

PERSPECTIVES

The following perspectives are from long-time OTA members in response to the question,

“Where do you see OTA and the organic industry 20 years from now?”

We would like to see OTA continue its vigilant role as the “standard bearer” of the organic industry. OTA must remain the “watchdog” for this industry to assure that the original organic concept and organic standards are not diluted. As more companies enter the organic business and organic consumers’ expectations increase, OTA will have an even more important role in maintaining the integrity of the organic program.

—**Arrowhead Mills, Earth’s Best, and Walnut Acres**
(now part of *The Hain Celestial Group, Inc.*)

The continuing and inevitable shortage of oil will tremendously affect conventional agriculture. People will be pushed into considering alternative agricultural methods. This means there is huge growth potential for Biodynamic and organic. Farming is a reflection of our society; the growth of Biodynamic and organic can only point our society in the right direction.

—**Charles Beedy, Executive Director**
Biodynamic Farm and Garden Association

Organic acreage and sales will continue to grow and be accepted by more mainstream shoppers. “Traditional” brands will continue to introduce organic products that will be accepted by consumers. Educational efforts at the governmental level will continue to be critical. We need to focus on our efforts to influence and lobby governmental and private organizations now and in the future.

—**Peggy Miars, Executive Director**
California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)

We hope that in the years to come, OTA will expand its activities to provide an effective lobby for the growth of the industry in Canada as well as in the United States. COG looks forward to working with OTA to increase the acceptance of organic foods in the Canadian marketplace.

—**Anne Macey, long-time COG member**
Canadian Organic Growers (COG)

OTA will continue to be a guardian for the industry, with a strong presence in Washington, D.C., and continue its influence and leadership in the international scene. The industry will enjoy the benefits of new research, education, and market development that will result in healthier small-family farm and ranch operations. Land grant universities will embrace and develop curriculum for organic agricultural studies and research. “Corporate” farms will adopt core values that support two “bottom lines”—financial responsibility to stakeholders, and social responsibility as defined by stewardship of land, water, and other natural resources involved in ecologically focused food and fiber production. In 20 years, my hope would be that at least 15 percent of America’s ranch and farmland be successful and sustainable.

—**Mel Coleman, Jr.**
Coleman Natural Meats

Continued on Page 16

Contents

Looking Toward 2025	1
Front Piece	2
Perspectives	3, 16-17
Leadership Circle	3
Regulatory & Legislative	4-6
D.C. Update	7
News & Trends	8-13
OTA News	14, 19-21
Other Sector Updates	21-23
New Members	24
Opportunities	25
News Bites	26-27
New Products	28
Classified ads	28
End Piece	30
Display ads	7, 15, 18, 29, 31

2005 LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

***A special THANK YOU
to OTA 2005 Leadership
Circle members
for supporting OTA’s work
all year round:***

Earthbound Farm
The Hain Celestial Group
National Cooperative
Grocers Association
Organic Valley
Small Planet Foods
Smucker Quality Beverages
Stonyfield Farm
SunOpta, Inc.
United Natural Foods, Inc.
WhiteWave Foods
Whole Foods Market, Inc.

PERSPECTIVES

“Where do you see OTA and the organic industry 20 years from now?”

Continued from Page 3

With the rapid pace of events and communication, one can only pretend to envision what will happen a month from now, let alone 20 years. Our hope is that awareness and growth of organic foods, farming, and consumption will continue to flourish and expand throughout the world, and that conventional family farms and businesses transition to organic quickly enough to keep up with demand and become integral to our expansion.

—**Morty Cohen, President**
Falcon Trading/SunRidge Farms

We believe the current trends of steadily growing sales for organic products and increasing attention to the issues surrounding organic agriculture will continue into the future, leading to further mainstream acceptance of organics. With this growth, the leadership of OTA in coordinating and communicating the voice and values of the organic community will become even more important.

—**Kathy Larson, Vice President,**
Corporate & Social Responsibility
Frontier Natural Products Cooperative

OTA and the organic industry will continue to grow and grow over the next 20+ years, because the need for eating wholesome nutritional foods will be more and more of a necessity due to our bodies reacting to our environment. We see evidence of this as celiac disease becomes more prevalent every year.

—**John Clough**
Garden Spot Distributors/Shiloh Farms

We hope to see the rate of growth in organic acres and food production continuing at its current pace. As more large farms and businesses join organic agriculture, we hope they will flock to OTA, making it a major voice in the marketplace and in U.S. agricultural policy. We also hope that OTA will continue to have a place for everyone in organic agriculture at its table—small-scale farmers and non-profit certifiers alongside corporate agribusinesses.

—**Elizabeth Henderson, Lisa Engelbert,**
Carol King, and Sarah Johnston
NOFA-NY

Continued strong growth, with a food system definition of “homeland security” that supports regional food production, creating a greater market for location-identified foods, where local and organic go hand in hand.

—**Enid Wonnacott, Executive Director**
NOFA-VT

I'm very optimistic about the future of organics. It's what the consumers want and there is an ever-expanding base of farmers and companies ready to supply the organic products. Organic production has become mainstream; in the next 20 years the focus will be a matter of total market share for food, fiber and other consumer products. That's why so many mainstream consumer companies are entering the organic marketplace. They would rather cannibalize their current product lines with their own organic products than lose their consumers to another company.

But I am concerned about the small farmers, who are the true pioneers of organics. They need OTA's support to learn how to thrive in this new marketplace. OTA has to look back as well as forward; if we focus too much on the larger companies then we will lose our way. It's a delicate balance, but then that's what organic is all about.

—**George Kalogridis, President**
George's Organics

I believe that the organic industry will continue to expand and move further into the mainstream marketplace. I envision OTA as a powerful association with an increasing capacity to lobby for, influence and direct regulations, and most importantly, create consumer awareness in the marketplace, functioning much like the meat and dairy associations.

—**Daniel Burke, President**
Pacific Soybean & Grain

Where I hope the industry and OTA goes is that OTA plays a strong role in keeping government and its regulating arms and food industry honest. I hope that we will be able to protect the integrity of the whole organic sphere. We must keep regulators honest and not let certain elements change rules and regulations so that the organic claim is diluted to not mean anything. A strong organic food producing structure is important, and it takes good regulators. USDA's move into the organic sector has been fantastic. We want to see more of that in Canada. It has made organic stronger in the United States.

—**Bob Swain, President**
Shady Maple Farms

The industry will continue to grow, but will go through inevitable crises of credibility; I predict that we will see some scandal that will set back the industry but make it stronger by creating an environment of improved enforcement; categories like cosmetics and supplements will finally get NOP standards; prices for organic products will slowly get closer to conventional products in some areas as economies of scale kick in; science-

based evidence showing organic products have superior qualities (although not across the board with all products) will eventually become recognized and will help drive growth; the farmer base will grow for organic, although corporate farms will continue to impact smaller, family-owned farms; international trade in organic products will become more streamlined as standards evolve among the world community; developing countries will have a big impact on raw material supply and pricing, as well as create new consumer markets for export.

—**Neil Blomquist**
Spectrum Organic Products, Inc.

We would like to see the organic industry focus on some of the core values that were originally embraced, including equitable access to nutritious and healthy food for everyone. We need strengthening of alternative systems of distribution to encourage independent and mid-size farms and businesses. We must evolve the standards for organic production and distribution to include social justice and humane treatment of animals. We want a worldwide moratorium on GMO food crops and the patenting of genes; we want universal access to crop seeds and seed heritages. We want people worldwide, regardless of income and location, to have access to certified organic, locally grown, fresh and appropriately priced foods and goods. We want the industry to focus on the education of children in how to grow, prepare and enjoy fresh foods, and to cultivate in them an appreciation of farmers and farm work. In 20 years' time, all communities can better understand their food choices, including the value of preserving cultural food heritages. We have seen success in some original goals as an organic movement, as a community, in our years of expansion and growth. We still have a lot of work to do.

—**Bu Nygrens, Purchasing Manager**
Veritable Vegetable

Concerning size and scope: Organic will be approaching 20 percent of all acreage and food sales worldwide and will have major impact on textiles, personal care, fertilizer, and other household goods, and on the way we think about products, from cradle to grave.

Social impact: Organic is the first successful model to convert an underlying philosophy to production methods and rules that can be certified. This is part of a larger move to index products and practices, such as “fair trade,” “local,” “farmer direct,” “sustainable,” and “healthy,” which buyers associate with the organic purchase and category. OTA has the opportunity to act as a leader to network and guide to help assure that some of these other claims are successful as additional claims under the organic banner.

—**Bill Wolf, President**
Wolf and Associates, and Thorvin Kelp

I think circumstances dictate that our entire economy has to have a more ecological perspective. And I see that

question is not being seriously addressed right now. It is going to happen. The changes are going to happen because they have to happen; the question is whether we are going to be proactive, or whether we follow the standard business practice to make money out of a market as long as we can, and make changes only when crises arise. My hope is that we will be proactive. My other hope is that the organic industry will be able to expand opportunities for family farms.

—**David Rosenberg, Owner**
Wooden Shoe Gardens

OTA must be at the forefront of consumer and marketplace education relative to the principles and the holistic values that the purchase of organic products bring to their table at real values—exchange, fair trade prices for goods that make a real difference to our producers, processors, their families and communities. The organic industry and OTA must take a serious global view, one that helps mentor and partner the developing communities so they, too, can fully benefit from the organic marketplace, local, national and supranational. Everyone must be included and benefit from this essential paradigm change, otherwise our organic dream has not succeeded, and succeed we must!

—**Thomas Harding**

Years ago when I was chair of OFPANA, I was asked by the Canadian Trade bureau to estimate the potential size of the organic food market. I described the potential to be 98.5 percent of the U.S. marketplace. We may be at 96 percent of how much of the market is left for us to embrace. At one point, OFPANA decided that we were “preaching to the converted.” Our market in 20 years should be at least 50 percent of the world food market. It should offer very consumer the opportunity to purchase any product in organic rendition.

—**P. Marc Schwartz**

In 20 years I believe that we will see much higher ecological consciousness in general and greater acceptance of organic as being integrally important to the health of our communities. OTA will still be serving as the voice of the industry to the public and government and helping us to address common issues effectively.

—**Jesse Singerman**

I foresee that it will be a firm part of the mainstream. The organic industry will be involved in a higher level in policy, higher part of the government program, the trade association will become a promotion center, and have an office in Washington, D.C, with five fulltime people in just the policy office, not counting the head office. I also see All Things Organic™ as one of the dominant food shows in the world.

—**Joseph Smillie**

