

Organic MATTERS



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USDA to Require Permits for GE Wheat Trials

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has announced it will require permits for field trials of genetically engineered wheat, and published a justification for taking that action. The agency noted that recent unauthorized releases of GE wheat and findings have led to the conclusion that U.S. agriculture would benefit from the increased oversight of permits. The justification cited two separate incidents concerning regulated GE wheat found in Oregon and Montana. "It became clear to us following the GE wheat incident in Oregon that the detection of regulated GE wheat where it was not authorized had great potential to disrupt wheat markets globally," the agency wrote. (From ota.com) 

Success in Bozeman: MOA Conference Breaks Records

by Susan Waters, *Organic Matters* Editor, and Contributors*

"This was a wonderful conference," wrote one of several enthusiastic participants on a post-MOA Conference survey. "I came seeking information and inspiration for a business project and was very fulfilled."

Such was the atmosphere at the 13th Annual Montana Organic Association Conference last December at the Holiday Inn in Bozeman.

Breaking all previous records, the 2015 Conference drew over 230 participants, including people from seven states—Montana, Minnesota, Vermont, Maine, Ohio, Wisconsin, Connecticut and Colorado. The amount of organic experience of the conference-goers had a wide spread; from well-seasoned organic professionals to beginning agriculture students. Attendees also included: 20 participants in *Organic University (OU)*; 44 children, aged 6-11, in *Kids' University (KU)*; 18 students at the general sessions; and 70 curious folks at the two *Farm Tours* and the *Montana State University (MSU) Lab Tours*.

While it is not feasible to cover every session that took place, the post-conference surveys netted a large number of compliments regarding the knowledge of the

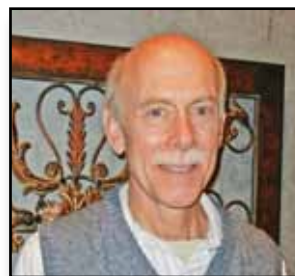
presenters, the range of organic topics covered, the networking opportunities, and the enjoyable activities. So, let's have the conference attendees tell the story.

Dr. David Granatstein returned as opening keynote speaker to talk about how extensively

agriculture and organic production has changed and how many forces beyond our control will continue to reshape organic farming in the future, as well as choices we make individually and collectively. David

explored how organic production will respond to or be affected by climate change, new invasive pests, urban agriculture, and many more possible influences. In his session, *Organics Evolving: Possible Paths and Pitfalls*, David presented many case studies for climate change and the latest information about sequestering carbon in the soil. Session participant Liana Nichols stated, "He emphasized that our best organic practices are a work in progress and are always changing. The big picture perspective that Dr. Granatstein presented was uplifting; that agriculture has changed so drastically and so quickly in the last few decades

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2015 Conference Keynote Speaker David Granatstein

that it is likely to continue to change in the coming decades, preferably away from the current systems of consolidation and chemicals.”

With an ambitious agenda, the Conference showcased 60 presenters in 49 formal sessions, and organic information was flowing freely in both directions, as was experienced in several panel discussions.

After the *Nuggets of Knowledge* panel, Lia Hardy stated, “I heard some good stories from the older farmers and was also inspired to hear from a young farmer who has made a business at such a young age. Every farmer in Montana has and will struggle but there is usually a silver lining.” This session was so well attended and received that several people suggested that this session be broken into several smaller, longer-lasting ones in future conferences.

Whitney Pratt reported on the *Ruminating on Organic Cropping Systems* panel by saying, “We

discussed flock density, the necessity of adjusting for heavy rainfall, and the manure inputs and soil compaction from sheep. It was helpful to have multiple speakers for this session as each had a different approach.”

The theme of climate change continued in the *Climate Change Impacts in Agriculture* panel. “I enjoyed the role playing activity in the beginning because it allowed the experts on the panel to

translate their theoretical knowledge into practical and applied actions for the farmer, rancher, processor and chef,” said Liana Nichols.

In the *OAEC Update* session, Noelle Orloff, “was a funny and engaging speaker,” according to Daniel Proctor. “She clearly

explained her data on bindweed and Canadian Thistle, the groups measured and their positive or negative impacts on weed biomass.” Lianna Nichols agreed, stating, “I was glad to see research results that were so relevant to most, if not all, of the farmers at the conference. And also to see researchers who are so responsive to producers. This is a powerful way to partner to solve problems.”

Another well-attended session was *Design and Maintenance of Productive and Edible Organic Gardens in Montana* with Jim Barngrover and Caroline Wallace. Daniel Proctor was impressed with the presentation, stating, “Jim covered everything about gardens from soil prep and testing to ideal times for planting and harvesting. He knows a lot of tricks...things you can only learn firsthand from someone with experience.”

The Conference was not just made up of classroom instruction though. One hands-on session was *Cooking with Chef Claudia*, presented by Claudia Galofre Krevat. Lia Hardy reported that she was a “lively, engaging speaker with helpful tips and great stories. She shared the importance of legumes and lentils for the health of the individual and future of agriculture and the environment. Everyone had a task in the food prep which seemed to have a positive impact on the session. We laughed, shared stories and information and it didn’t feel like a conference.”

Seed classes have been very well received at the MOA annual conferences. A full-day *On-farm Variety Trials Seed Class* included instruction by the Organic Seed Alliance and Steve Peters, formerly of the Rodale



Climate Change Impacts in Agriculture Panel

Montana Organic Association is a 501(c)6 non-profit organization dedicated to advocating and promoting organic agriculture for the highest good of the people, the environment and the State economy.

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Institute. Steve discussed seed breeding and selection, as well as appropriate varieties for our bio-region.

Back by popular demand was *Organic University*, headed up by Organic Inspector Trainer, Jonda Crosby. Participants learned about organic farming basics, the organic certification process, on-farm safety, and many other relevant topics for beginning organic farmers.

Kids' University returned for the second year and was facilitated by three Food Corps representatives. The kids participated in fun, interactive activities, which highlighted soil and water, while they learned about healthy eating habits.

Record numbers of participants took advantage of the tours offered. As one tour group headed out to learn about the livestock processes of two local farms, Amaltheia Organic Dairy and Thirteen Mile Farm, the other group went onto the MSU campus to visit four analytical laboratories—Schutter Diagnostic Lab, Seed Potato Lab, Regional Pulse Diagnostic Lab, and the Montana State Seed Lab.

The closing keynote speaker was Kristina Hubbard, who explored whether co-existence with genetic engineering (GE) was possible. She discussed the policy issues surrounding approval of GE alfalfa, the first GE perennial introduced to the market. Kristina gave such a passionate talk full of so much information, Liana Nichols said, “Kristina’s talk inspired me to learn more about the issue of lack of diversity in the seed industry—both in terms of the very centralized, large seed companies, and in terms of the lack of regionally-adapted *Organic Matters*, Winter 2016

and organic-adapted seed. This is a topic I could get behind for graduate studies and perhaps a career.”



13 Mile Lamb & Wool Co. Farm Tour



Kids' University



Seed Cleaning Demonstration



*MSU Seed Potato Lab Tour
by Seth Swanson*

MOA also received some very specific and constructive comments from participants on how to make the next conference even more tailored to what the participants of future events might want. Responding to this type of feedback is likely one of the reasons the MOA Conference

continues to grow in size and success every year.

The Holiday Inn in Bozeman provided a comfortable venue for the event. The Conference was also full of networking opportunities with other participants during the social hours and between-class breaks. Many informal “breakout discussions” were observed taking place in the lobby and the bar well into the night. The delicious organic meals provided by many generous local producers, the information-packed sponsor and vendor booths, the silent auction, and the very lively live auction added some fun to the Conference. Some conference-goers even kicked up their heels to the bluegrass band, the Hollowtops.

Overall, participants viewed the Conference as a valuable compliment to their work in organics. Liana Nichols summed it up by stating, “I have learned a great deal about different organic systems by apprenticing and interning on farms and in particular, through discussions with farmers, researchers, and others involved in the organic food movement. I see the MOA conference as a wonderful opportunity to continue learning from experts in the organic community.”

A huge “thanks” goes out to all of MOA’s Conference attendees, sponsors, vendors, donors, presenters, and the many, many volunteers that made this event a success. MOA could not produce the Conference without the generosity of all our supporters. 🌱

**Article contributors include: Liana Nichols, Vilicus Farms Intern; Lia Hardy, Terrapin Farm Intern; Whitney Pratt, FoodCorps Americorps Service Member; and Daniel Proctor, Terrapin Farm Intern. Photos by Susan Waters.*

Growing Montana Farms, One Beer at a Time: Part III

by John Larmoyeux, MOA Board Member

Beaver anal glands, fish bladders, and synthetic flavoring agents, together with residual pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides are among the tasty compounds found in conventional beer as evidenced by *Fenaroli's Handbook of Flavor Ingredients*, Research Brewery St. Johann, *Journal of Agriculture Food Chemistry*, and SPEX Certi Prep, just to name a few. Welcome to the world of Big Beer, where food processing sales reps cajole brewers to formulate drinkable beer-like liquids for the North American consumer, all within legal ramifications and approved by the FDA¹.

Whether you're Alex Jones from InfoWars.com, who refers to Budweiser beer as "chemical syrup;" The Food Babe, who alleges that Big Beer uses unappetizing things like propylene glycol (a foaming ingredient found in airplane de-icing liquid); or the average Montanan just curious about the local beer you love, the ingredients in American beer have been discreetly withheld from consumers since commercialization of brewing and made all the more

confidential since the dawn of chemical agriculture. If you would like to know what exactly is in beer, the answer is as simple as navigating the web of brewing associations and governmental entities who regulate food processing, labeling and distribution in the United States.

Like the Wendy's fast food chain, whose generic marquee sign says, "Quality is our recipe," Big Beer companies have routinely responded to consumer inquiries about beer ingredients by stating they are "in full compliance with all federal and state labeling requirements." By dodging the question, another question arises: why aren't the ingredients listed in beer as with all other "food" products? Since haggling over beer ingredients is a total buzz kill, consider how the USDA Organic label overcomes controversial GMO labeling debates. The USDA Organic label also holds the power to protect beer consumers from the increasingly bizarre additives in conventional beer used to chemically engineer color, body, taste and head. But the concept of "organic beer" collides with

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years of consumer conditioning. Perhaps a PR and advertising campaign is in order equivalent to that of psychologist Edward Bernay's, who was hired by the Beech Nut Company in the 1920's to persuade Americans that "breakfast is the most important meal of the day."

Although not a psychologist, Ted Vivatson is a family man in Fortuna, California, who raises organic beef, operates an organic orchard, and owns the largest organic beer producer in the country—Eel River Brewing—which has been brewing organically for over 20 years. "We make award winning beers. They just happen to be organic," he says. "We are not focused on the data or the health issues. Five percent of our customers drink from conviction, and the other 95% drink because it's great tasting beer! We are selling a good time. Only then we can mainstream it."

If you think Ted might be out of touch with the economics of average Americans, consider this:



Something extra with your conventional beer?

during the recent hops crisis, he provided organic hops to other small breweries out of his own supply to ensure their survival. As a capitalist, he also balances his brewing convictions with economic realities by brewing non-organic beers as well. After all, "How can you represent organics if you fail?" he says. "Do what it takes to make sure the organics can survive. We have a long way to go...and we may not get there in my lifetime...but I go to work every day to fight the battle."

'The battle' is not just a West coast dilemma. It is here on the home front, primarily against Jim Lueders, proprietor of Wildwood Brewing in Stevensville, Montana's only exclusive organic brewery. According to Jim, "We need more Montana farmers growing (malting) barley organically. You would think that with an organic farmer Senator like John Tester, we would be increasing this commodity. How can we get more growers into this? Organic malt is getting harder to find domestically. I prefer to buy

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One Beer at a Time *continued from p. 5*

local at every chance, but it is impossible to do this. All commercial breweries have hundreds of malts to pick from; I have two. It is quite difficult to make a variety of products given this limitation...I have to get all my hops from overseas. I have tried one organic hop producer in Oregon, but their hops were of poor quality and inadequately packed to consider using them regularly. And of course, price is a factor. Organic malt and hops are about three times the price of conventional. The demand for organic beer in Montana is not large enough to charge any more money for organic beer. It must be priced right to compete with breweries making conventional craft beer or I will be priced out of the market."

On the matter of organic ingredient selection, an analogy is offered by organic brewer Del Dan Grande of Bison Brewing in Berkley, California², "The ingredients we use are like a crayon box. We have 24 crayons in our box, and with them we can make some really beautiful pictures. But the conventional brewers have over 60 crayons in their box. So, if you don't like organic beer, don't blame the brewer." He also calls out classy restaurants that promote an organic menu, but balk at paying \$10 more to tap a keg of organic beer.

Bison Brewing reminds its customers that beer is first an agricultural product, going so far as to publish their research on the agriculture impact of organic brewing: "Each consumer who chooses a 6-pack per week of organic beer causes a farmer to convert 1,700 square feet of farmland from conventional to organic agriculture. That is the size of many suburban homes, or twice an average apartment. Each restaurant tap handle serving just one keg of organic beer per week causes a farmer to convert one football field of farmland from conventional to organic agriculture. That is a real impact."

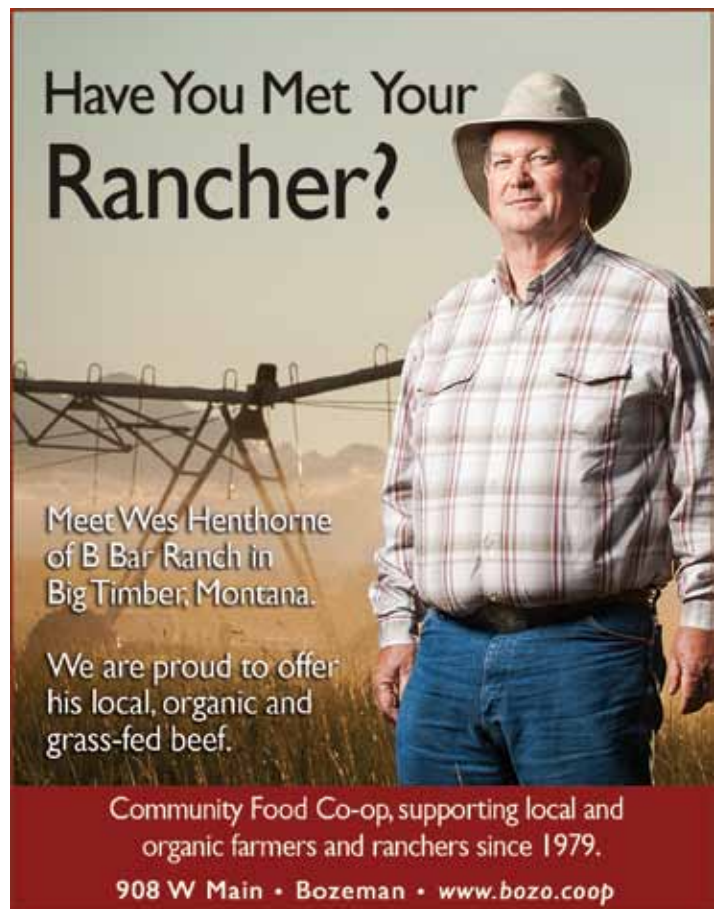
But don't leave it to Californian organic brewers to address Montana's organic brewing dilemma. According to Brian Smith, co-owner of Blackfoot River Brewing in Helena, where Organic Pale Ale and Organic Porter are mainstays, "Brewing organic is about land stewardship. To me it's not even about health anymore. Due to the amount of glyphosate on hops alone, if we could, we would brew with organic hops even in our conventional beers. But the supply of that sort of quality is just not available in the U.S right now."

However, it just might be on the horizon considering that organic food sales have quadrupled over the past ten years. Consumers who purchase organic food are increasingly purchasing organic beverages, which averaged 15.5% annual growth in sales between 2003-2013, according to the Organic Trade Association (OTA). Per the 2014 OTA organic industry survey:

“Although organic beer, wine, and liquor definitely face the challenges of varying label and liquor laws by state, these categories are also finding their niche and growing. The very small organic liquor market is the fastest growing sector within the beverage category... As consumers push for transparency, it is expected that this subcategory will grow. At the moment, liquor companies are not required to list ingredients on labels. Therefore, organic becomes appealing for those consumers who are ingredient savvy and want to ensure that sustainable practices were used in the production of what they are drinking. Yet the biggest challenge organic liquor makers face is... competing against larger companies who can mimic their unique flavors but not be held accountable to their ingredients. Just like in food, the ‘natural’ moniker can be and is used by many liquor companies when in fact there is nothing ‘natural’ about the ingredients. Organic beer is also finding its niche market, recording 19% growth in 2013 with \$79 million in sales... It is easier to have a conversation about the ingredients in beer than it is with liquor. People understand barley, wheat, and hops, and consumers are starting to make the connection between eating organic food and drinking organic beer. Conventional beer does contain GMO corn byproducts, hence growth of organic beer is expected from consumers who are concerned about this issue.”

According to current beer regulations, agricultural chemicals are a known yet acceptable residue in conventional beer, so long as the quantities are limited to x-amount of parts per million (PPM) under chemical analysis. Under the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2005), drinking alcohol in moderation is defined as the consumption of up to two drinks per day (for men) of 12 fluid ounces of beer, which, if strictly followed, would multiply that chemical ingestion 730 times (2 beers every day of the year). Reports on American beverage consumption show the average American is drinking 21 gallons of beer per year (only 2688oz, with moderation being 8760oz).

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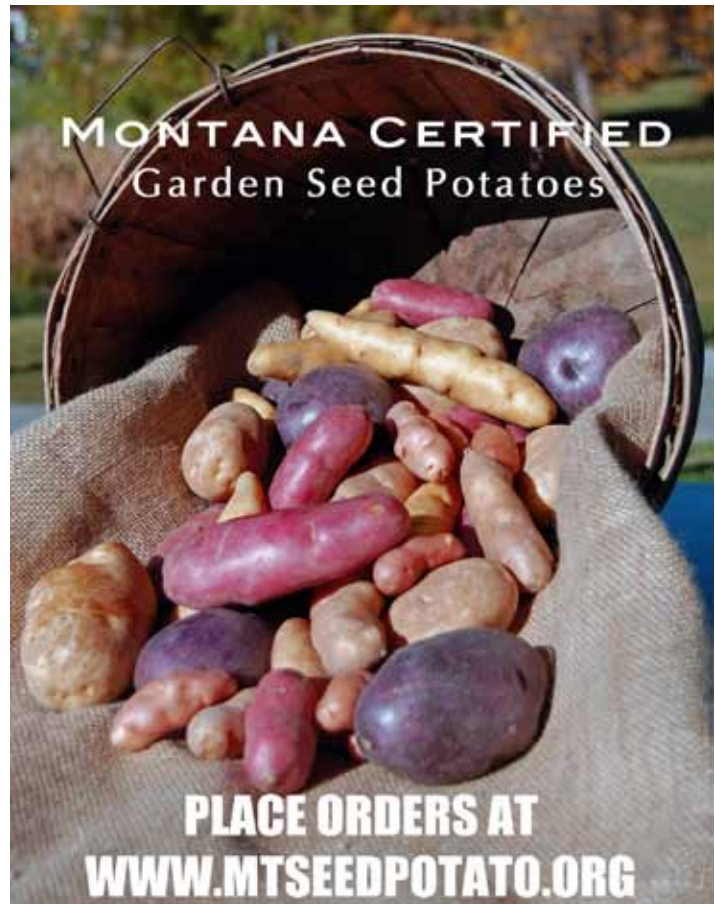
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National Organic Program Offers New Tools and Resources

by NOP and Jonda Crosby, IOIA Training Services Director

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP) announced new resources resulting from funding organic projects led by educational and inspection entities from across the US. The funding initiative was designed to help make organic certification more accessible, affordable, and attainable. USDA partnered with organizations from every region of the country to produce a set of educational and how-to tools designed to educate and support beginning, transitioning and experienced organic farmers. Short descriptions of some of the resources follow. To view any of these resources follow this link: <http://goo.gl/LKzvq4>

MOA members that participated in this national organic educational material development effort included: Margaret Scoles; Jonda Crosby; NCAT staff videographer Rich Myers; Georgana Webster, Organic Program Manager MTDA; Wes Henthorne, B-Bar Ranch Manager; and Brian Engel Owner of Pioneer Meats in Big Timber.

Video: "What to Expect When You're Inspected": Crop and Livestock Production (International Organic Inspector's Association – IOIA): These producer-focused videos allow crop and livestock operators to "experience" an inspection firsthand and better prepare for

their own inspections. This two-part series follows an organic inspector for a mock inspection of real-life organic farmers, one growing vegetables in South Carolina and the other raising livestock in Georgia, showing producers what to expect at their on-site visit.

Video: "Organic Myths" (Massachusetts/Baystate Organic Certifiers (MBOC):

Farmers and producers who are avoiding organic certification might be making decisions based on outdated assumptions. This video includes interviews with farmers who have completed the certification process—and experienced the benefits.

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Checklist: “Ten Steps to Transition” (California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF):

Written for prospective producers, this checklist outlines 10 steps for transitioning to organic certification. This easy-to-scan handout, in both English and Spanish, introduces new farmers to the certification process. Materials also include sample documents for organizations that want to host their own “Certification Made Simple” Workshops.

“How To...” Modules

(Massachusetts/Baystate Organic Certifiers – MBOC): This package of how-to guides covers key steps towards organic certification. The primers tackle high-interest topics and provide an organized resource that answers common questions from producers and certifiers.

Tip Sheets: Organic Standards (National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) – West):

These resources, in both English and Spanish, summarize the rules and regulations, basic steps, key processes, and additional resources for newly certified operations. Topics include the organic approach to animal health; treatment of sick and injured livestock; organic pest management; soil resources; manure; compost; crop rotation; and transitioning orchards.

Tip Sheets: Organic Certification Guidelines

(Northeast Organic Farming Association – Vermont – NOFA-VT): These reference guides are for certified and prospective organic farmers, and provide guidelines for organic certification of dairy, poultry, and crops production. There’s

also a document that answers common questions on the organic certification process.

Guide: Recordkeeping Case Studies (Oregon Tilth):

Organized recordkeeping is key to maintaining certification. This Recordkeeping Guide features case studies of successful recordkeeping models from different types of farms, ranging from small operations to large, diverse farms.

Organic System Plan Template (NCAT-West):

The organic system plan is the cornerstone of any application for certification and the jumping off point for transitioning to organic practices. This streamlined template provides a guide for highly diversified farms to develop organic system plans

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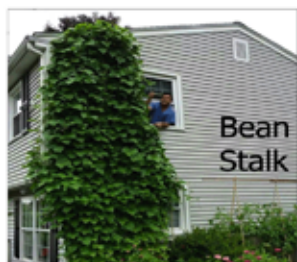
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New Tools *continued from p. 9*

and provides a starting point for newly accredited certifiers to develop customized templates for prospective producers.

Inspection Report Form (NCAT-West): This inspection report form is meant to be used with ATTRA's Streamlined Organic System Plan (OSP) for Crop Production. The generic template can also be used as a teaching tool for producers who want to learn more about the areas the inspector will review during the on-site visit.

Pre-Inspection Questionnaire (ALBA/NCAT): Preparing for an inspection should not be intimidating. Producers can fill out this 18-question pre-inspection questionnaire to help them identify what information and records to have ready before inspectors arrive. 🌱

Organic News

Congress Passes Funding Bill

Last December, Congress passed an omnibus appropriations package to fund the government through September 30, 2016. The bill provides \$21.75 billion in discretionary funding to USDA and FDA, which is \$925 million more than last year's enacted level. The omnibus:

- Maintains funding of the National Organic Program (NOP) at roughly \$9 million
- Maintains level funding of the Organic Transitions research program (ORG) at \$4 million
- Does not limit funding of the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at \$20 million
- Does not limit funding of the National Organic Certification Cost Share program at \$11.5 million
- Does not limit funding of the Organic Data Initiative (ODI).

Moreover, the omnibus did not include any language to preempt state efforts to require GMO labeling, and delays the approval of genetically engineered salmon until FDA provides guidelines for labeling the fish as genetically engineered.

Country of Origin Labeling

The omnibus bill repealed the mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) requirements for muscle cuts of beef and pork, and ground beef and pork. COOL regulatory requirements are still in effect for the remaining covered commodities: muscle cut and ground chicken, lamb, and goat; wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; peanuts, pecans, macadamia nuts, and ginseng. USDA will be amending the COOL regulation as expeditiously as possible. (From www.ota.com) 🌱



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NOSB Update

by Jonda Crosby, IOIA Trainer

At the NOSB meeting last fall, the Board faced a daunting agenda of decision-making, including voting on whether or not to keep 175 different materials on the list, plus other proposals. The board did not vote in favor of adding any new materials to the list. Key decisions that will result in materials coming off the lists are listed below. Changes to the list occur only after a final rule is published in the Federal Register, likely this Spring.

Crop - The following material was not relisted and will be removed from the National List §205.606. NOSB will relist as a chelating agent and dust suppressant. §205.601(l)(4) Lignin sulfonate (floating agent).

Also, a Motion was passed to revise the Micronutrients annotation in §205.601(j)(6) from “Soil deficiency must be documented by testing,” to “Deficiency must be documented”.

Livestock - The following material was not relisted and will be removed from the National List §205.603: §205.603(a) (10) Furosemide (for use to reduce edema in the udder after parturition)

Handling - The following materials were not relisted and will be removed from the National List §205.606, because organic sources are available.

- (c) Chia (*Salvia hispanica* L.)
- (e) Dillweed oil
- (i) Galangal, frozen
- (l) Inulin-oligofructose enriched
- (p) Lemongrass-frozen
- (t) Peppers (Chipotle chile)

- (x) Turkish bay leaves
- (z) Whey protein concentrate

In addition, the Handling Subcommittee considered petitioned materials:

- Motion was passed to revise the Flavors annotation §205.605(a) to read: Non-synthetic flavors may be used when organic flavors are not commercially available. All flavors must be derived from organic or nonsynthetic sources only, and must not be produced using synthetic solvents and carrier systems or any artificial preservative.
- No vote was taken on whether to list Sodium Lactate and Potassium Lactate in 205.605(b) for use as an antimicrobial agent. The materials were referred back to subcommittee. 🌱



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On-Farm Food Safety Workshops

Three On-Farm Food Safety GAP Workshops, designed to help farmers write food safety plans for their farms, will be held on February 11 & 12 in Bozeman, 18 & 19 in Ronan and 25 & 26 in Great Falls.

The workshops are designed for fresh produce growers, especially those who are exempt from the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Rule. However, the workshop will be useful to all fresh produce growers, as well as buyers of fresh produce, and educators working with growers of fresh produce. Most fresh fruit and vegetable growers in Montana are exempt under the FSMA rule in Montana because of the size of farms and the location of their sales –local, primarily.

Farmer participants will leave the workshop with:

- A draft Food Safety Plan for your farm
- Insight into the food safety risks on your farm and ways to mitigate them
- The ability to implement new food safety measures and assure your buyers that food safety is a priority
- Understanding of the relationship between FSMA and USDA-GAP

Others who will benefit from this on-farm food safety training:

- Produce Buyers: Learn what food safety measures to expect of your grower suppliers.
- Educators: Understand potential on-farm food safety risks so you can help produce growers identify and address them.

The workshop is free for all specialty crop producers thanks to funding from Montana Department of Agriculture and USDA. For others taking the course a \$25 fee will be charged to cover course materials and lunches for both training days.

To register go to: <http://lccdc.ecenterdirect.com>, select “Training Events” from the dropdown menu, then select the location option for the workshop you would like to attend. Please note each training has room for only 20 participants and farmers will be given preference.

Please bring a laptop computer to use or contact Jonda Crosby at 406-227-9161 or email jcrosby@mt.net to reserve a computer for use in the course. This workshop is funded through a Montana Department of Agriculture USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant and is sponsored by the Montana Food and Agriculture Development Network. 🌱

And the Winners Are...

The MOA “Lifetime of Service” award is presented annually to an organic producer, handler, retailer, researcher, service provider (or other) who has demonstrated a long-term commitment to organic agriculture in Montana. This honor was presented to Wes Henthorne at the MOA Conference in Bozeman. Wes has managed the B Bar Ranch in Big Timber for over 30 years. He managed the transition to organic production, which began in 1989, and the launch of



Wes Henthorne

the B Bar’s organic grassfed beef program in 2005. The B Bar raises nearly 400 free-range, grass-fed Ancient White Park cattle, which were saved from the brink of extinction, largely due to Wes’ efforts. The ranch is focused closely on grazing management, humane treatment, and beef sales across Montana. Wes served two terms on the MOA Board as both the Secretary and Treasurer and he currently sits on the board of the Organic Advisory and Education Council.

The “Leadership in Organics” award is also presented annually to an organic producer, handler, retailer, researcher, service provider (or other) who demonstrates an on-going commitment to advancing the adoption, practice and success of organic agriculture in Montana. Ole Norgaard was the 2015 recipient of this award and was presented with his certificate at the Conference in Bozeman. Ole is the owner and manager of North Frontier Farms, Inc., currently leasing a 650-acre organic farm 13 miles west of Lewistown, Montana.

The crops are wheat, peas, barley, triticale, sanfoin seed, hay and a special black/purple Indian corn. Ole has nearly 30 years of experience in conventional/organic agriculture, a Bachelor



Ole Norgaard

Degree in Agricultural Science and a Specialized Degree in Agricultural Economy and Management. He was instrumental in launching the Organic Advisory and Education Council. Ole is also a former Treasurer and Chair of the MOA Board of Directors. 🌱

One Beer at a Time *continued from p. 7*

With this level of demand, if there is to be a reduction in beer's controversial ingredients, it will have to begin with changes to agricultural practices, such as that proposed by California's Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) who intends to list the herbicide glyphosate—the active ingredient in Monsanto's RoundUp—as a carcinogenic chemical under Proposition 65 (which requires the state to publish a list of chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm). According to Dr. Don Huber, Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology at Purdue University, every load of malting barley from North Dakota has to be tested because the glyphosate levels are so high it kills the brewers yeast³. Glyphosate has also become synonymous with commercial hops, because of its heavy application for pre-season “burn-down” used to synchronize growing rates and tight harvest schedules. To no surprise, glyphosate has also been blamed for abnormally high rates of severe birth defects in the hop-centric Yakima and Willamette Valley due to chemical runoff in waterways.

All things considered, a conversation about organic brewing is a proverbial Pandora's Box. But like Ted at Eel River Brewing, organic producers show up to

work every day to “fight the battle.” Let Montana's organic consumers and producers awaken to this beer crisis and establish new drinking convictions so that breweries like Wildwood in Stevensville won't just survive, but thrive and forge the way for new organic brewers like Brett Tackery in Lewistown, who dreams of opening Montana's second exclusive organic brewery. If an organic brewery in Montana were to drop its organic certification, it would be a failure of the organic community and the entire state of Montana.

So, let the organic brewing campaign begin. Drink Responsibly. Drink Organic! 🍀

¹ For a list of 10,564 approved food additives being peddled to “food” producers, see <https://goo.gl/o9tng4>

² Vimeo, 2012

³ <http://goo.gl/uTrMBL>

Editor's note: This article is part three of a four part series to be concluded in the Spring 2016 issue.

Organic Matters Ad Rates

Ad prices and dimensions:

1 page ad --- \$110 (Size: 7-1/2W x 10H")

3/4 page ad --- \$90 (Size: 7-1/2W x 6-1/2H")

1/2 page ad --- \$65 (Size: 7-1/2W x 5H") -OR- (3-1/2" W x 10"H)

1/4 page ad -- \$40 (Size: 3-1/2W x 4-1/2"H)

Business card ad --- \$30 (Size: 3-1/2W x 2H")

***If you are a Farm/Ranch Business level member, you will receive a 5% discount on your ad. If you are an Organic Business or Lifetime member, you will receive a 10% discount on your ad. All ads must be print ready. See www.montanaorganicassociation.org/omadrates.htm for details or call Seth Swanson at (406) 258-4205.

Calendar of Events

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Owner: Jill Owen

View from the Chair *continued from back page*

Farming is trending toward organic for beginning farmers. The organic market provides a real opportunity to rebuild rural communities, one farm at a time, across Montana and all over the US. This is not rocket science – the more farmers on the land, the more economically viable a community, a region, a nation will be.

I joined a panel of state agricultural organizations at a recent MSU Extension conference on Climate Change. Sitting on the panel, in my flannel shirt and jeans, I remarked to the audience “one of us is not like the others.” Indeed, my colleagues in their jackets and ties bemoaned the possibility of regulation to address agriculture’s impacts. On the other hand, I offered that organic farming, which naturally builds soil organic matter and avoids synthetic nitrogen and petro-chemicals, is a proactive form of climate-friendly agriculture.

Given the exciting growth and opportunity abounding in organic agriculture, it is imperative that MOA grows our organizational capacity to educate, advocate and celebrate. I challenge YOU to help. The best way to maximize value of your MOA membership is to roll up your sleeves and participate! Join committees that plan and organize the annual conference; develop policy positions; publish our newsletter and populate the website; or plan annual farm tours. In addition to energizing our membership, I will work to strengthen our affiliations with national groups such as the Organic Trade Association, the Organic Consumers Association, the Organic Farming Research Foundation, the National Young Farmers Coalition and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. Our relationship with these groups helps us to amplify the voice of Montana citizens on the national stage and helps us bring timely and authoritative information to you.

I look forward to serving and working with you in 2016. Please contact me, or any MOA Board member, if you have ideas or energy to share. Together we can grow MOA and organic agriculture for the highest good of the people, the environment and the state’s economy. 



Doug Crabtree, MOA Board Chairman

Join MOA Today!

Each membership level delivers a quarterly newsletter devoted to sharing the latest news and information about the association and the organic industry, discounts to MOA events, special mailings on legislative alerts and events, a MOA member vote, and the networking and educational opportunities presented by joining others who share interest and experience in the field of organics. Other member benefits include eligibility for a Workman’s Comp premium discount, safety training and other services to assist you in your organic endeavors.

Please sign me up as a MOA Member!

Name: _____

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A View From the Chair

by Doug Crabtree, Vilicus Farms

A real Montana winter! Looking out the windows at our farm in northern Hill County, I see a uniform blanket of snow across the fields. In the last few days, our thermometer has struggled to register positive numbers. Today's 10° felt (relatively) warm! Given the challenges of extreme and unusual weather the past couple of years, it is reassuring to experience these "normal" winter conditions.

It is my honor to address you, fellow MOA members, as the new President of your Board of Directors. I welcome all individuals with an interest in organic agriculture to join MOA and help us educate, advocate

and celebrate the promise and opportunity that organic brings to Montana. I follow in large footsteps, as our organization has been extremely well led by my friend and predecessor Nate Brown. I am pleased to lead a 14-member Board dedicated to serving you and growing our organization.

Our recent conference in Bozeman was a great success. Over 230 attendees enjoyed learning and fellowship, while celebrating the opportunities and promise of organic agriculture in Montana. As usual, the MOA conference was remarkable for its youth, energy and awesome food! Many thanks to our sponsors, speakers and the

conference committee for making it happen!

Organic agriculture is growing and gaining recognition among consumers, farmers and the agricultural establishment. A survey by Consumer Reports indicated that 84% of US households purchased organic food in 2015. Food manufacturers state that lack of supply is the primary factor hindering their ability to meet market demand and grow organic's share of the food system even faster. While other farmers see prices below their cost of production, organic growers select from contracts often three to five times the price of non-organic crops.

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