



# The ACA Guidewire

Newsletter of the Accredited Certifiers Association, Inc.

Volume #2, Issue #2

July 2006

## ACA News

The ACA Board has been working diligently since our Annual Meeting in April, 2006. The first business conducted was the election of officers for this year. They are:

Leslie Zuck, Chair, Pennsylvania  
Certified Organic  
Brett Bakker, Vice-Chair, New Mexico  
Organic Commodity Commission  
Donald Franczyk, Secretary / Treasurer,  
Baystate Organic Certifiers

The Board also adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy, Bylaws Change Policy, and a Membership Renewal Policy. These policies were sent to members prior to our Annual Meeting.

The Board will also establish regular communication with the NOSB Certifier Representative, Joe Smillie, inviting him to participate in the monthly board conference calls.

The Board of Directors has adopted a new membership dues structure (see article at right.)

The ACA has submitted its IRS application for tax exempt status, plus has applied for membership in IFOAM.

### In This Issue

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- Education Committee Report
- New Membership Structure Adopted
- IFOAM List Serve
- Welcome Renewing Members

## Education Committee Activities

Education committee members Erich Bremer and Brenda Rogers have been discussing various options for the establishment of training opportunities for members. As part of this work, we have asked members for their input regarding topics for which training sessions would be beneficial. In addition, the committee will be examining our list of priority issues to condense this list and determine how best to address these issues.

Additional topics discussed by the Board of Directors are the establishment an education fund to be used to reduce the costs associated with training programs. Funds would be solicited from others in the organic community. Training sessions for certifiers are under discussion. Members interested in “hosting” a training session – assisting with locating meeting rooms, lodging, etc. – should contact the ACA office.

The ACA has a great deal of work to do – and few to do this work. **We would very much welcome additional assistance with the activities of the Education Committee.** Please contact Pat Kane at [PatriciaKane@accreditedcertifiers.org](mailto:PatriciaKane@accreditedcertifiers.org) if you are able to participate in the work of this committee.

## New Membership Dues Structure Adopted

Based upon input received from both members and others in the organic community, the Board of Directors has

adopted a new Membership Dues structure. The Board reconsidered our dues structure to address the issue of the amount of dues paid by members and also to address requests from non-certifiers to become supporters of ACA.

In conjunction with the discussion of dues amounts, the Board has acknowledged that the “value” received for the amount of dues paid is a critical determining factor in whether a certifier joins ACA. Our education activities, and our efforts to come to agreement on specific issues are key to increasing membership of ACA, and we are moving forward with plans for these efforts. The Board will also be researching other possible benefits for members of ACA such as various types of group insurance benefits and collaboration with other groups in order to provide training programs.

**ACA Membership Changes**

(effective October 1, 2006 for renewing members; effective immediately for new members.)

- Certification agencies applying for accreditation, may join with full member benefits;
- A **Supporting Member** category is established. This category of membership is open to members of the organic community who do not conduct certification activities. Dues are \$75.00 with the following benefits:
  - Receive newsletter & other press type information
  - Participate in workshops at member rates

The Supporting Membership category shall be a non-voting membership. Supporting Members will not have access to the certifier discussion group.

While we realize that lack of participation in the discussion group may not be a favorable response to requests from non-certifiers, members of ACA felt it was necessary to restrict the discussion group to only certifiers. Members felt that this restriction would encourage the broadest participation in the group, without feeling that sensitive topics would be distributed widely.

- Revised membership dues structure for certifying agency members:

Annual Income from Certification Including Inspection Activities	Dues
< \$200,000 \$2 per certified member, or minimum \$150	\$150.00 minimum
\$200,001 – 400,000	\$800.00
\$400,001 – 600,000	\$900.00
\$600,001 – 999,000	\$1,000.00
> \$1,000,000	\$1,300.00

**IFOAM Certification Body Forum Initiates List-Serve**

The IFOAM Certification Body Forum group has instituted a Certification Body List Serve. The List-serve is designed to help the Forum communicate in between annual meetings of the Forum. The Forum hopes to make some progress on issues of interest and give input to other

developments that affect the work of organic certification bodies.

This first mailing updated certification bodies on a number of administrative topics and started a discussion on the program for the November IFOAM Certification Conference in November in Rome, Italy.

Certification bodies wishing to subscribe to the List Serve please contact Matthias Fecht at [m.fecht@ifoam.org](mailto:m.fecht@ifoam.org)

### **Update of Contact Information**

Deanna Baldwin has taken over the position formerly held by Karen Fedor of the Maryland Department of Agriculture Certification Program. Deanna may be contacted at: (410) 841-5769, e-mail: [baldwidl@mda.state.md.us](mailto:baldwidl@mda.state.md.us). Karen will now be working in the organic marketing department.

### **Welcome Rejoining Members**

*Thank you* to the following renewing members who are supporting the work of ACA:

- Baystate Organic Certifiers
- Hawaii Organic Farmers Assoc.
- Maryland Dept. of Agriculture
- MOFGA Certification Services LLC
- Midwest Organic Services Assoc.
- NOFA-NY Certified Organic LLC
- Oregon Tilth
- Pennsylvania Certified Organic
- Vermont Organic Farmers LLC

## **Volunteers Needed**

**. Additional Members Needed for the  
ACA Education Committee**

**. Host Agencies to assist with logistics  
for ACA Training Programs**

**Contact Pat:  
[info@accreditedcertifiers.org](mailto:info@accreditedcertifiers.org)**