, with lettuce and grapes being the highest revenue organic crops. The survey also indicated that California produces more than 90 percent of all U.S. organic sales for 14 different commodities, including 99 percent of the nation's organic walnuts, lemons, figs and artichokes, and 100 percent of its organic almonds and dates. About one third of the organic farms classified themselves as mixed operations with both organic and conventional production systems in place, implying that the organic market provides a good opportunity for diversification for conventional farms. Most survey respondents said they planned to maintain or expand their organic production in the coming years. So although organic continues to be a niche market, it is a profitable one.

Organic Creates Jobs

A recent OTA survey shows that the organic industry in America has grown from \$3.6 billion in 1997 to \$29 billion in 2010, an annual growth rate of 19 percent from 1997-2008. Despite the U.S. experiencing the worst economic downturn in 80 years, the organic industry has experienced positive growth and is coming out of the recession hiring employees, adding farmers, and increasing revenue. This OTA data shows that 96 percent of organic operations nationwide plan to maintain or increase employment levels in 2011. There are approximately 14,540 organic farms and ranches in the U.S., totaling about 4.1 million acres, in all 50 states. The recent USDA Economic



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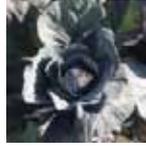
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Although the prospects are for a long, hot summer in D.C., on the policy front, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) has some reasons for hope and optimism.

In early June, I was at the White House to do a briefing on the organic industry, job creation, and business engagement ideas with the president's economic development teams. When I explained that organic is hiring employees, adding farmers, and increasing revenue with an impressive eight percent growth rate coming out of the recession, their jaws dropped. Recognizing that organic is dramatically outpacing the economy as a whole, they asked "What can we do to keep this momentum going? Would more transparency in the food system be helpful?"

I'm rarely faced with such easy questions, and the opportunity to strongly push our message about organic production practices and the need for a sane and equitable food policy. This was a monumental step for the organic sector and I believe the information I presented will help advance organic's cause on the policy front.

Funding Challenges

Meanwhile, we face a huge challenge to fight for organic funding amid massive cuts to the 2012 budget. Thus far, the House Appropriations Committee has marked up a \$125.5 billion funding bill for USDA and FDA. Of this, \$17.25 billion is discretionary, which is \$2.7 billion less than the fiscal year 2011.

The markup language would fund the National Organic Program (NOP) at or above fiscal year 2011 levels, and allocate \$4 million for organic integrated research, and \$2 million for ATTRA (Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas).

Funding for conservation programs that were reduced in the fiscal year 2011 Continuing Resolution and the House Appropriations Agriculture Subcommittee did not make gains in the markup.

The U.S. Senate had not yet passed a budget resolution.

Preparing for the Next Farm Bill

OTA is pleased to have received input from CCOF members in its survey that will be used to shape organic sector "asks" for the 2012 Farm Bill. Thanks to your participation, OTA can work on your behalf in its Farm Bill development work.

Meanwhile, OTA's board member Kristen Holt testified on behalf of the organic sector at the Senate Agriculture Committee's first Farm Bill field hearing, held May 31, in Michigan. Among OTA's asks:

- Increasing funding for NOP
- Continuing organic data initiatives and funding for organic research initiatives
- Continuing funding for the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program
- Providing assistance to organic producers for conservation practices by continuing the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, and
- Improving crop insurance for organic crops

GMO Update

USDA has reconstituted its Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture, whose purpose is to provide information and advice to the Secretary of Agriculture on the long-term impacts of biotechnology on the U.S. food and agriculture systems. In addition, USDA is renewing its National Genetic Resources Advisory Council to help ensure that all farmers have the best seed for their particular farming operations. Among its charges is the goal to develop a broad strategy for maintaining plant diversity available to farmers.

OTA is working toward having organic represented on these advisory bodies as they will be critical in making recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture. OTA believes organic's seat at this table is critical.

Since 2000, OTA has called for a moratorium on the use of GMOs and genetic engineering in all agriculture production, and mandatory labeling of GMO foods. OTA currently has a task force that is preparing a white paper on genetic engineering and its impact on the organic sector. Look for opportunities this summer for members to weigh in and participate in this process.



Canada Organic Standards Border Enforcement Begins July 1

Full implementation of the U.S. - Canada Organic Regime (COR) organic export agreement comes into effect on July 1, 2011. This means full enforcement of the rules regarding export of U.S. certified organic crops and products that are sent, either directly or indirectly, to Canada. Prior to this date, the Canadian Organic Office has allowed a "stream of commerce" policy while the industry readied itself for full compliance with the requirements. The time for full compliance is here!

What does this mean for you? As of July 1, Canadian border officials will begin verifying that the statement **"Certified in compliance with the terms of the U.S. - Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement"** is included on accompanying documents or packaging for ALL shipments of organic products exported to Canada from the United States. Products that do not have accompanying documentation with this statement may be refused entry into Canada.

If you have enrolled in the CCOF Global Market Access program and been reviewed to the terms of the U.S. - Canada equivalency agreement, this statement will appear on your Global Market Access certificate. To ensure smooth export of your product, you will want to provide your Global Market

Access certificate with shipment documentation, or add the required statement to bills of lading, invoices, or customs declaration documents.

Verification of NOP/COR Equivalence - Sodium Nitrate Risk Assessment

Under the terms of the U.S. - Canada organic equivalence arrangement, products grown using hydroponic or aeroponic production methods are not allowed to be sold as organic in Canada. This also applies to products grown using sodium nitrate (also known as Chilean nitrate). For U.S. operations wishing to ship organic product to Canada, CCOF will review the production practices and provide verification of adherence to these requirements so you can demonstrate compliance to buyers and others downstream.

CCOF researched the use of sodium nitrate, as well as hydroponic and aeroponic growing systems, and found that there are many crops (such as rice, coffee, or grapes) that have little risk of being prohibited due to use of these production practices. To ensure the U.S./COR verification process is as simple and efficient as possible, CCOF created a list of crops that are at risk of being grown using one of the prohibited production techniques (see below). For any of the crops listed below on the "high risk" chart, CCOF will verify that they were grown without the use of sodium nitrate and/or hydroponic or aeroponic production before we will issue a COR equivalency verification document. For crops that CCOF has identified as "no risk" CCOF will **not** seek additional documentation that they comply with the terms of the U.S. - Canada arrangement.¹

CCOF has identified the following crops as at risk of being grown using sodium nitrate, and will require verification prior to verifying equivalency with Canadian requirements:

- Carrots
- Celery
- Cole crops: including kale, collards, etc.
- Fresh tomatoes
- Greenhouse crops, including tomatoes
- Leafy greens
- Livestock feed crops produced in the Midwest²
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Winter citrus from the Southeast United States
- Winter vegetables: including broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

¹In early 2011 CCOF performed a rigorous review of all available inspection reports and discussed sodium nitrate use with experts in a variety of regions and certification agencies. CCOF will regularly review this list internally and with outside sources to ensure its ongoing accuracy and applicability.

²Relevant for cross border sales of feed; CCOF will not verify sodium nitrate prohibition in feed used in the Western or Eastern region at this time as it is not clear if this is explicitly required by the regulation.

Crops considered high risk for hydroponic or aeroponic production:

- Greenhouse Crops: including herbs and tomatoes

Rush OSP Update Service

To serve client needs and ensure the resources needed to provide timely service, CCOF has implemented new Rush Review services for OSP updates, material reviews, labels, products, and other items.

To serve client needs and ensure the resources needed to provide timely service, CCOF has implemented new Rush Review services.

Under this program, clients may complete the Rush Review Request form at www.ccof.org/forms.php. Requests for a two business day review are \$100 per item; requests for a five business day review are \$50 per item. The ability to request rush service has also been integrated into the CCOF Material Review Request form.

CCOF will only bill you if the rush is requested in this format and completed within your requested timeframe. CCOF clients are not required to utilize this service and may indicate the need for "As Soon As Possible" processing for any update. CCOF will review updates as quickly as possible in the order received. However, we are providing this option for those operations who want to ensure a specific turn around.

The Future of Chlorine

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently announced an important clarification to the use of chlorine in organic production systems. This may require operational changes for some CCOF clients who use chlorine for postharvest washing of crops. **The NOP now requires that a potable water rinse follows chlorine used in postharvest water at more than 4 parts per million (ppm).** CCOF was previously able to approve the use of chlorine at levels above 4 ppm in postharvest usage because of industry confusion over the meaning of the word "residual" in the regulations. The new NOP Guidance Document 5026 (available in the NOP Program Handbook at www.ams.usda.gov/nop) clarifies that the requirements are not intended to be a waste water regulation, but instead a regulation about protecting organic integrity.

According to the NOP Guidance Document, chlorine may be used in organic production as follows:

- *Preharvest crop production:* if in direct crop or soil contact, no more than 4ppm chlorine
- *Postharvest crop production or processing:* if in direct crop or food contact, and more than 4ppm chlorine, must have a rinse with potable water
- *Tool or equipment sanitation* (no direct food contact): up to maximum labeled rates, no rinse required

If you are a crop producer who has been using chlorine postharvest at more than 4 ppm in direct contact with food without a subsequent rinse, you will be required to modify your practices to be compliant with the above requirements. Please contact your CCOF Regional Service Representative to discuss a timeline for coming into compliance.

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Natural Resource Conservation Funding in Action

By David Novick

CCOF certified members are not simply committed to growing healthy, nutritious, organic food for you and your family.

At the heart of the organic movement is an innate understanding that the land we rely on to grow our food must be preserved sustainably. Since the way we grow our food affects the condition of the land on which it is grown, preserving the land means growing food in a holistic manner. Conserving soil and water, maintaining the land’s natural resources, and preserving biodiversity must be recognized as essential elements to a healthy ecological and biotic system. Organic honors our unwritten agreement with nature; that is, we will be able to grow healthy and nutritious food if we properly care for the land. This agreement necessitates promoting biodiversity and supporting a healthy ecosystem on the farm and the surrounding land. Natural resource conservation must play an integral part in the plan of any organic operation.

CCOF formally recognized this reality last year, in May 2010, with the addition of a new “Natural Resources” section

in our Organic System Plan (OSP). This new section is the accumulation of a two-year consultation between CCOF inspectors, clients, and biodiversity experts. CCOF, of course, has always promoted natural resource conservation, and now, with our new OSP section, we provide a systematic method for CCOF to track our clients’ various and unique conservation methods.

One obstacle for many farmers looking to initiate biodiversity and resource conservation projects is the price tag that can come with such practices. Fortunately, there are a number of grants available on the state and federal level that are designed to take the sting out of starting these projects. Below, we have profiled three CCOF certified members who are all taking their own unique approach to natural conservation efforts and in so doing, helping their businesses to thrive. The operations are distinct so as to highlight the wide range of projects that qualify for support from various federal and state conservation initiatives.

The Walking Wetlands Project

Noonan Farms, Klamath Falls, OR

Noonan Farms is located in the beautiful Klamath Falls Basin in Klamath Falls, Oregon, and has been in operation for 22 years. The Noonan Farms Walking Wetlands project is a premier example of an organic operation striking the balance between producing high quality organic food and maintaining an environmentally sound and beneficial habitat by actively promoting natural resource conservation. Noonan Farms is made up of 15,000 acres and as part of its project, 200-800 of those acres are flooded every one to two years in a continuing rotation that helps rejuvenate the land and create habitats suitable to migratory birds in the area. Mike Noonan began the Walking Wetlands project 15 years ago with a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG). Because the project consists of rotational walking wetlands, it was not eligible for a more traditional wetlands preservation grant, where operations use funding to keep static areas as wetlands for indefinite amounts of time. So, with a little research and innovation, Mike decided to apply for the CIG through Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), instead. Mike stresses the importance for farmers to look for unique solutions when they are searching for grants and funding opportunities, and it is clear that Mike thought creatively to find solutions for funding his conservation goals at Noonan Farms. Innovative thinking and problem solving is important to organic success and is just as important to finding the right sort of funding for your operation.

CCOF: What specific funding do you receive?

Noonan Farms: We took part in conservation grants, specifically, a CIG. The innovation grant was awarded to us because we came up with a unique concept: adding wetland habitat for the area in a manner that is different from traditional wetland preservation. It's a "walking wetland."

How did you hear about this funding opportunity?

Our project didn't work within the parameters for a Wetland Restoration Project, so I looked deep and started thinking outside the box. I think that's what we do, and have to do as organic people: think outside the box. Farm by farm, there are different needs and it's about us figuring out what's best for our local habitat. You have to look at what you have or do as an asset and value.

How long was the funding application process?

The funding application process was a year long. It is competitive and takes time and effort. There's no template for this. The ideas must be pushed by the producers themselves. You might take part in a wetlands initiative or have a project related to erosion control. But you want to maximize conservation and maximize

reproduction. We took some risks, but it's been worth it and it's paid off because now we have 10,000 migratory birds using our land as habitat. The project was undertaken before we received the grant money. The grant money took the sting out of the initial cost but that money is long gone now.

What are the details of your project? What concrete actions are you taking to preserve natural resources?

We flood, on average, 800 acres every one to two years in 200 to 300 acre parcels to create an anaerobic environment in the soil. The flooding brings in birds, as it creates a habitat for them. This refuge brings in a consolidated bird population that in turn helps with fertilization. The flooding encourages the growth of aquatic plants that otherwise would not germinate. We looked at the practices of old: the ground needs a rest and needs to be rejuvenated. The flooding produces a cleansing effect. The water we drain after the flooding is filtered and clean. In fact, we're sending water back that's cleaner than it was when it came to us. The flooding creates a tannin-rich environment that in turn cleans the algae in the water. All this gives back to organic production. It gives back to the wildlife. It's about maximum conservation, maximum productivity, and maximum value. You have to balance production and conservation.

It's been fun to watch the farm and wildlife grow. We're better off with this project than not. It's a local and regional approach. The more we can do in our local area for our local habitat the better.





“Everyone is so used to cheap food, while the cost of small farming is enormous. These grants can really offset those costs.”

- Jan Kielmann
123 Farm

Using Cost Share Grants for More Efficient Farming

123 Farm, Cherry Valley, CA

Since May 2009, 123 Farm, a 900-acre property, has been devoted to sustainably raising food for its sister restaurant, The Grand Oak Steakhouse & Bar, part of the Highland Springs Resort. Providing both vegetables and meat for the restaurant menu, 123 Farm is a leading example of the sort of closed system operation for which sustainable, organic farms are known. In addition to providing food for the restaurant, 123 Farm employs herbal extract processing, cheese making, a lavender and herb growing operation, poultry and egg wash, dairy cows, and several hundred acres devoted to wild pasture.

The grants that 123 Farm has received are a great example of how funds can help promote biodiversity while, at the same time, making an organic operation more efficient and thereby boosting the bottom line of a farm. Jan Kielmann, the farm coordinator, explained to me his experience, reasoning, and process for obtaining funding for the farm.

CCOF: What specific funding are you receiving or have you received?

123 Farm: We have applied and been approved for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Organic EQIP cost-share grants. Originally we were approved for just one grant, but because of the nature of our projects it turned into two.

How did you hear about this funding opportunity?

When things were really dire at the farm and I could not develop it the way I wanted, due to limited funds, I did some research and found these grants.

How long was the funding application process?

In our case it was three years, due to several complications, but normally it would have been between three to six months.

Was the process for applying for the funding difficult?

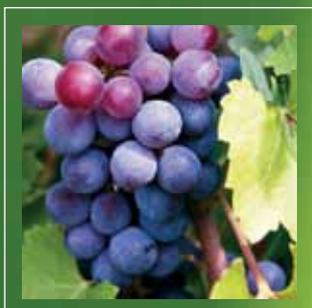
In our case yes, due to the company structure, but you just can't give up. You have to keep trying until it works. You have someone from EQIP come out and they have a list of what they can help fund you with, and you go through the list of potential opportunities and see what you might be eligible for.

Would you have been able to complete your project without funding?

It would have been very difficult, and still is, because the cost share requires me to finish a project first, before I can get reimbursed. So it's hard to come up with the upfront costs, but, on the other hand, it might have taken many years to get the necessary funds without the grant, and I knew I couldn't get any further with the farm without initiating these projects.

What are the details of your project? What concrete actions are you taking to preserve natural resources?

We produce organic meat for our restaurant, and we are building a large, woven-wire fence around our pasture to stop the loss of lambs to coyotes, and to enable rotational grazing for sheep, cows, chicken, and pigs. Building good fences really helps to make things more efficient; it makes organic farming a little easier.



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We are mulching several of our lavender fields with woodchips to decrease the amount of labor spent on weeding and to preserve moisture in the soil. We are planning to fight the Olive Fruit Fly in our 100 year old trees, and set up nesting boxes for owls, bats, and bluebirds in order to increase natural enemies to insects, flies, rodents, etc.

What advice do you have for other farmers seeking funding?

Just take a little bit of your time in winter and look up all the opportunities on the internet or ask your local NRCS about options. Just apply. Apply and then they'll help you with everything else. There's nothing to lose through applying. Small farms need this sort of help because the market for their product undervalues the product. Everyone is so used to cheap food, while the cost of small farming is enormous. These grants can really offset those costs. The NRCS can provide technical help with experts, and they can advise on standards that must be met for things like fencing. With the cost-share reimbursement grant they will pay something like \$1.50 for every foot of fencing that you erect. Call or visit your county NRCS office and call your county agricultural commissioner.

Building Alliances to Preserve Natural Resources

Leavitt Lake Ranches, Vina, CA

At Leavitt Lake Ranches in Vina, California, Darrell Wood's family manages 40,000 acres of owned, leased and public land that are home to his 100% grass-fed cattle herd, some of which goes to meat production.

Through a complex and innovative grazing system that works with the land instead of against it, the Woods are preserving rangeland for generations to come. The Wood's work has been recognized on numerous occasions and, in 2006, Darrell received a National Wetlands Conservation Award from the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Wood family also received the 2010 California Beef Cattle Improvement Association's Outstanding Commercial Producer of the Year Award, which recognizes progressive cattle breeders who use practical and scientifically accepted selection and management methods in their ranching.

Between the winter range, annual grasslands of the Vina Plains, and the summer range, high elevation meadows of Lassen County, they own approximately 3,670 acres of private land, manage 25,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management permits and lease another 11,000 acres. Together, they manage 600 mother cows and 400 yearlings, farm 600 acres of alfalfa, and maintain 900 acres of irrigated pasture. Their methods for rangeland conservation include developing fenced off riparian areas in their ranches, installing water troughs to help keep

Seeking Investment for Your Operation

animals from using certain riparian zones, employing rotational grazing and field replanting, and installing new irrigation systems. The Woods partnered with NRCS to permanently place a portion of their ranch in the Grassland Reserve Program to protect it from development, and have worked with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore creeks on the ranch to a healthy condition. They protect vernal pools that create habitats for endangered plant and animal species, and have installed fish ladders for migrating schools of salmon. The Woods have made environmental stewardship a part of their everyday ranch life. They are involved in a multitude of partnerships and are a compelling example of how, with a concentrated effort between different parties, land can be preserved and kept healthy for future generations.

CCOF: What specific funding are you receiving or have you received?

Leavitt Lake Ranches: We've worked with and received grants from Wetlands Reserve Program, EQIP, Partners for Wildlife, and US. Fish and Wildlife Service for the last 15 years.

How long was the funding application process?

It took about six months to get into the system. And then every year for the next 10 years there were addendums and project improvements.

Would you have been able to complete your project without funding? Would you have undertaken the project without funding?

No, these are all very expensive projects and we would not have been able to do them without the help of these grants.

Please describe the details of your project.

We have riparian restoration projects, cross fencing, rangeland improvement, and we are encouraging the growth of sage grass. We have fenced off three miles of streams and riparian areas from our livestock to be able to have a controlled grazing area. We have off-stream ponds and water troughs for the cattle so that they don't have to go down to the riparian areas to drink. Per the NRCS grazing plan, we keep areas from being grazed until July 1 so as to lessen the impact that the cattle will have on this land.

We have profiled three farms here, but countless stories abound of other organic operations with their own unique set of strategies for preserving the natural resources of their land.

What ties all of the above operations together is their devotion and motivation to seeing that the land they are managing now is maintained in perpetuity. This loyalty to sustainability is seen through their numerous and innovative farming and ranching methods. The alliances and partnerships they have developed with local, state, and federal entities ensure the existence of a faithful mandate among various parties to help realize this goal.

CCOF, in our ongoing effort to build positive organic conservation alliances, has gathered Resource Conservation District (RCD) and NRCS contact information and organized it by CCOF chapters. This effort to compile pertinent information is to better help our clients reach their local district resource coordinators and identify potential financial aid, plan projects, and even receive assistance in some instances with filling out paperwork.

CCOF takes pride in the many operations that employ differing approaches to natural resource conservation. Many do so independently, and many successfully gain grants and other assistance to meet their conservation and financial goals. The purpose of this article is to share with our community the inspiring successes achieved by CCOF members and to offer information that will allow all our certified members to achieve wealth based on sustainability, stewardship and community. To that end, we encourage you to look into the programs for which you may be eligible. Please refer to information we have profiled online at www.ccof.org/biodiversity.php for contacting your local NRCS and RCD office.

CCOF encourages its members to take a look at the natural resource conservation strategies they might already have in place and ones that still can be implemented. Preserving our precious natural resources is something that will come about through building partnerships and seeking out opportunities for shared costs. The money you apply for to invest in your operation could turn out to be the impetus for projects and alliances that help boost your bottom line while maintaining your land for generations to come, which, at its heart, is the deepest intention of organic.



David Novick, former CCOF Intern, has studied organic farming and worked in the Santa Cruz mountains on a CCOF certified organic farm. He is excited to share his passion for organic farming with the wider organic community.

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JS Venture

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Joe Yeung Farms, Inc.

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mmjyeung@gmail.com
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Tomatoes (Processing)

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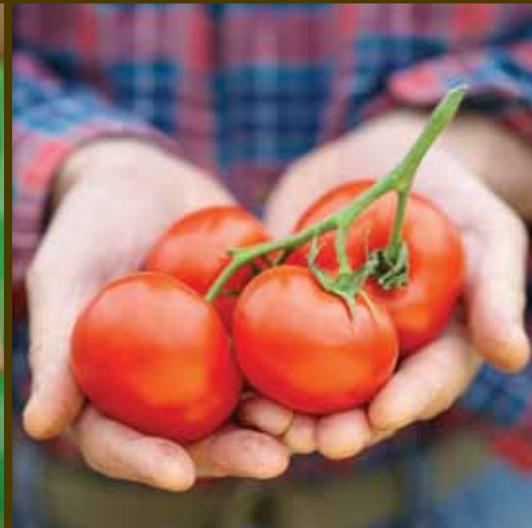


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2011 Grass Hay and Alfalfa Wanted

New season grass hay and alfalfa wanted. Please call Paige at **(707) 743-2337** or email paige@johnwoolleyranch.com with details.

Classified Submissions

CCOF members may run classified ads for free online and in *Certified Organic* as space permits. To submit your classified, email patrice@ccof.org or fax your ad to CCOF at **(831) 423-4528** with a subject line of "CCOF Member Classified Ad." Non-members can visit www.ccof.org/classifieds.php for info on purchasing an ad.

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Funding Opportunity

2011 Grant Funding for Agricultural Equipment

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is accepting grant applications for emission reduction projects located throughout the San Francisco Bay Area region. Eligible projects include replacing equipment, replacing engines, adding emission control devices and more. Projects will be selected for funding on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications will be accepted until all funds have been allocated. Visit www.baaqmd.gov/agriculture to learn more about the application process and eligibility.

July 26 and 28, Webinar

CCOF Marketing 201 Webinar

This *Marketing 201* webinar will review the key elements for establishing continued marketplace presence. Presenter Dina Izzo will offer tips and tricks on how to determine a fair price for an organic product, create an availability list, and create an invoice. The webinar will also include hands-on activities such as developing a price proposal for an organic product and practicing a sales pitch. Learn from Dina's 30 years of experience in the organic produce industry. Register at

www.ccof.org/programs.php

August 27, Ukiah, CA

CRCMC's Annual Pure Mendocino® Celebration

This August is the 7th annual Pure Mendocino® Celebration, an exploration and commemoration of the healthy community created around Mendocino's organic and biodynamic farms, vineyards, and ranches. This year's farm-to-table family-style dinner will showcase organically produced Mendocino County wines and a menu by Ross Kilkenny of Ukiah's Kilkenny Kitchen, as well as many guest chefs. This highly anticipated event will be held on Saturday, August 27, from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Tickets are \$135 per person and include a commemorative wine glass. For more information please visit **www.puremendocino.org** or call **(800) 449-6483**.

September 13 - 15, Sonoma, CA

National Heirloom Exposition

Join CCOF at the National Heirloom Exposition! This event is gaining incredible interest among home growers, farmers, school groups, and the general public - so much so that it is shaping up to be the "World's Fair" of the heirloom industry. This is a not-for-profit event and any funds generated will be donated back to school gardens and food programs. Event activities will include a display containing more than 2,000 varieties of heirlooms, educational seminars for school groups, workshops on seed saving, movie screenings, and more. Visit **www.theheirloomexpo.com** for more information.

Save the Dates! ←

December 2 - 3, San Luis Obispo, CA

10th Annual Sustainable Pest Management Conference

The 10th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Pest Management Conference provides an opportunity for pest control advisors, organic consultants, and growers to enhance their skills in innovative pest management practices for organic and sustainable agriculture. The conference, co-hosted by CCOF and the Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) Center for Sustainability, will feature Secretary of Food and Agriculture Karen Ross as keynote speaker and will focus on tools for organic production practices, biologically-integrated pest control, pesticide resistance management, beneficial soil organisms, and updates on important regulatory issues.

February 1, Pacific Grove, CA

CCOF Annual Meeting and Conference

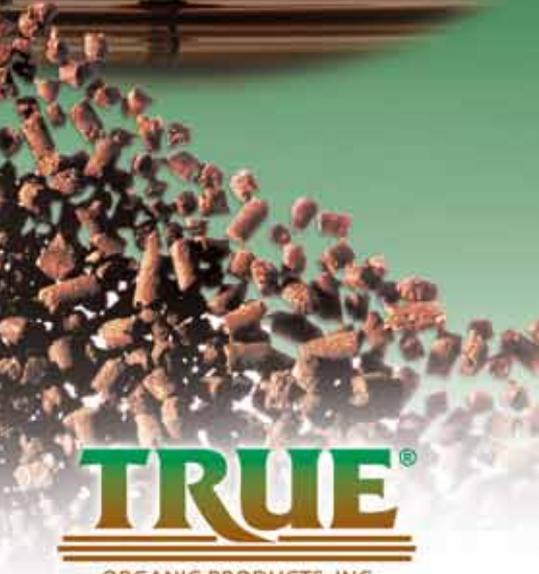
Join us for CCOF's Annual Meeting, Conference and Reception on February 1, 2012. The theme of this full-day conference is *Advancing Organic 2012: Practices and Policies* and is scheduled as an EcoFarm pre-conference. The focus will include advancing strong organic practices and shaping policies that support organic research, soil management, food safety, and farming innovation. Conference participants will explore advanced practices and techniques in sessions led by expert organic producers and handlers. Topics will include soil fertility, weed management, range management, and organic processing. In addition, we will explore the connection between implementing these practices and advancing federal food and farm policies that value and support the work of organic producers. Experts will address compliance with the National Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement, and Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010. 2012 Farm Bill provisions, and how they connect to our work, will also be discussed.

Please check **www.ccof.org/programs.php** for updates and registration information on both of these events.

Visit **www.ccof.org/calendar.php** for more events or to post your own!

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