

Organic



I S S U E

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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 1,600 producers, processors, distributors and retailers of organic foods, fibers, farm and garden supplies, and health and beauty products. OTA is your leading resource for information about this industry.

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INFORMATION FLIER – A PUBLICATION OF THE ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION



All Things Organic™: Come and learn the latest about organic products

Want to learn more about organic products and trade? Plan to be in Chicago May 6-9 when OTA, in partnership with Diversified Business Communications, presents the sixth annual All Things Organic™ Conference and Trade Show.

Co-located with the FMI Show, Spring Fancy Food Show™, United Produce Expo and Conference and the U.S. Food Export Showcase in an event billed as “The Power of Five” at McCormick Place, All Things Organic™ is anticipated to be bigger and better than ever this year.

May 6 has been designated as OTA Member Day, with special activities geared primarily for OTA members. However, it also will include two tours, open to those who specifically register for these events. Conference sessions and the trade show are featured Sunday, May 7, through Tuesday, May 9. Here is a preview of some of the activities planned.

Saturday tours

There will be the opportunity to take part in one of two tours during May 6.

The first, scheduled from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., is an Organic Fiber Walking Tour. This will spotlight organic fiber fashion retailers in Chicago's world-famous downtown shopping district, the Magnificent Mile.

The second, scheduled from 11

a.m. to 3:15 p.m., is an Organic Store Tour. Stops will include visits to a number of stores, from small co-ops and health food shops to mainstream retailers. Get an inside look at how retailers are marketing organic products on the shelves.

For more details, visit the All Things Organic™ web site at www.organicexpo.com.

Trade show

This year's trade show will feature approximately 450 booths.

Two new and exciting features added to the show floor this year will be an “Organic for Kids” product showcase and

“The Corner Store...Organic and more, for every lifestyle.”

Products aimed at children, from snacks, beverages and meals to clothing made with organic fibers, are in growing demand. From conference sessions on product development and marketing to a

show floor display of organic products on the market for kids today, companies will learn ways to tap into this rapidly growing segment of the industry.

Consumers buying organic foods are also looking for other organically grown, environmentally friendly products. There will be informative conference

sessions on merchandising these products, and an elaborate floor model of an actual store display on the trade show floor. Peter Millard, a prominent retail designer whose clients include Ralph Lauren, Armani, Klinger Advanced Aesthetics and Chanel, will design this display.

Keynote addresses

Presenting keynote addresses will be Ted Koppel, Steven D. Levitt, and Carol Moseley Braun.

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North American Summit

The first North American Summit on Organic Production and Marketing, presented by OTA in partnership with the National Association of State Organic Programs, will take place May 7-9 at All Things Organic™ at McCormick Place. It will provide a collaborative forum for legislators, regulatory, and industry members from Canada, the United States and Mexico to establish contacts and create networks to assist in the continued movement of organic products throughout North America and the world. All attendees with an All Things Organic™ Conference and Trade Show pass may attend any Summit session.



Wilcox is OTA's new executive director

Caren Wilcox assumed leadership of the Organic Trade Association March 1 as its new executive director. She succeeds Katherine DiMatteo, OTA's original executive director who had served in that role since 1990.



It is anticipated that DiMatteo, as Senior Advisor, will remain at OTA through June to work with Wilcox to ensure a smooth transition.

Wilcox brings to OTA a wealth of experience in the world of agriculture. She is experienced at managing domestic and international programs, and has served in both the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government. Most recently, she was a senior advisor for health, food safety and agriculture to the ranking member of the agriculture subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee.

Attentive to the needs of consumers learned during her years in the food business, Wilcox has skills in a number of areas important to OTA, including developing effective communications and public policy programs for government, business and academia; association membership development; and strategic planning. She has handled food safety and quality issues, rural development matters, and environmental issues throughout her career, and because of those experiences, she was appointed as the first Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety at USDA. Wilcox has worked with a diverse cross-section of individuals from the agriculture, business and academic sectors, as well as with local, state and federal elected and appointed officials and their respective offices throughout her career.

OTA's principal office is in Greenfield, MA; it also has an office in Ottawa, Canada. Wilcox is dividing her time between the offices of OTA and Washington, D.C. As OTA expands in Canada, Wilcox plans to spend time there as well, having worked with colleagues in the Canadian government in the past.

OTA plans a press reception with Wilcox Sunday, May 7, at All Things Organic™. Look for an invitation; contact hgivens@ota.com for further details.

Organic News

- There were 8,035 certified organic farms in the United States in 2003 with nearly 2.2 million acres under organic management, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. In 2001, there were 6,949 certified organic farming operations totaling slightly more than 2 million acres.
- U.S. organic livestock numbers in 2003 were up substantially from 2001, reflecting growing demand for organic milk and meat. The number of organically raised milk cows grew from 48,677 recorded for 2001 to 74,435 in 2003. The number of organic beef cattle grew from 15,197 in 2001 to 27,285 in 2003.
- As of Feb. 9, there were 97 agencies accredited by USDA to certify farms, processing and handling operations as meeting national organic standards. Of those, 56 were based in the United States, and the remaining 41 were from other parts of the world.
- U.S. farmers in 2004 planted 5,550 acres of organic cotton, an increase of nearly 37 percent over the 4,060 acres planted in 2003, according to a 2005 survey conducted by OTA and funded by a grant from Cotton Incorporated. Plantings included 5,020 acres of organic upland cotton and 530 acres of organic pima cotton. Most was grown in Texas, with limited acreage in California, New Mexico and Missouri. Acreage planted in 2005 totaled 6,577 acres of mostly upland organic cotton, an increase of 19 percent over that planted in 2004. Harvesting figures for 2005 are not yet available.
- The University of New Hampshire has unveiled plans to establish an organic dairy farm for research, education and outreach, making it the first U.S. land-grant university to have an organic dairy farm. Stonyfield Farm has made a \$200,000 leadership gift to help get the project going and is assisting the university in finding other partners for the endeavor. The new research farm is expected to produce certified organic milk by December 2006.
- OTA has undertaken the Organic Coffee Collaboration, a collective, one-year campaign to promote the benefits of organic coffee and expand the production of organically grown coffee. Detailed information on collaboration participants and fact sheets on organic market data and organic coffee productions systems are available at www.ota.com/organic_and_you/coffee_collaboration.html.
- Organic Valley Family of Farms is undertaking "Generation Organic," a campaign to encourage new farmers into organic

To view this issue electronically, go to
<http://www.ota.com/news/whatsnews.html>



Quote of Note

“Most of the fresh produce and milk served to children could be produced organically within one to two decades, if a concerted effort were made to accomplish this milestone. There is no other conceivable scenario in which pesticide dietary risks facing infants and children could be largely eliminated in the same time frame.”

—Dr. Charles Benbrook, Chief Scientist, The Organic Center

agriculture. The number of farmers in the co-op has doubled in the past three years, from 361 farmers in 15 states in 2002 to 723 farmers in 22 states in 2005.

- Horizon Organic has launched a \$13 million Land Stewardship Initiative to fund grazing and agricultural land expansion with environmental integrity for its two original farms and its growing national network of family farmers. Currently 75 percent of Horizon Organic’s milk is supplied by more than 300 certified organic family dairy farms. The company is providing financial and technical support to more than 130 dairy farmers who are transitioning to organic management.
- Dorothy Lane Market, with three stores in Ohio, has gained certification from the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association to sell organic products in its produce departments.
- Pacific Northwest Academy, a private K-8 school in Wilsonville, OR, now provides an organic lunch program to students to promote healthier lifestyle and eating choices, environmental awareness, and to help combat diet-related illnesses. Zen Kitchen, which specializes in organic catering and meal preparation, plans, prepares and delivers the meals to the school.
- St. Luke’s Hospital in Duluth, MN, is incorporating organic offerings, including organic fresh fruit, on its menu for patients.
- A documentary entitled “The Real Dirt on Farmer John,” featuring an organic farmer in Illinois, is being shown in cinemas throughout the country. To see where it’s playing, visit www.therealdirt.net or www.angelic-organics.com.
- California Certified Organic Farmers is partnering with the Wild Farm Alliance to promote and develop biodiversity conservation guidelines for organic farming.
- Research at the Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences indicates that pigs raised organically are healthier than those raised conventionally. Results from the project, “Health and medicine used in organic pig herds,” found that the prevalence of respiratory disease was 12 percent in organic pig herds compared with 29 percent in conventional herds, with the prevalence of gastrointestinal disease also lower for organic pigs.
- Surveying 1,144 organic farms in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, Jules Pretty and colleagues at the University of Essex found that organic farms employ approximately twice the number of people than do conventional farms.

Consumer trends

- In the 2005 Whole Foods Market® Organic Foods Trend Tracker survey conducted for Whole Foods Market, 65 percent of Americans said they had tried organic foods and beverages, up from 54 percent in similar surveys conducted in 2003 and 2004. The top reasons given for buying organic foods and beverages were to avoid pesticides (70.3 percent), freshness (68.3 percent) and health and nutrition (67.1 percent). More than half

(55 percent) said they buy organic to avoid genetically modified foods. More than half of all respondents agreed that organic foods are better for their personal health and better for the environment.

- More and more consumers are trying additional categories of private label, natural and organic packaged foods, according to The Hartman Group. Consumers are seeking out these products at channels associated with bargain shopping, such as Costco, Trader Joe’s, and mainstream grocers.
- The November 2005 “Functional Foods & Organics: A Global ACNielsen Online Survey on Consumer Behaviour & Attitudes” showed that many consumers who purchase organic foods do so because they believe organic foods are healthier for them and their children. European respondents seemed to be more conscious of the wider benefits of organic food, such as protecting the environment. Eggs, vegetables and fruits were the most popular organic items.

Environmental News

- Park managers are establishing pesticide-free parks across the United States. The Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides outlines how pesticide-free parks benefit communities in a new report, *Pesticide-free Parks: It’s Time!* Go to www.pesticide.org/pfpreport.pdf.
- In a voluntary study to track underground water quality in Dakota County, MN, one in five wells tested positive for unsafe levels of pesticides and other harmful chemicals. Levels of nitrates and pesticides exceeded state safety standards for drinking water in 14 of the 68 wells tested, and only 12 wells showed no contamination at all, according to an article in the Dec. 14, 2005, *Star Tribune*.
- Findings from three studies published in *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry* (Vol. 25, No. 1, 2006) provide insight into the documented global decline in amphibian populations. In the studies focusing on frogs and long-toed salamanders, researchers found that the use of agrochemicals, which pollute the habitats and disturb the natural breeding cycles of amphibians, was a major cause of the population declines. ❖



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Organic Trade Association

HOW TO REGISTER

Members of the press can register for All Things Organic™ by going to www.organicexpo.com, or e-mailing kgilbert@divcom.com. Press registration also includes access to the North American Summit.

All Things Organic™ — *Continued from Page 1*

Speaking Sunday May 7 from 8:15 to 9:45 a.m., Ted Koppel, former anchor of Nightline and 42-year veteran of ABC News, will address a general session hosted by the “Power of Five” co-locating shows.

Monday morning keynote speaker Steven D. Levitt, author of *FREAKONOMICS* and winner of the highly esteemed John Bates Clark Medal, will discuss how economics is, at root, the study of incentives and how this ties into the organic industry. He is scheduled to speak from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. May 8, followed by a book signing.

The keynote address Tuesday, May 9, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. will feature Carol Moseley Braun, founder and CEO of Good Food Organics, an organic food wholesaler/distributor. She has been a candidate for the Democratic nomination for U.S. President, and has served as U.S. Ambassador, U.S. Senator, County Executive

Officer, State Representative and Assistant U.S. Attorney.

Immediately following her talk, there will be a special plenary session slated for 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. entitled “Organic on the Fast Track” featuring prominent industry leaders.

Conference topics

For those new to the industry or to organic, there will be five Organic 101 sessions:

- **Organic 101: Incorporating Organic Food Into Your Foodservice Operation**
- **Organic 101: Tap into USDA’s Tools for Your Organic Business**
- **Organic 101: Transitioning to Organic**
- **Organic 101: Overview of the Organic Market in North America**
- **Organic 101: How to Merchandise Organic Products in Your Store**

The remaining 18 conference sessions will cover a diverse selection of topics, including

tools to grow one’s organic business in today’s market. Focus areas covered will be Organic Leadership, Organic Retail, Organic Foodservice, Organic Manufacturing, and Organic Non-Food.

Networking and special events

In addition to networking in conference sessions and on the trade show floor, there will be special events to meet old friends and make new ones.

Sunday evening, May 7, will feature the Welcome Party offering organic food and beverages, dancing and fun at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum.

In addition, OTA’s Annual Dinner and Dance is slated for Monday evening, May 8. This year, this event will be a tribute to Katherine DiMatteo, OTA’s original executive director. The dinner portion is a ticketed event. The celebration will end with a dance party. The festivities will be at the InterContinental Hotel. ❖