



The ACA Guidewire

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Response to "Open Letter to the Organic Food Community"

In June, several ACA members drafted an "Open Letter to the Organic Food Community" regarding the media coverage of the NOP Materials List additions.

The letter was circulated on our discussion group and received many additional comments. The final version of the letter was sent to press organizations, magazines, certifying organizations who are not currently members of ACA, and other organic community associations.

The ACA office received many positive comments on our letter. OTA created a new website page *Organic News &*

Comments from Other Sources, which contains a link to our letter, along with an article written by Sam Fromartz, *How the Media Missed the Story*.

Several commenters indicated that the information was very clear and well done. The office was asked to provide a shortened version to be used in the "Letters to the Editor" column of two national magazines. The full version of our letter is posted on the ACA website.

Thanks to all our members who contributed to this letter.

Hold the Date!

January 14 - 16, 2008

ACA - NASOP - NOP Trainings & Meetings

Held in conjunction with the

Southern SAWG Conference,

Louisville, KY

See Inside

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Upcoming ACA Gatherings

Natural Products Expo East - If there are members attending the Natural Products Expo East, September 26 — 29, 2007, we will plan an informal meeting. Watch the discussion group for additional information.

National Organic Standards Board - November 27—29, 2007. We will plan to meet informally during the week to discuss current issues. Notice will be sent in early November to inform you of time and place.

ACA / NASOP / NOP Trainings & Meetings
ACA & National Assoc. of State Organic Pro-

grams (NASOP) have organized the following trainings & meetings in January 2008:

January 14 - NOP Certifier Training 9 - 5 pm

January 14 - ACA Annual Meeting 6:30 pm

January 15 - ACA / NASOP Training
8:30 - 6 pm

January 16 - NASOP Annual Meeting 8 - 1 pm

These meetings will precede the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Conference

January 16 - 19, 2008, in Louisville, KY. Additional details will be sent soon.

All Things Organic, April 26 - 29, 2008.
Additional information will be sent.

Certification Issues Project Update

The 1st Issue of our *Certification Issues Project* — Grower Group Certification — was sent out to obtain comments from our members. The comments received were compiled into a draft document and the document is currently being re-circulated to members for additional comments. Keep in my that your participation is needed on this project. The outcome of work on the Grower Group Certification issue will be to submit our comments to the NOSB.

Future Issue Topics: Next up on our agenda will be to work on developing a process and the criteria to assess *commercial availability*. This could apply to both seeds and ingredients.

Resource Info Requested: If your organization has a commercial availability procedure, or forms, please consider forwarding the informa-

tion to

PatriciaKane@accreditedcertifiers.org;

this will be used to formulate the background information for the Issue.

Suggestions for additional topics are always welcome.

The goal of the
Certification
Issues Project is to
develop agreement among
ACA members
regarding NOP
issues.

ACA Board Conference Call Summaries

June BOD Conference Call Summary

- **NOSB Report** - Joe Smillie participated in call. He indicated the Certification, Accreditation & Compliance Committee has been receiving comments on Grower Group Certification. The Board will be working on developing definitions for ag/non agricultural ingredients and synthetic/non-synthetic materials.
- The Board reviewed the 1st CIP Issue Topic - Grower Group Certification. It will be sent to the membership.
- There was continuing discussion regarding the joint meeting & training with NASOP.
- In the latest survey of the membership regarding participation in the discussion group by those other than certification agency staff, the members wished the discussion group remain limited to certifica-

tion agency staff only. This will remain the policy.

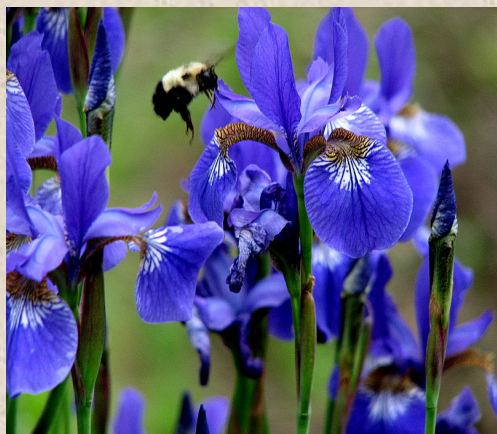
- The Executive Committee recommended to the Board that Pat's contract for coordinator be extended an additional year. The Board agreed.
- The Board discussed the various events ACA would participate in during the upcoming months. (see: Upcoming ACA Gatherings, pg. 2)
- Discussion regarding the Open Letter to the Organic Food Community determined that the letter would be sent out by ACA.

July BOD Conference Call Summary

- **NOSB Report** - Joe Smillie noted that various NOSB committees were meeting, but no new information has been finalized.

Continued on page 4

~ Thank You ~ To the Following Renewing Members



Baystate Organic Certifiers, Inc.
 California Organic Farmers Association
 Clemson University
 Global Culture
 Hawaii Organic Farmers, LLC.
 Maryland Department of Agriculture
 Midwest Organic Services
 MOFGA Certification Services, LLC.
 NOFA-NY Certified Organic LLC.
 Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association
 OneCert, Inc.
 Oregon Tilth, Inc.
 Pennsylvania Certified Organic
 Quality Certification Services
 Quality Management Institute

Board Conference Call Summaries (cont.)

July BOD Conference Call Summary (cont.)

- The Board discussed the financial report. We are continuing to have a loss. Pat explained that the majority of membership renewals are due from June - September, so our bottom line should improve.
- **CIP** - We received a very few comments. Pat will contact members again. Pat will compile results of the comments we receive.

August BOD Conference Call Summary

- The draft of the Grower Group Certification CIP Issue was reviewed. The Board

indicated that this should be sent to the members

- Pat reviewed the progress to date in organizing the joint meetings with NASOP.
- Leslie & Marty discussed the recent meeting in New York regarding aquaculture standards (see article).
- The Board discussed the draft of a member survey. This was approved. Pat will begin working on this.

Aquaculture Standards Meeting

In July, Leslie Zuck and Marty Mesh attended a meeting addressing Aquaculture Standards hosted by the Environmental Defense Fund and the Monterey Bay Aquarium in NYC. Invited attendees included biologists, aquaculture producers, and representatives of several consumer organizations. The group focused on discussion of net pens and feed for fish. Leslie and Marty provided information from the certifier perspective.

ACA Board Positions Available

ACA will be putting forth Board Member candidates for election / re-election at our annual meeting in January 2008, with the terms beginning in April 2008.

Currently we have 7 board members, however, our ACA bylaws stipulate that the Board of Directors may consist of between 5 and 9 members.

We would like to encourage members who are willing to assist with the work of ACA to submit their names for the open positions on the Board of Directors. Board members are asked to participate in our monthly conference calls.

For additional info Contact Pat Kane at PatriciaKane@accreditedcertifiers.org

