

Executive Director Report for December 2022

- Started an introduction with Ed Maltby from NODPA, Abby Youngblood from NOC, Kate Mendenhall from OFA, Laura Holm, Megan DeBates and Jo Mirinda from OTA, Kelly Koorman from CCOF (introductory 1:1's)
- Participated in OTA's Dairy Council Meeting and Farmers Advisory Council Meeting
 - o Dairy Council Meeting:
 - Organic Feedstuffs have skyrocketed due in large part to the war in Ukraine (grains) and India ceasing all exports (soybeans)
 - Disaster relief letter was sent out for signatures/ support
 - CCOF advised on the funds given by CDFA to be dispersed to ANY organic farmers (not just CCOF clients). Applications are now due by 12/9/2022.
 - One major challenge is that new, potential farmers are given plenty of opportunities for help to get started but there is very little available for long time organic farmers.
 - Rail strike could potentially create an issue for farmers getting concentrates from rail. There is bi-partisan support, but it isn't unanimous. Biden stepped in and signed a bill to avert the strike for now but this issue isn't completely resolved.
 - Texas Department of Ag Accreditation – NOP tried to work with them. They refused to comply. TDA is not consistently enforcing and will lose their accreditation.
 - 2023 Workplan Discussion
 - Producer viability and supply chain – will tie into Farm Bill
 - o Organic Specific DMC program
 - Elevate farmer voices to decision makers on farm bill priorities
 - Education of organic dairy consumer benefits and advocacy
 - Energy independence

- Leverage organic opportunity toolkit for organic dairy ([Organic Opportunity Communications Toolkit - Download Form | OTA](#))
 - Promoting organic dairy as a climate smart solution
 - Farmers Advisory Council Meeting:
 - Reviewed and endorsed OTA's Farm Bill Platform:
 - policy priorities include continuous improvement and accountability to organic standards
 - Technical assistance, conservation, and climate
 - Research and data collection
 - Crop Insurance and Risk Management
 - Certification Cost- Share
 - Market and Infrastructure Development
 - Discussed nominees for the OTA Farmer of the Year Award
 - Learned about OTA's activities related to Organic Feedstuff Trade Relief
 - OTA specifically asked us to sign on to their National Dairy Crisis Business Letter (attached)
- Set up weekly phone check ins with Joseph Button from Straus
 - He keeps me updated on the meetings Straus is involved with, the connections they have made and opportunities to pass along to our farmers (like CCOF extending the deadline on the applications from 12/2 to 12/9).
- Listened in on the Senate Ag Committee Farm Bill Hearing
 - One major point that has not been brought up in other discussions I have been a part of was brought to the table during this meeting – China purchasing our farmland in the US and US farmers exporting alfalfa to China.
- Received tutorials from Darby on the website, constant contact, etc.
 - Website and social media platforms are being updated. I will be reaching out to each board member to get updates on biography.
- Started jotting down ideas for fundraising/ membership drives
 - Post cards to send to Stakeholder members:

- Ad space on our website
 - Ad space in our newsletters
 - Constant contact video options
- Post cards to send to farmers:
 - List membership options and contribution options
- Testimonials on website of farmers who have experienced benefits of WODPA
- Looked into Zach's suggestion of the Ag Funding Assistance Program
 - We should sign up ... this provides a list of specific assistance & grant programs for both dairy and organic. Annually: \$299.90; Monthly: \$29.99
- Mercaris update: All board members should have received an email gaining personal access to Mercaris information. Ryan has only received one milk statement example and is requesting more. In order for us to create a report showing regional or even overall reporting on pricing, etc. we need samples of milk statements to be sent to Mercaris so they can set their system up and we can start logging info monthly to get to our end goals of using this as a tool to be treated fairly and stay in business. If you are willing to send your milk statement to Mercaris directly, please email it to ryan.koory@mercaris.com. As a reminder, this is a third party company who is required by law to keep info confidential so no one else will have access to the exact info you send over.
 - Organic Purchaser's Price Report, Organic Dairy Update for November and Organic Market Update for November all attached.
 - Access for Board members – if you do not have access, let me know.