

## **Executive Director Report for May 2023**

### **FDA Labeling Comments submitted.**

1. Attached

### **OTA's Organic Week DC Report:**

1. Attached

### **Spring 2023 NOSB Meeting highlights:**

- a. OTA's Summary is attached and covers a full summary of the meeting.

### **ODMAP update:**

1. The announcement should be coming any day. As soon as the announcement is made, applications will be made available at your local FSA office.
2. FSA Staff clarified that payment will be 75% of \$1.10.
  - a. We can reach out and start urging the release of the remaining 25% as soon as the program is officially opened. Organic Dairies are going to be asked for an attestation to be submitted with their application. This attestation should be taken VERY seriously and should include your production numbers from the past 5 years along with input costs for the past 5 years to convey that need for more the remaining 25% and a safety net program to be enacted. Your attestation must be accurate!
  - b. The maximum amount per farm entity is 5 million lbs.
  - c. Volume is based on 2022 production numbers.
3. Marketing costs were based on conventional numbers since organic specific numbers are not available. This became a main ask during my Hill visits last Thursday.
4. The application period will only be 60 days.
5. These funds are through the Commodity Credit Corp (CCC) and are not automatically included in the FARM Bill so money needs to be allocated and disbursed before the next Farm Bill.
6. A farm must currently be in business at the time of application to receive funds.
7. Once the application is submitted, funds should be received within a week.
8. Fun fact: Sheep & Goat dairies are also included in program.

### **OFA Meeting Updates (4/17, 5/1, 5/8):**

1. Senator Welch was interested in moving forward on a marker bill which was introduced May 11.
  - a. [Sen. Welch Introduces Bill to Reduce Obstacles to Organic Agriculture - Welch \(senate.gov\)](#)
    - i. WODPA has now been added as a supporter.
    - ii. A bill will soon be introduced in the House as well.
2. Senate Ag Committee hearing on conservation programs
  - a. <https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/conservation-in-the-farm-bill-making-conservation-programs-work-for-farmers-and-ranchers>
3. OFA Organic Dairy Team working on getting costs together for organic dairy specifically.

### **Organic Cost Share Announcement**

1. Announcement attached. Certified Organic Farmers are now eligible for reimbursement up to \$750 per year up to 75% of their annual cost of organic certification per scope.

### **Mercaris Update:**

1. Quarter 1 (January, February, March) Final statements & market adjustment payments were due to Mercaris (data@mercaris.com) April 25<sup>th</sup>.
2. We have our first report!! (attached)

### **Origin of Livestock Information Collection Notice**

1. NOP is seeking public comment on the burdens, costs, and other effects of the information collection required by the final rule, which adds a process by which organic operations may request a variance, or exception, from certain livestock sourcing requirements. Online comments are encouraged. Information on how to submit comments can be found on Regulations.gov, and by clicking the link below. The 60-day comment period will close on June 26, 2023.
  - a. [Federal Register :: Origin of Livestock; New Information Collection](#)

### **Financial Opportunities:**

1. The Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP- Grassland) is open for enrollment
  - a. [CRP Grasslands \(usda.gov\)](#)
  - b. Signups are open from April 17 – May 26, 2023
2. The Emergency Livestock Disaster Assistance Program (ELAP) deadline for 2022 has been extended
  - a. [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish \(ELAP\) \(usda.gov\)](#)
  - b. Applications have been extended to June 2, 2023
3. Cost Share Announcement

### **Reminders:**

1. Strengthening Organic Enforcement Rule goes into full effect March 19, 2024.
  - a. In anyone is in need of a certifier, please visit [Organic Integrity Database \(usda.gov\)](#)