



QUARTERLY REPORT

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Phil Unterschuetz retires from IFM

Farewell, Phil

As the organic industry has grown, many new farmers, processors, and suppliers have entered the industry. Sadly, sometimes our long-term supporters decide to retire. This is the case with Phil Unterschuetz.



Twenty-four years ago, Phil established Integrated Fertility Management, known as IFM, in response to a grower's request. In those early days of organics, it was difficult for organic growers to find supplies of approved fertilizers. Phil and a partner started IFM to fill this need. His company, IFM, became an important source of fertilizers, pesticides, and other supplies for small organic growers, particularly orchardists. In those years, growers were on their own, struggling to figure out how to produce tree fruits organically. Phil's background in forestry, soil science, disease control, and pest management helped fill that need, and he is proud that he was able to support the organic industry. Phil added: "I greatly admire the small growers for the work they do, and for their courage. The family farmers have made a tremendous difference in the organic movement."

Phil's support of sustainable agriculture was not limited to IFM. Over the years he served on several boards, most notably our own Organic Advisory Board (OAB). In addition, he attends the Tilth Producers Annual Conference every November. At this time, Phil is closing the doors of IFM, and planning for retirement. For the present time, he will remain active as a consultant and as a member of the Organic Advisory Board.

In the past 24 years, Phil has seen many changes in the organic industry. "Now we have figured out how to grow organic crops. The new challenge is to secure the integrity of organic products," said Phil. He believes that both large and small growers are important for the future of the organic movement. We thank Phil for his dedication to organic agriculture, and we accept the challenge of ensuring organic integrity, in partnership with all of our customers.

By Pamela Coleman, Organic Food Inspector

"The new challenge is to secure the integrity of organic products"

Inspector's Corner

If you export to Europe, you may receive an additional inspection ...

If you export products to Europe, expect to see some changes in your inspection procedures. In order for producers of organic products to have access to European organic markets they must be in compliance with European regulations. The WSDA **European Organic Verification Program** (EOVP) is a voluntary program that provides certification that crops are produced according to the European standards.

When the Organic Food Program was audited recently, the IFOAM auditors expressed concerns about keeping a clear separation between EOVP certified and non-EOVP certified products. That is, EOVP-certified crops may not be commingled with crops not allowed for export to Europe. These concerns are especially important for operators that have split production or parallel production.

Split production means that you grow or handle EOVP and non-EOVP certified crops. The non-EOVP certified crop could be NOP certified organic, transitional, or conventional. **Parallel production** is a specific type of split production. **Parallel production** means that you grow or handle both EOVP certified and non-EOVP certified crop of the same variety.

In order to address this issue, the inspectors have increased our focus on how crops are identified at harvest, and how crops are tracked at the warehouse and processors. This year, for the first time, the Organic Food Program will conduct surveillance inspections during harvest, if a producer has parallel production. These inspections may be announced or unannounced. Inspectors are looking for verification that procedures are in place so that EOVP fruit is kept separate, and can be distinguished from non-EOVP fruit when it leaves the orchard.

Warehouses also have an obligation to insure that at receiving they can identify lots of EOVP fruit, and track it separately through storage and packing. Inspectors will be looking to see if practices are adequate to verify EOVP certification of each lot of fruit, and ensure that only EOVP-certified fruit is exported to Europe.
By Mike Haskett, Organic Food Inspector

These photos were taken during harvest of EOVP-certified organic fruit.



Organic Food Program Gets Inspected

What goes around ... Comes around ...

The Organic Food Program (OFP) is accredited to perform certification services verifying compliance with USDA National Organic Program (NOP), ISO Guide 65 (European Union), and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM). This accreditation is what gives us permission to issue your organic certificates.

To maintain this accreditation, the entire organic program undergoes a rigorous audit by USDA and the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS). The auditors review all aspects of our operation to verify whether we are following the policies and procedures outlined in the Organic Program Manual. In essence, this Manual is like the Organic System Plan that producers and handlers develop and follow for organic certification. The Organic Program Manual describes our system for certifying producers and handlers. The auditors look through lots of files, and they evaluate letters, inspection reports, application forms, policies and procedures to see if we are in fact following our system of certification outlined in the Manual.

In addition, auditors accompany inspectors during an actual inspection to evaluate whether the inspector is following the appropriate procedures. In 2007, four inspections were observed by our auditors. At the end of the audit, during the exit interview, the office staff meets with the auditors to learn what they found, areas of the program that need strengthening, and specific corrective actions needed. In addition, a follow-up letter outlines the corrective actions we must address to maintain the accreditation status.

OFP improvements made and underway from 2007 audit findings:

- Reduce turnaround time from inspection to inspection response letters.
- Revise certification procedures to clearly identify the persons responsible for making certification decisions.
- Develop a policy addressing third party confidentiality.
- Provide fee estimates to crop and livestock producers.
- Publish a list of EOVP certified producers and handlers and update the list quarterly.
- Clarify the meaning of parallel production and conduct a 2nd inspection of farms that have parallel production. (See the Inspector's Corner for more information on inspections.)

After a recent audit by USDA, Miles McEvoy remarked:

"we do all this great work with lots of incredible detail and we only hear about the things we're doing wrong...that must be what our growers and handlers think when we do the inspection exit interviews and send letters that only note what's wrong with their organic operation..."

And in the end, what goes around does come back around - the information we get from the audit process helps us do a better job for our certified operations. Likewise, the information we give certified operations, helps producers and handlers do a better job at upholding the integrity of the organic industry and the consumer confidence that depends on it.

By Linda Condon, Organic Certification Coordinator, and Miles McEvoy, Organic Program Manager

BRAND NAME MATERIAL LIST UPDATE

October 3, 2007

This list is to be used as an addendum to the Brand Name Material List distributed to all new and renewal applicants for certification. All materials listed below are approved as of October 3, 2007. You may access a complete updated Brand Name Materials List at the WSDA Organic Food Program website:

<http://agr.wa.gov/foodanimal/organic/default.htm>.

PRODUCT NAME	COMPANY NAME	PRODUCT SUB-TYPE	PRODUCT TYPE	RESTRICTION
Agri-Verde	Cal Agri Products	Soil Amendment	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Cytomet	StarWeather Ag., LLC	Plant Starch	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Down To Earth Bio-Fish 7-7-2	Down To Earth Distributors	Blended Fertilizer	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Down To Earth Bio-Turf 8-3-5	Down To Earth Distributors	Blended Fertilizer	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Isomate-M Rosso	Pacific Biocontrol Corporation	Pheromones	Disease & Pest Control	Label Use Only
Natural Coat 56	HDH Agri Products LLC	Fruit Coating	Post Harvest Material	Label Use Only
Northwest Agricultural Products Stick-It Organic	Northwest Agricultural Products	Spray Adjuvant	Disease & Pest Control	Must be used with an approved pesticide only.
Organic Biolink Soil Food-Web Activator 1-0-0	Westbridge Agricultural Products	Soil Amendment	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Pro Natural Soil Quality Enhancer	Wilbur Ellis Co.	Biological Soil Amendment	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
Taegro	Novozymes Biologicals	Biological Fungicide	Disease & Pest Control	Label Use Only
USG BEN FRANKLIN No. 1 Brand Agricultural Gypsum	United State Gypsum Company	Gypsum	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None
USG Gypsum/Anhydrite Rock 160-80	United State Gypsum Company	Gypsum	Fertilizer & Soil Amendment	None



Organic Advisory Board Meeting in November

The WSDA Organic Advisory Board will be meeting in Yakima, Washington on Thursday, November 8, 2007 from 10 AM - 5 PM. The agenda includes: An Organic Program Update, Recommendations on dairy replacement animals, Revisions to the European Organic Program, Canadian Organic Standards, Accreditation and

Corrective Actions, Farmer's Market Surveillance, the new Organic Database, and a Materials Update. The agenda and directions to the meeting will be posted on the WSDA website - <http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic/default.htm>. Please contact Miles McEvoy at 360-902-1924, mmcevoy@agr.wa.gov for more information.

Classes on Sustainable Farming

This fall, farmers and those interested in becoming farmers have a unique opportunity. Selected county extension offices are now taking registrations for a course on "Sustainable Small Farming & Ranching." This evening course is part of an expanding series developed by the Cultivating Success program of Washington State University and the University of Idaho.

The 12-14 week course combines classroom and on-farm experience to give students lessons in technical aspects of farming along with practical whole farm management skills. Guest speakers range from research scientists to successful farmers. Evening lectures are supplemented with tours of local farm and market operations. Students also explore internet resources to obtain production and marketing information.

"This course was designed for beginning farmers and for current producers who are interested in taking their farm in a new direction," said Marcy Ostrom, Director of WSU's Small Farms Program.

Course topics include: Whole Farm Planning, Resource Evaluation, Direct Marketing, Sustainable Crop and Livestock Production, Ecological Soils Management, and Tools for Whole Farm Success.

"The final product is a whole farm plan that students will use to evaluate their goals and resources, and help them to assess what type of small farm enterprise is right for them," Ostrom said. "They also leave this class with a network of professional contacts and farmer mentors that they can turn to for advice and support." Students will have the skills to assess the feasibility of a potential on-farm enterprise.

The cost of the 12-14 week course ranges from \$125 - \$200. Funding for Cultivating Success is made possible by The USDA Risk Management Agency, USDA SARE, and USDA Higher Education Challenge Grants.

For information on course locations or for more details about the Cultivating Success Program see www.cultivatingsuccess.org or contact Mary Kempfert at: mkempfert@wsu.edu or (253) 445-4565. You may also contact Fred Berman, WSDA Small Farms Program Coordinator, at (360) 676-2059.

Calendar of Events

Sustainable Ag Expo

November 1-2. Paso Robles, CA. Crop specific and general seminars featuring researchers, extension consultants and growers. Call 805-369-2288 or visit: <http://www.vineyardteam.org/events/agexpo.php>.

Tilth Producers Conference— Cultivating the Family Farm

November 9-11. Yakima, WA. A conference for growers, retailers, and processors, on issues facing the rapidly changing organic industry. For more information visit: www.tilthproducers.org/conference.htm; contact Nancy Allen at 206-442-7620; or email: nancy@tilthproducers.org

Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Conference and Trade Fair

November 13-14. Kennewick, WA. Contact PNVA at 509-585-5460 or visit: www.pnva.org.

Focus on Farming IV Conference: From Soils to Sales

November 29. Lynnwood, WA. Topic sessions range from on-farm storage to water rights, farmers markets, and energy use. Call John Roney at 425-377-7112; or visit http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County_Services/Focus_on_Farming/Information/2007Conference/

Pacific Northwest Grains Conference

November 28-30. Spokane, WA. Growers from around the state gather together to network, meet new people and set policy for the coming year. For more information call 208-345-0706; or visit <http://www.idahograin.org/igpaconvention.htm>

Do You Export to Canada?

Canadian Export Information Needed!!

Currently, organic products that are certified in accordance with the USDA National Organic Standards can be sold, labeled, and represented as organic in Canada. This is due to the fact that organic products in Canada have not been regulated; organic certification and labeling claims have been largely on a voluntary basis. However, in December 2008 the Canadian National Organic Standards will go into effect.

Under the new Canadian regulation, products that are sold in Canada after December 2008 must be specifically certified in accordance with the new Canadian standards; products certified in accordance with the USDA National Organic Standards will not be considered “organic” in Canada as the organic regulations for the two countries differ. In addition, the agency that is certifying the products must be specifically accredited to implement and enforce the Canadian Standards. Our office is hopeful that USDA and Canada will come to a reciprocity agreement and accept each other’s standards as equivalent. However, in order to ensure that there is not a disruption in trade for organic certified operations, we need to be prepared for the possibility that this agreement will not happen before December 2008.

WSDA Organic Program is currently doing an assessment of the organic operations and products that will be affected by the new Canadian regulation. If your company is currently exporting organic products to Canada, or plans on exporting in the future, please let us know by providing the following information:

- Your Company Name and Certification Number
- The organic products exported to Canada
- The amount of each organic product exported to Canada

In addition, if you produce crops or ingredients that are used in organic products that will be exported to Canada by your customers, please let us know this information; these ingredients will also require additional certification if a US and Canada agreement is not reached.

Please send this information by email or fax to Brenda Book, email: bbook@agr.wa.gov, fax 360-902-2087. Please indicate “Canadian Export Information” in the subject line of your communication. If you have any additional questions or concerns about organic exports to Canada, please contact Brenda at 360-902-2090. *By Brenda Book, Organic Certification Coordinator.*



Handlers and Processors:

Did you know that if you are handling, processing, or repacking a product for another company (a private label), then you must submit the labels for your file as well?

Keeping your file up-to-date saves time for inspectors, reviewers, and YOU!

Welcome, Lisa!

Lisa Brines joined the Organic Food Program in September as an Organic Materials Review Specialist. She will provide registration services for organic materials to be included on our Brand Name Material List. Lisa recently completed a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Washington, where she conducted research on the role of metals, such as iron, zinc, and copper, in biological systems. Her goal is to apply her knowledge of chemistry to real-world scenarios, and she is particularly interested in sustainable agriculture. She is originally from Spokane and is a lifelong resident of Washington State. We are fortunate to have someone with Lisa's background on our team. Welcome, Lisa!



Lisa Brines,
Organic Materials Review Specialist

The Organic Food Program Continues to Grow -

Two New Staff Members Added to Better Serve Our Customers



Elizabeth Apley,
Organic Food Program Receptionist

Welcome, Elizabeth!

Elizabeth Apley joined us in July as the new Organic Food Program Receptionist. She formerly worked at a veterinary hospital where she gained a great deal of customer service experience. Her family includes her husband and their two children, a son and a daughter. Elizabeth's hobbies include scrapbooking, boating, family time, and socializing with friends. Elizabeth is very excited about her new position and looks forward to having a future with the Organic Food Program family. Elizabeth has been doing a great job and has been a pleasure to work with. Welcome, Elizabeth, we are glad to have you as a member of the family.

WSDA Organic Food Program

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National Survey of Organic Apple Growers

This fall, USDA's Washington Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will be contacting approximately 225 certified organic apple growers for the Agricultural Resource Management Survey. The purpose of this survey is to collect information about production practices, costs, and pest management decisions. This is an important survey for the organic community, as this is the first time that NASS will be concentrating on organic apple production. This survey is a tool for organic producers to let USDA and policy makers know what it takes to produce a quality organic crop. Please take this opportunity to inform the public about how you are producing a healthy food source for US consumers in an environmentally friendly way. *By Matthew Pantler, USDA-NASS*

Mission Statement of the Organic Food Program

The WSDA Organic Food Program protects consumers and supports the organic food industry by ensuring the integrity of organic food products. The program certifies organic producers and handlers to US National Organic Standards and enforces organic standards in Washington State. The program supports the development of export markets by providing certification to foreign organic standards.

“Soils respond to affection.”

Phillip Unterschuetz