



I S S U E

INFORMATION FLIER – A PUBLICATION OF THE ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION

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This newsletter is published by the Organic Trade Association, the North American trade association committed to the promotion of organic products in the marketplace, and the protection of the integrity of organic standards. Its membership includes more than 1,100 producers, processors, distributors and retailers of organic foods, fibers, farm and garden supplies, and health and beauty products. The OTA is your leading resource for information about this industry.

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## Conference and Trade Show will feature “All Things Organic™”!

To bring together sectors of the organic marketplace, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) will hold an “All Things Organic™” Conference and Trade Show May 17-19, 2001, at the Austin Convention Center, Austin, TX. This premiere event will include educational sessions, networking opportunities, an all-organic trade show, workshops, and an organic farm tour, among other activities. It will also feature organic products wherever possible at meals and organic fiber in the exhibit hall.

In addition, OTA will hold two Good Organic Retailing Practices Training sessions and a half-day workshop for companies in the apparel and textile industry interested in incorporating organic fibers into their product lines.

Among the highlights of “All Things Organic™” will be an opening address May 17 by Michael Pollan, journalist at *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, and a keynote address May 19 by commentator and political analyst Jim Hightower.

General sessions during the educational program will include:

- “All Things Organic™” — New Standards, New Regulations: The Organic Industry Meets Its Future
- Staying Power — Creative Solutions for Today’s Changing Environment
- Organic Outlook 2001 — Deep

Roots, Still Growing: Where Do We Go From Here?”

Breakout session topics will include:

- Impact of the National Organic Program on the Farm
- Recipe for Compliance — Organic Ingredients and Commercial Availability
- The Handler’s Responsibility — Backing Up Good Intentions
- Organic Regulation Enforcement — Who’s in Charge?
- Economic Directions — Upstarts, Takeovers, and Fallout
- Beyond the National Organic Program — New Relationships with Regulatory Agencies
- Getting the Right Message Out — Media Reactions and Relationships
- Going Global — The International Influence
- Organic Frontline — The View from the Beltway
- Pushing the Envelope — Expanding the Scope of Organic Products
- The GMO Prohibition — The Impossible Dream?
- Trend Watch — Cultivating the Organic Customer

The trade show will run from noon to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 18 and 19, and feature approximately 200 booths. There will be a mixer-reception on the trade show floor between 4-6 p.m. Friday.

There are other activities planned as

well. Thursday will include an organic farm tour from 1-4 p.m., and a Texas-style barbecue welcome party and dance that evening. Friday will begin with a fun run and walk. On Friday evening, following the trade show mixer-reception, attendees may watch Mexican freetail bats emerge from under the Congress Avenue Bridge. Saturday activities will begin with a yoga session. The day’s main event will be OTA’s Annual Meeting breakfast. Jim Hightower will speak following the breakfast. Saturday evening, OTA will present a dinner and awards program, followed by a live band dance party. There will be a fee to attend the dinner and dance.

Corporate sponsor is United Natural Foods. Special event hosts include Horizon Organic Dairy, Wild Oats Markets, Inc., Wholesome Sweeteners, The Rodale Institute, Organic Essentials, Quality Assurance International, Global Organics Ltd., Whole Foods Market, and Tradin Organics, USA.

Eurich Management is managing the conference and trade show for OTA. To make arrangements to attend, sponsor an activity, or exhibit, contact Eurich Management (Phone: (517) 327-9207; Fax: (517) 321-0495; e-mail: Eurichmgt@aol.com).

More details about “All Things Organic™” are available on OTA’s web site at [www.ota.com](http://www.ota.com). ☘





## Ask Us About Organic!



By Katherine DiMatteo,  
Executive Director,  
Organic Trade Association (OTA)

**Q:** With the new USDA rule, when will U.S. consumers see new labels on organic products?

**A:** The rule became effective Feb. 21, 2001. However, because of an 18-month implementation period, consumers will not see the new labels on products until August 2002. At that time, products in the "100 percent organic" and "Organic" categories may carry the new USDA organic seal, although its use will be voluntary. Labels will most likely list the actual percentage of the organic ingredients in the product, since this provision is included in the new rule. ❖



[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

If you have a question about any aspect of the organic industry, please call the Organic Trade Association's headquarters, (413) 774-7511.

## Standards Will Benefit Consumers

*The unveiling of national organic standards in December 2000 marked a major milestone for the U.S. organic industry and for consumers.*

The long-awaited standards announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) outline what is allowed in producing and handling organic products in the United States. As a result, by August 2002, there will be consistent standards for all organic products marketed in the United States. Thus, consumers will have the assurance that any product labeled organic, in fact, has been grown and processed according to strict practices. Organic agriculture, for instance, prohibits the use of toxic synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, irradiation, sewage sludge, and genetic engineering.

In addition, with the rule in place, only qualified organic products can be imported into the United States, thus preventing false and mislabeled products from entering the country.

Producers and manufacturers using organic claims will have to be certified. Farms and handling operations that sell less than \$5,000 of organic agricultural products annually will be exempt from certification. However, they must comply with the national standards before they can label their products as organic. Penalties for those caught violating its provisions include fines up to \$10,000 and up to five-years' imprisonment.

Between now and August 2002, consumers seeking organic products should continue to look for labels declaring the products are "certified organic."

### Labeling

The new national organic standards will allow four different labeling options based on the percentage of organic ingredients in a product. The first three categories prohibit the inclusion of any ingredients produced using

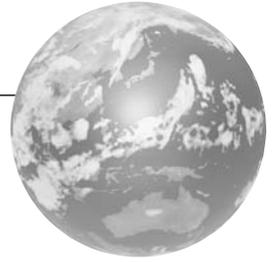
genetic engineering, irradiation, or sewage sludge.

- 100 percent organic. Only products that have been exclusively produced using organic methods will be allowed to carry a label declaring "100 percent organic."
- Organic. This will signify that at least 95 percent of the ingredients (by weight, excluding water and salt) in a processed product have been organically produced. The remaining contents can only be natural or synthetic ingredients allowed on the National List.
- Made with organic. Products with 70 to 95 percent organic ingredients may display "Made with Organic [with the specific ingredient or ingredients listed]" on the front panel.
- Products with less than 70 percent organic ingredients would list the organic items in the ingredient panel.

To assist consumers, USDA has designed a seal that may be used on products labeled as "100 percent organic" or "organic" once the rule is in force. Use of the seal will be voluntary. The actual percent of organic content may be displayed on all products, regardless of label category. However, the rule specifies the actual dimensions that are allowed in displaying the content, and the percentage for products with less than 70 organic ingredients can only be displayed in the information panel. In all four labeling categories, the product cannot use both organic and non-organic versions of the same ingredient.

National organic standards position the organic industry to grow the organic farm community, protecting the environment and protecting future generations. ❖

# A World of News



## Agronomic news

- Organic farming enhances soil fertility and biodiversity, according to findings from a 21-year field trial initiated by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Switzerland. Begun in 1978, the DOK trial compares organic, biodynamic, and conventional farming systems in a randomized plot trial. Contact: FiBL (E-mail: [admin@fibl.ch](mailto:admin@fibl.ch)).
- Farm animals in the United States receive 24.6 million pounds of antibiotics a year, which may fuel the rise of drug-resistant bacteria, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). UCS noted that about 70 percent of all antibiotics made in the United States are used to fatten livestock. Organic agriculture does not allow this practice.
- A University of Wisconsin-Madison study has shown composted manure can increase crop yields and disease resistance. Field trial findings showed dairy cow manure compost increased crop yields by an average of ten percent even in the presence of microbial disease.

## Organic news

- The U.S. Department of Interior headquarters in Washington, D.C., now includes certified organic shade-grown coffee in its foodservice cafeteria serving 3,000 persons a day.
- According to Worldwatch, more than 7 million hectares now produce organic food and fiber worldwide, and involve farmers in 130 countries.
- Forty-seven percent of consumers use organic products at least occasionally, according to the *Organic Lifestyle Shopper Study* from The Hartman Group. Three common factors motivating consumers to buy organic products include: having children, having specific health conditions such as food allergies or cancer, and seeking a healthy lifestyle.
- The Southeastern Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation has ruled that it will not spray Steve McKaskle's organic cotton crop in Missouri this year. Instead, it will install traps and bait sticks around his cotton fields, and evaluate progress in the fall. McKaskle had worked closely with state officials and submitted a detailed plan of organic boll weevil management,

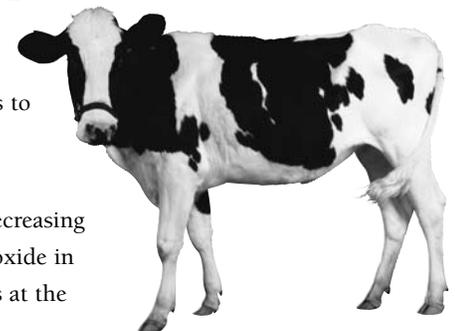
because his property would lose its organic certification if sprayed with conventional insecticides. Further details: [Judy\\_Grundler@mail.mda.state.mo.us](mailto:Judy_Grundler@mail.mda.state.mo.us).

## Environmental briefs

- Pesticide sprays "encourage life-threatening bacteria to grow on crops," according to Canadian researcher Greg Blank in the *New Scientist* (Oct. 7, 2000). Research at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg found that bacteria thrived in some formulations of synthetic pesticides diluted with water.
- Toxic chemicals are contaminating groundwater on every inhabited continent, endangering the world's most valuable supplies of fresh water, according to a Worldwatch paper, *Deep Trouble: The Hidden Threat of Groundwater Pollution*. Calling for a systematic overhaul of manufacturing and industrial agriculture, the paper notes that several water utilities in Germany now pay farmers to switch to organic operations because this conversion costs less than removing farm chemicals from water supplies.
- Agricultural Marketing Service has released its Pesticide Data Program (PDP) annual summary for calendar year 1999. For a copy, call (703) 330-2300.
- U.S. consumers can experience up to 70 daily exposures to residues from persistent organic pollutants (POPs) through their diets, according to the report, "Nowhere to Hide: Persistent Toxic Chemicals in the U.S. Food Supply," from the Pesticide Action Network North America. The report is available at [www.panna.org](http://www.panna.org).

## International news

- The recently formed Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network aims in three years to increase the availability of Atlantic Canadian grown and produced certified organic products by 30 percent, and assist three percent of conventional farmers to transition to organic production.
- Increasing use of fertilizers may be contributing to global warming by decreasing oxygen and raising levels of nitrous oxide in coastal waters, according to scientists at the



## Quote of Note

"We don't fully understand how certain chemicals disrupt reproduction and other basic biological functions. And we've just begun to consider the possible long-term impacts — and unintended side effects — of genetic engineering."

"THE CHALLENGES AHEAD"  
From the U.S.  
*Environmental Protection Agency's Innovation Annual Report 2000*

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# All Things Organic™

Save the date for “All Things Organic”!

OTA's premiere Organic Conference and Trade Show  
May 17-19, 2001, Austin, TX



## A World of News

National Institute of Oceanography in India.  
(*Nature*, Nov. 16, 2000).

- The “environmental burden” of conventional agriculture in Great Britain is estimated to cost 25 to 40 British pounds per hectare, compared with 15 British pounds per hectare for organic systems, a professor from the University of East Anglia reported at the January 2001 Soil Association conference.
- Turkey during 1999 surpassed the United States as the leading producer of organic cotton in the world, according to a December 2000 study by Pesticides Trust. In 1999, Turkey produced 41 percent of all organic cotton, compared with 34 percent from the United States, 13 percent from Africa, 8 percent from India, and 4 percent from Latin America.

### OTA news briefs

- OTA and the Natural Marketing Institute (NMI) are

cooperating to produce an *Organic Products Consumer Trends Study*. The study will analyze the U.S. organic products consumer market based on NMI's *Natural Marketplace Trends Report*.

- *The Organic Pages Online*, a searchable database of OTA member resources and organic products, is now available on OTA's web site ([www.ota.com](http://www.ota.com)).
- OTA's report entitled “Export Study for U.S. Organic Products to Asia and Europe,” funded in part by USDA's Market Access Program, is now posted on OTA's web site. Go to OTA's home page, and click on the “News and Information” section on the navigation bar. After filling out a brief registration sheet, you will have free access to the study findings.
- OTA will hold an OTA Congressional Education Day Oct. 11 in Washington, D.C.♣

Questions about organic? Visit OTA at [www.ota.com](http://www.ota.com).