



THE ORGANIC CULTIVATOR

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

COMING HOME AGAIN	1
FROM THE DIRECTOR	1
POLICY UPDATES	2
THINKING GLOBALLY: ORGANIC TRADE, A LITTLE DISCONTENT, AND A CORNUCOPIA OF VIRTUES	4
MEET MOSA EMPLOYEE ROBERTA DUCHARME	8
AVOIDING SHOW STOPPERS DURING FINAL REVIEW	9
CLASSIFIEDS	10
EVENTS	11

COMING HOME AGAIN

The Placke Family Story

by Joe Pedretti, Outreach Manager

Rita and Joe Placke were high school sweethearts who came from farming families in the Kieler/Sinsinawa area of southern Wisconsin. After they married, and were ready to begin their farming career in 1980, Joe's father helped them get started. Unfortunately, 1980 was not the best time to be buying land. Prices were at their peak, and interest rates were at 13%. "Dad bought the farm. We bought it under land contract from him. We probably would have lost it if it weren't for that. We bought the cows and equipment with a loan

from FHA. The interest was so high, that we made no principle payments for the first several years," noted Joe.

By 1985 farm prices had dropped and so had interest rates, which went from 13% to 5%, so they were able to start making principle payments. To make ends meet, they added on to the barn in 1988 and went from 50 cows to 90 cows. "Everyone was telling us that we needed to get bigger and to push for more milk. We were averaging 70 pounds per cow and our

see PLACKE on page 3



FROM THE DIRECTOR

The leaves are falling, the days are noticeably shorter, temperatures are dropping, it is harvest time for many farmers, and with Thanksgiving fast approaching, we at MOSA would like to acknowledge how grateful we are for the continued strong and vibrant organic movement. It's a great time to be a part of this industry!

According to the USDA, the demand for organic food is growing so fast that consumer demand is outstripping some domestic supplies. Once a net exporter of organic products, the United States now spends more than \$1 billion a year to import organic food, and the ratio of imported to exported products is now about 8-to-1. Many of these organic imports are grown in the European Union, where more than 140,000 farmers are meeting Europe's organic standards on 12.6 million acres of farmland.

In the United States, about 10,000 farmers have made the transition to organic food production on about 2.3 million acres of land, according to the USDA's Economic Resources Service. There is a lot of room for growth!

As you've heard from us in past newsletters, the National Organic Certification

see DIRECTOR on page 8



Cori Skolaski
Executive Director

POLICY UPDATES—WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

by Jackie DeMinter, Certification Policy Manager

Biosecurity and avian influenza continue to be topics to pay attention to with continuing confirmation of cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in the Midwest. If confinement in your area continues to be necessary or if you become aware of a new threat in your area, contact MOSA to discuss your situation. Inspections on farms that have poultry and are located near affected areas have resumed but even so, **please discuss all biosecurity concerns with your inspector prior to their arrival at your farm.**

NOP Materials Update:

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently updated information regarding the use of electrolyzed water. In June of 2014, the NOP issued **Policy Memorandum 14-3** to certifiers clarifying that electrolyzed water was not permitted by the organic regulations. That Memo sought to resolve “a conflict in interpretation among certifying agents and material evaluation programs” by clarifying that electrolyzed water is not currently permitted by the USDA organic regulations. “Electrolyzed water contains the active ingredient hypochlorous acid (HOCl) and is generated from the electrolysis of salt (sodium chloride) in water. Hypochlorous acid is a synthetic substance that is not included on the National List.” In September of this year, the NOP issued **Policy Memorandum 15-4**, replacing PM 14-3, clarifying that electrolyzed water **is a type of chlorine material that is allowed** for use in organic production and handling. Why the change? After release of PM 14-3 last year, the NOP received additional technical and regulatory information on electrolyzed water from various stakeholders in the industry. After review of information, the NOP now considers hypochlorous acid generated by electrolyzed water to be an allowed chlorine material.

Controversial Organic Certification:

We can expect to hear about one of the more controversial certification issues in the near future. On the NOP’s work plan are regulatory and policy topics like Animal Welfare Standards, Apiculture, Aquaculture, Mushrooms, Pet Food, Group Certification, and **Aquaponics/Hydroponics**. Why is this important? Because, currently there are no USDA organic standards that directly apply to these areas. The NOP is busy working to develop regulatory language and guidance for certifiers to address areas where more clarity is needed. Of particular interest is the recent growing recognition of hydroponic and aquaponic production under the organic standards.

In 1995, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) recommended organic certification for hydroponic production in soilless media if all provisions of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) have been met. Later in 2010 they recommended that the USDA shouldn’t allow organic crops to be produced using hydroponic methods. The new contention is that the production methods do not fit within the production systems allowed for use in the current regulations. The NOP has acknowledged that some farms are currently producing organic crops through hydroponic methods, and that

there are some certifying agencies, including MOSA, that certify organic hydroponic operations. The NOP has further clarified that this certification is allowed, as long as the certifier can demonstrate the process for certifying in a way that is compliant. At MOSA, we ensure that systems are compliant with the organic standards. Because of the controversy regarding the certification of hydroponic operations, **the NOP formed the Hydroponic/Aquaponic Task force**. In the September 2015 “Organic Integrity Quarterly” newsletter the NOP stated, “The task force will examine hydroponic and aquaponic production and its alignment with the USDA organic regulations and the OFPA. Hydroponics is a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, with little or no soil. Plants may be grown with their roots in the mineral nutrient solution only or in an inert medium, such as perlite, gravel, biochar, or coconut husk. Aquaponics combines the features of hydroponics and aquaculture. In these systems, the metabolic waste from fish tanks provides a source of nutrients for vegetables grown hydroponically. Some organic farms are utilizing hydroponic and aquaponic growing methods to produce organic crops under the USDA organic regulations. Yet, **the USDA organic regulations do not specifically address this type of production.**”

The Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is a first step toward addressing the need for a clear policy on this issue. The task force will provide the NOSB with **the technical information that it needs to develop comprehensive recommendations** regarding hydroponic and aquaponic production. **The task force is expected to begin work in October 2015 and submit their final report to the NOSB in October 2016.** Selected from nominations to the NOP, the task force includes 16 members. Appointees are diversely qualified experts with deep technical knowledge of hydroponic, aquaponic and organic production. They represent a range of stakeholder groups including producers, researchers/scientists, consumer representatives, conservationists, systems designers, and organic certifying agents. The appointed members are Will Allen, Milwaukee, WI; Colin Archibley, Escondido, CA; John Biernbaum, Ph.D., East Lansing, MI; Angela Caporelli, Frankfort, KY.; Dave Chapman, East Thetford, VT; Marianne Cufone J.D., New Orleans, LA; Amy Lamendella, Santa Cruz, CA; Richard Shultz, San Marcos, TX; Eric Sideman, Ph.D., Strafford, NH; Pierre Sleiman, Encinitas, CA; Stacy Tollefson, Ph.D., Tucson, AZ; Jose Edgardo Torres, Sahuarita, AZ; Jessica Vaughan, Freedom, CA; Jeffry Evard, Plainfield, IN; Sam Welsch, Lincoln, NE; and Theresa Lam, East Brunswick, NJ.

For more information, visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic/nosb/task-forces>.

As with all complex certification policy areas, we’ll be sure to keep you informed of any new developments and in the meantime, we’ll continue to provide quality certification work in all areas we certify. ■

cont. PLACKE from page 1

vet said we'd have to get up to 90+ pounds if we wanted to keep up with the western dairies. If we stayed conventional we would have had to become managers, not farmers. We were already working as hard as we could," said Joe.

Around the same time, they became more interested in organic farming practices. Rita had been subscribing to "Organic Farming and Gardening" magazine, and they went to some of the first Organic Farming Conferences in Sinsinawa. Then Joe's brother got cancer. "My brother's cancer was caused by exposure to farm chemicals. He had been in the hospital for corn insecticide poisoning," lamented Joe. Another major catalyst was when Jay Richard, a local dairy farmer, went organic with his 35 cow dairy and started shipping to the new CROPP Cooperative (Organic Valley).

Joe contacted Jim Wedeberg and George Siemon at Organic Valley, confirmed that they were looking for more organic milk in the area, and started their transition in 1993. By 1996 they were certified, but they had to wait another year until Organic Valley was ready for their milk.

input costs. Our vet bills were less, and so were our costs for fertilizers and pesticides. We used to have the vet out two times a week. We now go for several months without needing him."

"The stable pay price is the key. Conventional prices are \$12 one year and then \$9 the next. We need more farmers to get together on stable pricing. It is very hard to get everyone on board. The pricing for organic grains still fluctuates too much," noted Joe.

Joe and Rita were the first organic dairy farmers in LaFayette County. They took a lot of calls from interested farmers over the years. "A lot of kids who worked for us went on to start their own farms, however, we weren't sure any of our own children were interested," said Joe.

Joe and Rita have four children. Their oldest son Aaron was in the Marines and now is a chiropractor in Seattle. Their second son Joshua is a teacher on the Navaho Reservation in Arizona, and their youngest son Nick is a Marine. They also have one daughter, Kelly, who may have been the least likely to have an interest in farming.

Kelly Placke went to college and earned a degree in art. "I milked every

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As one of the early adopters of organic practices in his area, Joe was confident that he was making the right decision, but had a few worries at first. "You always worry about not using antibiotics and about weed control. When we quit using lutalyse, our cows actually bred back better. We were not pushing them as hard, so they stayed healthier. We lost more cows when we used antibiotics than since we stopped using them," said Joe. "I learned how to treat cows organically from other organic farmers, from ACRES magazine, and from Organic Farming Conferences."

"We used to use a three year corn and then three years in hay rotation. Now we do one year of corn, one of wheat and then three of hay. I have had good luck with this rotation. We also found out during the transition that we made up for the drop in production through the reduction of

morning and night unless I was doing sports- I had to be there to milk. Growing up on a farm, and in a big family, I wanted to get far away for college. I went to Arizona to school and afterwards got involved in the art community in Phoenix. I started an art space and community garden in downtown Phoenix in 2009. We converted a garden of dust into the Garden of Eden," said Kelly.

"The friend that I started the project with was intrigued by the fact that I grew up on a farm, so in deciding what to do with the plot next to the art space, he suggested a community garden. That is what got me back involved with agriculture- gardening. Mom and Dad came down and thought that the project was great. In 2009, I bought my first house

see PLACKE on page 7

THINKING GLOBALLY: ORGANIC TRADE, A LITTLE DISCONTENT, AND A CORNUCOPIA OF VIRTUES

By Stephen Walker, Compliance Manager

In September, MOSA had a booth at the Natural Products Expo East in Baltimore. We were among some 1800 exhibits, including more than 400 brands exhibiting for the first time. I had the privilege to attend along with a couple of my wise and personable

global access for MOSA-certified operations. And while thinking globally, I'll give an organic twist on defining bounty in this holiday season.



MOSA colleagues, Mark Geistlinger, and Rebecca Claypool. We walked the exhibit hall floors and introduced ourselves and MOSA to new friends. We greeted representatives from various brands and businesses that we certify, and met with others from the organic community to talk about trends, challenges, and changes. We answered a lot of questions while talking to many of the over 20,000 attendees who stopped by our booth. There was a noticeable energy on the showroom floors, as we all looked for the next big thing, or the next niche market, for food, dietary supplements, and personal care. It was gratifying to see how far MOSA's scope extends.

In Baltimore, Mark, Rebecca and I heard a lot of questions about importing and exporting organic products with other countries. Increasingly, we're seeing demand for organic products across the globe. So, I thought it might be helpful to give an overview of various international organic trade agreements, to describe potential

International Trade Partners

The United States has trade arrangements with several nations to facilitate the exchange of organic products. These arrangements provide additional market opportunities for MOSA-certified organic producers and processors, and they enable organic availability of products that may only be produced in other parts of the world. A full description of USDA organic trade arrangements is found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade>. You may also contact MOSA for more specific information.

The US now has five organic equivalence arrangements with other governments. Each equivalence arrangement has specific terms. If these are met, MOSA-certified organic products, and products certified to a trade partner's organic standards, can be labeled and sold in either country.

Canada

In 2009, the US established this first organic equivalence arrangement. This arrangement is a bit more challenging than others. Here are some of the key details.

- Canada-based operations must be certified to the Canada Organic Regime standards.
- Agricultural products produced with the use of sodium nitrate shall not be sold or marketed as organic in Canada.
- Agricultural products produced by hydroponic or aeroponic production methods shall not be sold or marketed as organic in Canada.
- Agricultural products derived from animals (with the exception of ruminants) must be produced with specific livestock stocking rates required in the Canadian Organic regulations.
- The above terms also apply to processed products, and their suppliers. This necessitates verifying compliance of the full supply chain, back to the farms.
- All products produced under the terms of the arrangement must be accompanied by verifiable documentation, from the organic operator or from the certifier, stating, "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
- For retail products, labels or stickers must identify MOSA or Canadian certifying agent and may use the USDA Organic Seal or the Canada Organic Biologique logo. All product labels must be in English and French. Wholesale products only require lot numbers. More specific requirements are detailed on the USDA Organic website, or are available by contacting MOSA.

European Union

This equivalence arrangement with the European Union (EU) was established in 2012.

- The equivalence arrangement only covers products exported from and certified in the United States or the EU.
- Apple or pear products that used antibiotics for fire blight control may not be exported to the EU. Note: As of late 2014, this control method is no longer allowed for US organic production.
- Organic products from livestock treated with antibiotics, and from fish or shellfish may not be imported to the US.
- MOSA must complete an EU Certificate of Inspection for each shipment of MOSA-certified product exported to the EU.
- For imported product, the EU-authorized certifier must complete an NOP Import Certificate.
- For retail products, labels or stickers must identify MOSA, or the EU certifying agent, and may use the USDA Organic Seal or the EU organic logo.
- Exported products must meet EU organic labeling requirements. These have the following differences: the "Organic" claim includes processed products with 95-100% organic content; processed products, if under 95% organic, may state the % organic content; there is no "made with organic" claim; MOSA must be identified

on the label using our US-ORG-025 certifier identification number; If the EU organic logo is used, the MOSA identification must be placed in the same visual field, and the place where the product's agricultural raw materials were produced also must appear in the same visual field as the logo.

- Wine exported from the US for must meet the EU organic regulations. This does not include a "made with..." claim. Wine may only use organic grapes, and may not use any "prohibited" practices. Compliant wine products may use the US and EU organic logos.

Japan

This organic equivalence arrangement with Japan began January 1, 2014.

- In order to meet the requirements of this arrangement, products must be produced in, or have final processing / packaging occur in the US or Japan.
- This arrangement only applies to certified organic plant (including fungi) and plant based processed products. Other MOSA-certified organic products, like meat, dairy products, and alcoholic beverages, may also be exported to Japan, without having to meet the added equivalence arrangement terms..
- Plant and plant-based processed products exported to Japan must be accompanied by a TM-11 export certificate, completed by MOSA for each shipment. This must include the statement, "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Japan Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
- Plant and plant-based processed product shipments imported from Japan must be accompanied by an NOP Import Certificate, completed by an approved certifying body in Japan.

- Exported plant and plant based processed products must carry the JAS seal in partnership with a JAS-certified importer. MOSA must verify that the label, including bulk labels, meet the JAS requirements, and that the exporter has a contract with JAS-certified importer.

- Products NOT covered by the arrangement may carry the USDA Organic Seal, but must NOT use the JAS organic logo. These must be certified to the NOP regulations by an NOP accredited certifier, like MOSA.

Korea

This organic equivalence arrangement with Korea began July 1, 2014.

- This covers products which are certified to the NOP or Korean organic regulations, are processed products as defined by the Korean Food Code, which contain at least 95% organic ingredients, and have their final processing occur in the US or Korea.
- Exported products must not contain apples or pears produced using antibiotics.
- Imported products must not contain livestock products produced with the use of antibiotics.

see THINKING GLOBALLY on page 6

- Shipments exported to Korea under the arrangement must be accompanied by NAQS Import Certificate of Organic Processed Foods, completed by MOSA. This must include the statement, "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Korea Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
- Products imported to the US under the arrangement must be accompanied by an NOP Import Certificate, issued by a Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA)-accredited certification body.
- MOSA-certified products for export must be labeled according to MAFRA's organic labeling requirements and may display the Korean organic food label and/or USDA Organic Seal.

Switzerland

This organic equivalence arrangement with Switzerland began July 10, 2015.

- This covers products that are certified to the NOP or Swiss organic regulations, and which have their final processing occur in the US or Switzerland.
- Swiss products must not contain any livestock products or ingredients produced with the use of antibiotics.
- Organic wine must be produced and labeled to the regulations of the importing country.
- Exported MOSA-certified products must be accompanied by a Swiss Certificate of Inspection.
- Imported products must be accompanied by an NOP Import Certificate, issued by an authorized Swiss certifying body.
- U.S. organic products imported into Switzerland must be labeled according to Swiss organic labeling requirements and may display the USDA Organic Seal.

Taiwan

The United States has an export trade relationship with Taiwan, which allows MOSA-certified products to be sold as organic in Taiwan.

- Organic products from outside the United States or its territories are not included in this arrangement.
- When exported to Taiwan, MOSA-certified products must be accompanied by an organic transaction certificate (TM-11), issued by MOSA for each shipment. This must include specified compliance statements, which are differentiated for processed products and crops, and for livestock and meat products.

Recognition agreements

The US also has recognition agreements with India, Israel and New Zealand. Recognition agreements allow a foreign government to accredit certifying agents in that country to the USDA organic standards. These foreign certifying agents are authorized to certify organic farms and processing facilities, ensuring that USDA organic products meet or exceed all NOP regulations. These products

can then be sold as organic in the United States.

A Different Perspective

The past few years have seen a speedy, increasing proliferation of organic trade arrangements, and increasing demand for US organic products. Organic, like other sectors, functions in a global economy and a shrinking world. But there's more; organic also helps to address global crises of soil loss, climate change, food security, and ecological debt. Perhaps all the international interest is because our overseas neighbors have the benefit of a more global perspective.

In early October, I found an interesting account ([at thinkprogress.org](http://thinkprogress.org)) regarding the tiny Himalayan country of Bhutan, and their lofty and progressive goal to make their agricultural system 100 percent organic by 2020. Bhutan has in its favor their small size, prevalent religious tenets stressing sustainability and conservation, and good governance that supports farmers in the transition. Not coincidentally, Bhutan is also the only country in the world which rejects gross domestic product as a measure of progress. Instead, Bhutan relies on a measurement of gross domestic *happiness*.

Appachanda Thimmaiah, Bhutan's agricultural adviser from 2008 to 2013 and associate professor of sustainable living at Maharishi University of Management in Iowa, explained, "*When we say happiness, it's not just happiness of humans. It's happiness of the soil, happiness of the animals, happiness of all sentient beings... Organic farming was very much part of the gross national happiness. You cannot think about applying chemical fertilizers and pesticides and say that your country is happy.*" Thimmaiah noted that's a cultural philosophy that we don't see present here in the States. For the United States to switch to 100 percent organic agriculture, it would require a massive overhaul of our priorities, at a federal, industrial, and consumer level.

In the same account, John Ikerd, professor emeritus of Agricultural & Applied Economics at the University of Missouri Columbia, noted that industrial operations are more economically competitive because they don't pay the full environmental and social cost of what they're doing: "*When you shift to an agriculture that does not impose any of those costs on the environment or the people that work on that system, you're going to have increased costs in the short term. In the long term, we'll find that the organic system is less costly.*" Ikerd said, "*The main thing is the mindset. It's a different way of thinking about what agriculture is. I tell people, being an organic farmer is a lot more like raising kids than making cars.*"

A different kind of bounty

In June, a website story (from 24/7 Wall Street) caught some local attention when it ranked MOSA's hometown of Viroqua as the poorest town in Wisconsin. We Viroqua locals took some offense to the research methodology, yet we could not deny that our geographic area has had some long-term economic challenges. But, it's all relative with global thinking. Even a typical Viroqua income is in the top 2% of the world's wealth. We progressive Viroqua locals were also quick to point out that wealth can be measured on a dif-

see THINKING GLOBALLY on page 9



with help on the down payment from my parents. It was just after the recession so I got it for a great price and sold it three years later at the top of the market. I paid off my school loans and had money saved. I had no plan at that point, aside from wanting to get out of the desert, so I traveled to Alaska, Morocco, France and Ireland”.

“I was working on a goat farm in France when the light bulb turned on. Mom called and said she wished she had someone to help with the fall harvest. I thought to myself ‘why am I here and not working on my own farm?’” laughed Kelly. “It was the first time that I seriously considered farming as an option”.

With Kelly coming home with an interest in joining the farming operation, Joe and Rita started researching their options for bringing on a family member successfully.

They started by forming an LLC. Each of the Placke children bought 40 acres of land and Kelly also bought an additional 40. The LLC pays rent to each of the property owners. The LLC collects all income (milk and grain) and pays out a salary to the business partners (Joe, Rita and Kelly). “The organic price allows this ability to sell the farm for the price we paid for it in 1980,” noted Joe. “We make enough to live and pass on the farm. Conventional farmers don’t often have that option”.

Kelly earns a wage and a 2-2.5% ownership transfer of the LLC each year. In 20 years she will own a 50% share.

“Without this arrangement, buying a farm would not have been an option for me, as with many of my generation, who often start off with a lot of debt,” added Kelly.

“The roles worked out quickly. I do all of the milking. Dad has been ready to stop doing that for a while. I’ve taken a great interest in herd health and am very happy handling the animals while Dad focuses on the crops,” said Kelly.

Kelly is currently milking her grass-based, no grain herd of 40 cows in an older stanchion barn. Her goal is to upgrade to a robotic milking system in five to ten years so she can increase to 60 cows without adding more time to her workday. “I recently started a small milk soap business and would like to continue to have time for that as well as gardening and other hobbies. Our current barn is obsolete, and a parlor would just put me 10-20 years behind the technology curve. Robotic milkers are exciting. There are a lot more options for placement, which I think we could get really creative with, with a grass-based operation” stressed Kelly. She also plans to use an NRCS cost share program to add new water lines to the pastures.

“I am so grateful that my parents were ready to start the conversation about a succession plan. I was recently talking with a friend who helps run her father’s family business with her three brothers. Her dad refuses to talk about the generational transfer, which really puts everyone in an uncomfortable position, especially if something unexpected were to happen where they were forced to make decisions quickly.”

For more information on generational farm transfers, the WI Department of Agriculture has an excellent online guide “Farm Transfers in Wisconsin- A Guide for Farmers”: http://datcp.wi.gov/uploads/Farms/pdf/transfer_guide.pdf

The guide is also available in hard copy by calling the Wisconsin Farm Center at 800-942-2474.■



MEET MOSA EMPLOYEE: ROBERTA DUCHARME

What do you do in your position at MOSA?

I am an Administrative Specialist. I help with customer service by answering phones, checking in certification applications, scanning documents that are sent to MOSA from clients, processing inspection reports to send to clients after their inspections, and mailing out files to inspectors.

What do you do with your time outside of MOSA?

I recently moved back to Viroqua after teaching in Honolulu for the last four years. When I moved back I bought a little house in a quiet neighborhood and I've been spending the last year and a half making my house a home and my yard a gardening space and comfortable place to spend my time away from work. I created a raised bed garden and experimented with a straw bale garden this year, all organic of course! I live near a walking/biking trail at the end of my street so I'm fortunate to be able to hike and bike in my neighborhood. I practice yoga to help keep my life balanced.

How long have you been at MOSA? Can you tell us about one thing that was really different when you started?

I started at MOSA in 2008 and worked for two years before moving to Hawaii to teach. When I moved back in the spring of last year I got a call to help part time with the busy spring certification application time. I moved into a full time position a year later. When I first worked at MOSA we only occupied part of the building and mostly the second floor. Now we've grown to occupy the whole building and have expanded our certification and administrative staff as well. MOSA is a thriving non-profit business and continues to grow each

year.

Why organic?

I've always been interested in gardening and subscribed to Organic Gardening magazine way back in the day. Gardening organically just resonated with me. I believe it's good for the earth and good for all of us who live on the earth. When I moved to a dairy farm and we were raising our family there, it seemed like it was the healthy and right thing to do, even though at the time it was a different way from how most of our neighbors were farming. When I lived in Hawaii, I found that the Hawaiian Islands are immersed in GMO experimentation because of the continuous growing season. There is a strong movement there to protest this use of the land and the movement had some recent victories against big chemical companies. I feel fortunate to live in Vernon County once again where organics are alive and well.

Why MOSA?

I've changed careers by coming to work at MOSA after having been an early childhood teacher for all of my life, but I am happy that this opportunity came to me. I loved being a teacher, a gardener and a dairy farmer. Now I can combine all of those experiences in helping our clients with their organic certification. MOSA supports all of us working here to achieve a healthy lifestyle. I value my coworkers and the work that we do to help our clients and to promote organics.

What are a few great things about your life?

People are often amazed when I tell them that I moved back here after living in paradise. Hawaii is definitely paradise, with the climate, the stunning beauty of the land and the ocean, and the resurgence of the Hawaiian culture. I will hopefully visit friends there during the coldest part of the winter! But, having moved back here I feel blessed to be close to my family and friends and living in this vibrant community where there are so many interesting things to do and cultural events to experience. We also have access to a bounty of local and organic food and live in such a gorgeous natural world. ■



At MOSA, we treat you like
you're the most important part
of our work—because you are.

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**Practical, Reliable and Friendly
Certification Services**

cont. DIRECTOR from page 1

Cost Share Program is available to organic producers; it provides noncompetitive financial assistance to defray the costs of organic certification to encourage farmers to begin or continue their certification. Thankfully, it was funded again in the 2014 Farm Bill to provide reimbursements of up to 75 percent of annual certification costs, up to a maximum payment of \$750 per year per scope. This is outstanding support for organic operators; if you have not taken advantage of cost share I urge you to do so.

Because of the steady industry growth we've seen, certifiers are working hard to find qualified organic inspectors. As you know, every organic operation must be inspected on an annual basis. Along with reviewing and evaluating operator files, each year many of MOSA's in-house Certification Specialists perform a few dozen inspections each, and we contract with more than 40 independent inspectors. We are often asked by our clients about how to get into inspecting; we have found that this can be a natural off-farm job for many organic farmers with their practical hands-on knowledge and experience. If you are interested in finding out more about inspection opportunities, contact the International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) at 406-436-2031 or www.ioia.net. This professional organization of organic inspectors offers training world-wide for crop, livestock, and processing inspectors. Most of MOSA's inspectors, both staff and independent, are IOIA-trained. ■

AVOIDING SHOW STOPPERS DURING FINAL REVIEW

by MOSA CRT Team

In the MOSA office we have a list of what we refer to as “show stoppers” during the Final Review process. A show stopper is a critical piece of missing information, which will prevent your file from moving on through the process and prevent us from issuing your certificate. Instead, we will send you a Certification Determination Letter (CDL), and then issue a Pre-Decisions Requirements letter (PDR). Here is a list of the most common reasons we would need to issue a PDR:

1. Seed receipts that were not viewed or were not available at inspection.
2. Non-GMO and/or untreated verification for seed that was not available at inspection.
3. An incomplete Organic System Plan.
4. Incomplete Field history or Prior Land Use Declaration (PLUD) forms for new land.
5. Missing or incomplete field maps.
6. Use of a crop or livestock input that has not been reviewed or is prohibited.
7. Missing verification of organic status of livestock or livestock feed from an inspection audit.
8. Missing Winter & Summer Livestock rations forms for ruminant animals.
9. Missing or incomplete livestock list.
10. Use of labels that are noncompliant or have not been reviewed, or misleading website/marketing materials.
11. The MOSA Terms & Conditions Agreement (MTCA) has not been signed.
12. Unpaid fees.

The best way to avoid these “show stoppers” is to have all Organic System Plan and audit information available at your inspection. The deadline for responding to a PDR is three weeks, but it is best to get the requested information in as soon as possible so that we can offer clarification if your response is incomplete. If more time is needed, or if it is unclear what information is being requested, please contact the certification specialist who sent you the PDR letter. S/he will be the most well equipped to answer specific questions about your certification issue. ■

cont. THINKING GLOBALLY from page 6

ferent scale, including richness of community and of consciousness.

Here in this postharvest, holiday season, we do a lot of thinking about our bounty. Indeed, here in the States, in the midst of a growing organic marketplace, we have a lot to be grateful for, in typical economic terms, and beyond, to a different kind of bounty. Our organic community fills a bountiful cornucopia with gifts and virtues like environmental preservation, passion for our work, earthy practicality, youthful energy, and revolutionary thinking. What a difference we can make if we change our focus from wealth in consumer goods to other kinds of riches.

A little discontent

Over dinner in Baltimore, Rebecca, Mark and I had a thought-provoking conversation about accepting wherever we are in the moment. Mostly, we affirmed the power of gratitude. And, even with gratitude for the now, we also noted that a little discontent has value toward motivating us to make things better.

In a recent essay here, regarding the changes we face, I noted organic's role in addressing global urgencies, and affirmed our call to action through some words from the influential social activist, Grace Lee Boggs. On October 5th, we were saddened to hear of Grace's passing, at the age of 100. Here's more from Grace, regarding discontent birthing a new kind of progress:

“My hope is that as more and different layers of the American people are subjected to economic and political strains and as recurrent disasters force us to recognize our role in begetting these disasters, a growing number of Americans will begin to recognize that we are at one of those great turning points in history. Both for our livelihood and for our humanity we need to see progress not in terms of ‘having more’ but in terms of growing our souls by creating community, mutual self-sufficiency, and cooperative relations with one another.”

By sharing these words, I don't mean to imply that we need to sacrifice financial wealth for other kinds of bounty. Instead, I'm talking about the necessity of focusing on the happiness virtues, like ensuring sufficiency and sustainability. Thinking globally, we see many challenges that bring more than a little discontent. A little discontent means there's work to be done and a difference that must be made, for the sake of the kids. By acting locally, with a good focus on broad based bounty and happiness, we affect our global neighbor. ■

CLASSIFIEDS

LIVESTOCK

For Sale: Pure Bred Blond Mangalitsa boar piglets. \$1000 each. 3-4 available. Rockland, WI. Call Dale at 608-498-6656.

For Sale: Certified Organic Fleckvieh bull calves up to three months old. 75% Fleckvieh/25% mix- mostly Holstein. Thorp, WI. Call Allen at 715-206-0491.

Wanted: We will custom raise your organic dairy heifers. Certified organic feed. Call Matt for details 507-459-7719.

Wanted: Interested in buying all classifications of organic cattle and calves for meat production. Mike Noble, Kenyon, MN 507-789-6679

FARMS/LAND

For Rent: organic 38.5 acre farm. This organic farm has 10 to 15 acres of tillable fertile land, as well as pasture and woodlands against a large pond. Rental will include renovated house (two bedrooms 1600 sf) and shared use of dairy barn; garage; and 24x48 packing shed with concrete floor, trough drain, and updated electrical. Property has a new 60gpm 200-foot deep irrigation well, and will probably have a kitchen and bathroom available for interns. Farm is located in Clayton, WI, an hour and a half from the Twin Cities. The farm was used this year to grow produce for a 200 member CSA and other markets, so the property is ready to go for a renter next year, to share with a small log-grown mushroom farm. Rent negotiable. Available February, 2016; call Jeremy at (612) 205-8599 or email at cherrytree-housemushrooms@gmail.com.

Wanted: Organic Land for Rent. Any size parcel within a 20 mile radius of Soldiers Grove, WI. Call Rich at 608-606-9226.

For Sale: Organic Farm, Northfield, MN. 126 Acres of certified organic farmland with full set of bldgs for veg farm or plant production. 80,000 sq ft greenhouse, 52 x 100 new four season pack shed, 40 x 60 potting shed, 48 x 100 new, heated shop. Well maintained 1200 sq ft house with full basement. Two new septic systems. Two wells. MLS #4599644 kubesrealty@kubesrealty.com 952-445-9110.

EQUIPMENT

For Sale: 1978 IH Combine. 3200 hours. Great Shape. Comes with a 944 4-row corn head. La Farge, WI. Call David at 608-479-1222.

For Sale: John Deere Combine Engine. Serial 287700T. Model 6329DH01. 90-100 HP. Complete with radiator, alternator, battery, starter, fuel tank and instrument cluster. 4000 hours. \$2500. Will Deliver. Rockland, WI. Dale. 608-498-6656.

For Sale: John Deere Corn Sheller on Stand.

\$135. Rockland, WI. Dale. 608-498-6656.

For Sale: Massey 1135 Tractor. New hydraulic pump and brakes. Tires good. Uses some oil. Open station. \$6500 as is. Rockland, WI. Dale. 608-498-6656.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale: Mr.K's garlic tincture & garlic vinegar approved for use as treatment in organic production. Helps with mastitis, scours, etc. 330-674-3999 x3.

VEGETABLES/TRANSPLANTS/SEEDS

For Sale: Fresh Cranberries certified organic by MOSA. Available in 40 pound lots in poly mesh bags. Will keep for 12 to 20 weeks at 40 degrees Fahrenheit with good ventilation. Selling price is \$2.50 per pound. Contact Shirley at 715-652-0171.

For Sale: Organic Seed Garlic: Over 20 different organic heirloom garlic varieties: Music, Chesnok Red, Georgian Crystal, Georgian Fire, Italian Red, Killarney Red, Majestic, and many more. www.keeneorganics.com or call 608-215-7599.

FORAGES/GRAINS

For Sale: Organic 2015 crop balage. 86 3x3x5 squares- 3rd cutting, clover/grass mix. 46 4x4 rounds- sorghum sudan/clover mix. 14 4x4.5 rounds- 1st cutting ryegrass/clover mix. 19 4x5 rounds- 2nd cutting ryegrass/clover mix. Also 7 4x5 rounds of dry hay- stored inside. All feed is being tested. Call David Chupp 715-223-7381. Spencer, WI.

For Sale: Organic hay (1st, 2nd and 3rd crop), organic haylage, and organic barley hay. Near Rushford, MN. Email heidimae@rocketmail.com.

For Sale: Certified Organic Winter Rye and Non-GMO VNS Winter Rye. Germ tested. NE WI. Call 920-427-6663.

For Sale: Certified Organic Hay. Very good quality. Mostly alfalfa, some grass. Available in dry 3x3x8 large squares, small squares and well-wrapped baleage (3x3x5.5). NE WI. Call 920-427-6663.

For Sale: CERTIFIED ORGANIC HAY. Approx. 300 small square bales of 2014 2nd crop alfalfa. Very Good. \$3.50/bale. Quantities less than 25 bales, \$4.00. Approx. 100 small square bales of 2015 2nd crop alfalfa/grass mix. \$3.00/bale. Approx. 450 small square bales of 2015 grass mix hay. \$2.50/bale. Approx. 130 small square bales of 2015 wheat straw. \$2.50. CONTACT DENNIS - 608-416-0364 - Brooklyn, WI.

For Sale: Organic alfalfa second cutting 3x3x8 sq. bales. Test results available. Brad, Allenton WI (262) 305-7623.

For Sale: MOSA Certified Hay. Round bales. No Rain and tight. 4x4 (approx. 600lbs)

twine wrapped grassy hay with alfalfa and clover: 1st crop \$23 ea 2nd crop \$34. 4x5 net wrapped (approx. 800lbs) 1st crop \$32 - \$34 (much higher alfalfa) each. 7 miles east of Viroqua. Can load. Bill 608-606-4369.

For Sale: 2015 certified organic dry hay. Tight 4'X5' Netwrapped round bales. NO RAIN. Eight Lots--all forage analyzed--results available. First, second and third crop. Approximately 500 Tons. Delivery within Wisconsin and U.P. Michigan can be arranged. 715-473-2154 (message line). medow@medowfarmsorganic.com.

For Sale: Organic 4x4 Silage Bales. 1st and 2nd crop alfalfa/grass mix. Can Deliver. Rockland, WI. Call Dale at 608-498-6656.

For Sale: MOSA Certified Organic Fall Rye Seed. Cleaned, ready to plant in 35 bu totes. \$19.00/bu.

5 miles SE of Hillsboro WI. Contact Ben, 419-294-8598 or 608-489-8598.

For Sale: 15 large square bales clean, Transitional Oat Straw. \$35/bale. 5 miles SE of Hillsboro WI. Contact Ben, 419-294-8598 or 608-489-8598.

For Sale: Organic Seed Wheat: Soft Red Winter-VNS:\$25/bu, Hard Red Spring-VNS: \$25/bu, Heritage Turkey Red winter: \$35 per bu. Available in 40 bu totes or smaller if requested. Wisconsin grown, cleaned by fanning mill and gravity table, germ tested by WCIA. Call 608-583-2100.

For Sale: Certified organic first crop hay, 4' x 5' round bales. Tight, average weight 950 lbs, no-rain, polytwined, grasses(June, Brome, Timothy), Legumes (Trefoil, red clover). Hauling available. References can be given. Northern Wisconsin. Ask for Dale, 715-685-4291 ,or e-mail at heavydale@gmail.com.

For Sale: MOSA certified organic oats, \$5.65 a bu. Also, 30 round bales of straw. \$35.00 each and first crop hay, \$30 to \$45 a bale, 4x5' round. Medford, WI. 715-748-6863 or organichay11@hotmail.com.

For Sale: MOSA certified alfalfa hay large squares. 2015 crop, stored inside. Cheryl 815-405-5375, Newark, IL.

To submit an ad to be posted in the printed version of the Organic Cultivator and on the MOSA website, send it to MOSA, PO Box 821, Viroqua, WI 54665, or email to mosa@mosaorganic.org. All ads will be posted for 60 days free of charge for MOSA clients (100 words max). For non-clients, cost of an ad is \$5.00 for 40 words, and \$0.10 per word over 40 (max 100 words).

MOSA does not guarantee that all products posted on this page are certified organic, and MOSA is not responsible for the accidental purchase of non-organic products through the use of this page. Always check to guarantee the certification status of any product before purchasing or using. ■

EVENTS

NOVEMBER

Green Lands Blue Waters Conference: Bridges and Buffers, Farms and Cities **Nov. 3-4 | \$180** **Minneapolis, MN**

Agricultural water issues, pollinators, and soil health are on the agenda for this solution-oriented conference. Green Lands Blue Waters supports the development of multi-functional agricultural systems in the Mississippi River Basin. This conference, like many of their initiatives, will focus on continuous living cover systems. Contact: Richard Warner rwarn@umn.edu or call 612-625-3709.

Passive Solar Deep Winter Greenhouses **Nov. 4 | 3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. | Free** **St. Paul, MN**

University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnership hosts this public seminar to highlight recent ongoing work on passive solar greenhouse technology. This system allows small-scale producers the ability to grow specialty crops throughout the winter with minimal reliance on delivered heat. Go to <http://www.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/statewide/deep-winter-greenhouse/> or call 612-624-1222.

Deep Winter Production of Greens and Livestock Fodder Utilizing Passive Solar Energy **Nov. 7 | 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. | \$100** **Ashby, MN**

Join MOSES and tour the 450-acre certified Sustainable Farming Association hosts this hands-on workshop. Paradox Farm owners Sue Wika and Tom Prieve provide a detailed overview of the construction and operation of their deep-winter greenhouse, which utilizes passive solar energy and underground heat storage. Go to

https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/7232/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=77868 or call 1-844-922-5573.

Small Food Co-Op Conference **Nov. 7 | 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.** **Bloomington, MN**

Land Stewardship Project organizes "Small But Strong – Securing Your Food Co-op's Future," a one-day networking and training conference for board and staff of small Upper Midwest food co-ops. For more information and to register, contact Tomm Guettler at 651-307-5691.

Business Planning for Small Farms **Nov. 12 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m. | \$40** **East Troy, WI**

Paul Dietmann of Badgerland Financial is hosted by the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute for a discussion around planning small farm businesses. Got to workshops@michaelfields.org or call (262) 642-3303 Ext. 100.

Year Round and Seasonal CSA Success **Nov. 14 | 8 a.m.-6 p.m. | \$150** **Lansing, MI**

The Michigan State University Student Organic Farm leads a day of Community Supported Agriculture exploration. Learn about different resources, strategies and approaches for CSA models from startup to growth. Led by Jeremy Moghtader of the Organic Farmer Training Program and Tomm Becker of Sunseed Farm. For workshop questions, contact Megan DeLeeuw, Farmer Field School Program Manager at 734-718-5506; or Tom Cary, Farmer Field School Program Manager at 616-916-9823

Iowa Organic Conference: Celebrating the Biodiversity of Organic Farming **Nov. 22-23 | \$125* | Iowa City, IA**

Keynote speakers, Klaas and Mary-Howell Martens, farms organic grains in upstate New York and are the NOFA-NY Farmers of the Year. Go to <https://www.signmeup.com/108970> or call 319-335-5516. *Reduced rates for early registration available before Nov. 1

DECEMBER

Transitioning to Organic **Dec. 1 | Free | Morris, MN**

University of Minnesota Extension offers a workshop for grain and forage crop producers seeking more information about organic certification and transition process. The workshop is designed to alleviate some confusion offer answers while giving attendees additional resources for the future. Learn more by contacting Jill Sackett at sacke032@umn.edu or 507-389-5541.

Midwest CSA Conference **Dec. 3-4 | \$135 | Eau Claire, WI**

Sponsored by the Wisconsin Farmers Union, the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) community is invited to come together, network, learn and strengthen the integrity of the CSA movement. The conference features practical presentations regarding production, land access, business management, community building, and more. Go to <http://www.midwestcsa.com/> or email midwestcsa@wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

Beginning Farming Panel: So, You Want to be a Farmer **Dec. 5 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m. | \$10** **East Troy, WI**

Instructed by Michael Futschenritter (Three Brothers Farm), Courtney Stevens (Flower and Bee), and Paul Huber (Shared Season Community Farm), this panel shares the stories and lessons of beginning farmers. It is offered by the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute.

Email workshops@michaelfields.org or call 262-642-3303 Ext. 100.

Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo **Dec. 8-10 | \$ | Grand Rapids, MI**

Organic Day is on Thursday at the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo (GLEXP0). Michigan's biggest conference and trade show for farmers offers educational sessions all three days. Contact Jennifer by phone at 734-677-0503 or by email at jdickie@managedbyamr.com.

Acres U.S.A. Conference and Trade Show **Dec. 8-11 | \$ | Pittsburgh, PA**

The annual Acres U.S.A. conference includes seminars and workshops, a trade show and optional "Eco-Ag U" intensive courses prior to the conference. Farmers and consultants from every vein of sustainability-minded farming come together to share their experience and expertise. Admission by pre-registration only. Have questions? Call our office @ 1-800-355-5313 or 512-892-4400.

Navigating Farm Taxes **Dec. 8 | 10 a.m.-12 p.m. | \$30** **Sun Prairie, WI**

The Michael Fields Agricultural Institute presents Andy McCarty of Badgerland Financial sharing important information about farm tax preparation and navigation. Email workshops@michaelfields.org or call 262-642-3303 Ext. 100. ■



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