

the Integrity

Magazine of the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA)

WODPA Announces 10th Annual Fall Conference and Organic Trade Show Tuesday and Wednesday, October 27-28, 2015

WODPA's Annual Fall Conference and Trade Show will take place October 27 and 28, 2015, at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center, Oregon State University, 725 SW 26th Street, Corvallis, Oregon, 97331. Please see our website, www.wodpa.com, and the back page of this issue of the Integrity for registration information.

The two day event will feature Board elections, educational sessions, a farm tour, a trade show, hot topic updates, and time to network.

Elections

Elections will be held for Secretary, and Treasurer. We will also be electing Directors, as State Representatives, for the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Texas. Producers interested in running for any of the positions should notify Mario Avelar, Nominations Committee Chair, at 707-496-2955 or Ward Burroughs, Committee Member, at 209-678-5967. Job Descriptions for Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Director can be found on our website at www.wodpa.com. You can also obtain them via email by contacting Richard H. Mathews at rmathews51@comcast.net or 717-457-0100.

Educational Sessions (Speaker profiles occur later in this article.)

Keynote: Challenges ahead for USDA Organic Seal:

Mr. Tom Willey, T&D Willey Farms, 9:30 a.m. Tuesday.

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Managing for a drought resilient farm: Practices that build soil and pay long-term dividends – A Producer Perspective:

Mr. Cheyenne Christianson, Grazing Acres, 11:15 a.m. Tuesday.

Scientific Pasture Profitability Panel: Connecting the dots between soil, grass & profits. Moderated by

Mr. Jon Bansen, Double J Jerseys. 1:15 p.m. Tuesday.

- All pasture is not created equal – the secret to profitable pasture starts in the soil. **Cynthia A. Daley, Ph.D., California State University Chico, Organic Dairy Education & Research Program**

• Using weekly pasture growth & utilization measurements to make management decisions on Oregon dairies. **Mr. Troy Downing, M.S., Oregon State University Cooperative Extension. Dairy Specialist**

- How to Utilize Your Herd's Genetic Potential: **Zoetis** 7:15 a.m. Wednesday.

• *Maximizing Employee Potential: Family and Non-Family*: **Drs. Pat and Paul Frishkoff, Leadership in Family Enterprise, LLC**, 9:15 a.m. Wednesday.

- *Economic benchmarks for the most successful farms & how these top programs plan for transition to the next generation*: **Earl Doman, CPA, Woodburn, OR**, 11:00 a.m. Wednesday.

Farm Tour

At 2:00 p.m. we will depart from the Hilton Garden Inn lobby for the **Double J Jerseys Farm Tour; bus transportation will be provided**. Farm Tour Topics will include: Pasture management, grazing program, late season grasses that perform, calf program, and forage budgeting. **Double J Jerseys** is located at 13405 Elkins Road, Monmouth, Oregon.

Everyone attending the conference is invited to participate in the tour. To help with planning we ask that you notify Darby Heffner if you will be participating in the tour. Darby can be reached at wodpa@outlook.com.

Trade Show

Last year's trade show featured 32 companies that provide products and services to organic dairymen. This year's facility provides for a larger and more centrally located trade show. Our goal is 35 participating companies. All participating companies will be given an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves during the conference. See our website (wodpa.com) for a listing of the companies that have registered to date. As of September 23, 2015, the following companies have registered for the trade show:

Abs
 Agri King Nutrition, Inc
 All West / Select Sires
 All West Naturals
 Alltech
 Big Dog Solar
 Blue River Hybrids
 Boehringer Ingelheim
 California State University, Chico – Organic Dairy Program
 Cascade Dairy Service
 Crv Usa
 Crystal Creek Dairy Service
 Delaval Dairy Service
 Ernst Irrigation
 Excel Dairy Service, Inc.
 Fodder Works
 Gallagher North America
 Genesis Feed Products
 Genex Cooperative, Inc.
 ImmuCell Corp
 J.d. Heiskell & Co.
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 Redmond Minerals
 Spalding Lab's
 Thorvin
 Tmr & Perma-Guard, Inc.
 Udder Comfort
 Zoetis

Speaker Profiles

Mr. Tom Willey, T&D Willey Farms. Tom Willey and his wife, Denesse, have operated T&D Willey Farms, a seventy five acre farm in Madera, California since 1981. Certified Organic by CCOF since 1987 they grow a wide array of Mediterranean vegetables. Tom is a passionate advocate for local food prominence. Currently, he is working closely with a number of organizations urging Whole Foods to modify its proprietary produce rating system which devalues the USDA Certified Organic Seal.

Mr. Cheyenne Christianson, Grazing Acres.

The Christianson's bought a run-down farm in July of 1993 and started grazing in 1994 as a way to produce high quality on-farm feed. His innovative grazing management strategy boosts soil fertility and as a result, improves the quality of his grass, a phenomenon Cheyenne says is crucial during drought. Northern WI suffered severe drought for several



years - forcing the Christianson's to "think out of the box" – and focus on ways to manage the farm with less rain. Cheyenne has become a master grazer and owes his success to the quality and quantity of his grass.



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LeeRoy Horton with daughter Mariam
 Roadrunner Organic Alfalfa Field, Christmas Valley, OR

THE CEO reports to US



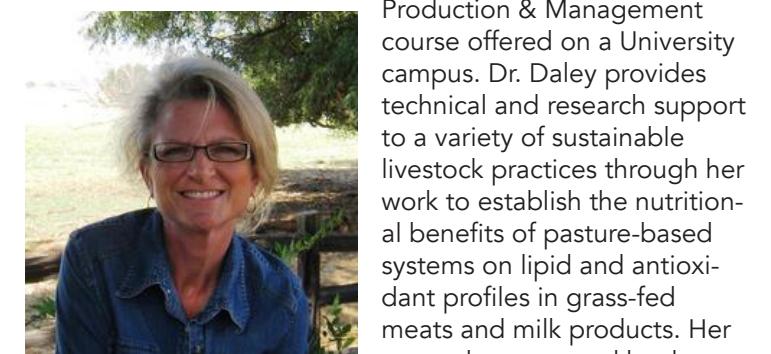
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research on the effects of fodder feeding on rumen function. When she's not teaching class or doing research related activities, she's writing, or providing support to the eOrganic on-line educational database (www.eorganic.info). eOrganic is where much of the most relevant work in organic dairy production is supported.

Mr. Troy Downing, M.S., Oregon State University Cooperative Extension. Troy Downing has worked for 25 years for Oregon State University and is a professor in Animal Science. Early in his career he worked on campus managing the university dairy, conducting research and teaching. The past eighteen years he has worked as a dairy extension agent conducting applied research

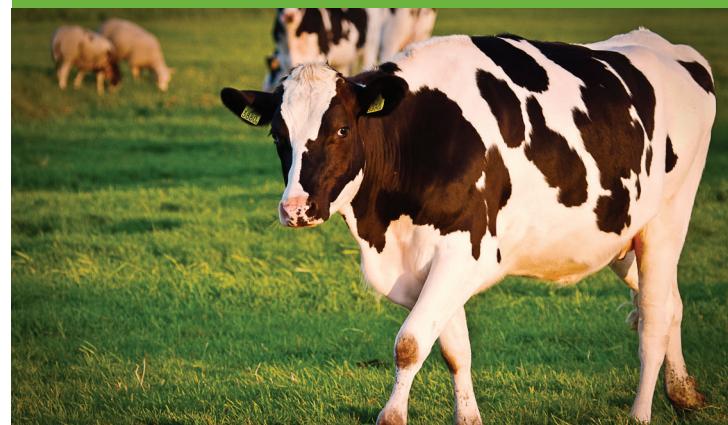


Production & Management course offered on a University campus. Dr. Daley provides technical and research support to a variety of sustainable livestock practices through her work to establish the nutritional benefits of pasture-based systems on lipid and antioxidant profiles in grass-fed meats and milk products. Her research, supported by the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education fund, was recently published in the Nutrition Journal. This research continues to provide justification for "value added" nutritional labeling for farmer direct marketing of grass-fed products. In addition to lipid research, Cindy is working to develop sustainable feeding strategies by enhancing forage quality through soil amendments. She recently completed



and teaching with the commercial dairy industry in Oregon. His extension programs have primarily focused on waste management and forages. He has also spent considerable time conducting applied research that he uses as the basis of his educational programs. Projects

If we are what we eat, isn't it time we start thinking about what they eat?



have included developing systems to monitor nutrient cycling on farms, animal waste management planning, pasture variety trials looking at soluble and structural carbohydrate digestibility and management of dairy grazing systems.

Drs. Pat and Paul Frishkoff, Leadership in Family Enterprise, LLC. Both were raised in business-owning families. Pat launched the Austin Family Business Program at Oregon State University, which will celebrate 30 years this fall. She also held the A. E. Coleman Chair in Family Business. Paul was Professor of Accounting in the Lundquist College of Business at the University of Oregon. Their tag-team presentations are



interactive, informative and humorous. You will take away key questions and suggestions for approaching them in your business. They will alert you to snags and offer secrets for success. Pat's background and family-business focus is agriculture. Pat leads with systems development, specifics of planning, and asking the hard questions. Paul weaves in



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career assessment, communication skills, and a wicked sense of humor.

Mr. Earl Doman. Mr. Doman is a Certified Public Accountant practicing in Woodburn, Oregon. He has been in public accounting since 1963 and does not intend to retire. A preparer of estate tax returns, he believes that everyone should understand and prepare for how estate taxes will affect their estate.

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President's Message

Hello everyone,

Wow another dry, hot summer! But Fall, rain, and the harvest season is here. It may have been dry, but it's better than the rains and floods that the Midwest received this summer. For all of us up North, the early harvest season means we'll all be finished before our conference! Hint, hint.

You know, we do have a lot to be thankful for! We all should have had some good raises since last fall. Maybe more to come! Granted it will take a while for some to catch up. Let's also be thankful that we're not on the "roller coaster" some of our neighbors are on. So how do we avoid the "roller coaster"? Let's keep an eye on how much our markets need. WODPA has been working on several issues lately to keep our incomes continuing. Pay prices are always the number one issue to watch. Origin of livestock, Organic Research and Promotion Programs, and the sunset

of the Materials List has taken up a lot of effort. We definitely need to thank our Executive Director Richard Mathews for his expertise in weaving his way through Washington DC!!! If we want to avoid the "roller coaster" of our neighbors, we all, small, large, independent, and members of coops all need to keep working together!

I just received an email this week announcing 3 conventional herd dispersals. Three dispersals in 2 counties which have about 129 dairies total including the organic dairies. That's about 2.3% farms going to auction in one email! As of Aug 2015, Wisconsin had about 9800 dairies. In Wisconsin the same 2.3% would be 225 dairies announcing herd dispersal in one email! Let's not talk about rumors of other dairies.

To summarize this all up; let's be thankful for what we have going. To avoid the roller coaster; we ALL need to be diligent, we absolutely cannot become complacent. Last year's WODPA conference was a barn burner for dairymen; couldn't have been a better conference! With all of us working together and supporting WODPA there will be many more prosperous years and conferences to come.

Thank you very much:

Andrew Dykstra, President



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Executive Director's Message

First, I thank each of the producers who have provided WODPA with financial support this year.

I also extend a warm welcome to our 2015 Associate Members. A special thank you goes out to our 2015 conference sponsors for their generosity and to the many trade

show vendors participating in our trade show. I thank those of you who take out advertisements in this publication. Finally, I thank WODPA's board members for their hard work and dedication.

WODPA's membership benefits from the educational seminars, conference forums, newsletters and collective efforts to stay abreast of government regulations that affect organic dairy production. All of you play a big

part in WODPA's quest to enable organic dairy farmers to maintain the sustainability of organic dairy farming in the Western Region. THANK YOU!

Thanks to a group of 14 dedicated organic dairy producers, the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) was created in 2006. Within 6 months, this hard working group created WODPA's overall structure and held the first WODPA conference. That conference was held October 10 and 11, 2006, in Santa Nella, California. This year your WODPA is holding its 10th Annual Conference and Trade Show on October 27 and 28, 2015 in Corvallis, Oregon.

I encourage all organic dairy producers, processors, certifiers, allied entities, and organic consumers to attend this year's conference. Your attendance is a great way to show support for the ONLY organic dairy organization working specifically for organic dairymen in the Western United States.

This is a critical year for organic dairy producers due to 5 impactful issues involving the USDA in Washington DC. For this reason alone every organic dairy producer should attend and participate in this year's conference.

During the first day we will introduce the issues, which are:

1. USDA has published a proposed rule on origin of livestock.
2. Approval for all livestock materials is expiring unless renewed and the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) is considering nonrenewal of several.
3. USDA has published a proposed rule regarding exemption of organic products from assessment under the various commodity promotion laws.
4. USDA is moving forward on the Organic Trade Association's application for implementation of an Organic Check-Off Program.



5. USDA is working on a proposed rule regarding animal welfare.

During the Wednesday morning business meeting we will provide all attendees with an update on each of these issues. The update will include information on what the USDA has and is doing and what WODPA has and is doing. We will also seek your opinion on how WODPA should proceed in responding to these issues.

New this year is a producer only breakfast meeting on the 27th and a Zoetis sponsored producer breakfast and educational presentation on the 28th. When you register, please indicate whether you will be attending the breakfasts.

This year's conference will once again feature outstanding educational sessions presented by knowledgeable experts in their field. See the conference article beginning on page one of this issue. I encourage everyone to visit with the many trade show participants. The conference would not be possible without the support of the trade show participants and our sponsors.

Everyone attending the conference is invited to participate in the tour of Double J Jerseys. To help us plan transportation, please indicate, when you register, whether you will be participating in the tour.

The fee for conference registration is \$100 if payment is received on or before October 13, 2014. The fee increases to \$125 on October 14, 2014. Please note that the conference registration fee does not cover the full cost of meals for each conference attendee. To minimize the chances of over ordering meal servings, we ask that attendees register early. By registering early, you will help us control the total food cost and prevent food waste. Please see the back page for registration and lodging details.

All western organic dairy producers are invited to run for a position on the Board. This year elections will be held for Secretary, and Treasurer. We will also be electing Directors, as State Representatives, for the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Texas. Producers interested in one of these positions should notify Mario Avelar, Nominations Committee Chair, at 707-496-2955 or Ward Burroughs, Committee Member, at 209-678-5967. Job Descriptions for Secretary, Treasurer, and Board of Director can be found on our website at www.wodpa.com. You can also obtain them via email by contacting Richard H. Mathews at rmathews51@comcast.net or 717-457-0100.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the conference.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Mathews, Executive Director



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Secretary's Message

Hi Everyone,

I hope that the summer treated you well!

The conference committee and I have been working very hard on this year's 10th Annual Conference and Trade Show; the plans are coming together very nicely. When selecting



this year's speakers the conference committee agreed to cover a wide variety of topics to provide dairymen with as much "bang for their buck" as possible. We are confident that the speakers will provide valuable information that you can put to use on your operation as soon as you get home.

We also have had fantastic feedback from trade show vendors and the company line up looks like one of the best we

have had. There are many companies that have not been in representation at any of the WODPA trade shows in the past. You can see the full list updated daily on the website at wodpa.com.

New to the conference this year, breakfast will be provided both mornings. Tuesday, WODPA will hold a producers only breakfast from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. On Wednesday morning, Zoetis will sponsor a free producer's breakfast. During breakfast they will present on *How to Utilize Your Herds Genetic Potential*, this starts at 7:00 a.m. Please plan on attending both events.

Last year 189 people attended the conference and 32 vendors participated in the trade show. Please make the extra effort to not miss out on this year's conference. Come hear our speakers, visit with the vendors, and network with your fellow dairymen. A good time is sure to be had by everyone!

On a different topic all together, I wanted to alert you to WODPA's new Classified's webpage. This page helps dairymen sell and purchase equipment, feed, livestock, etc. WODPA Classified Ad's is the perfect place to publish an ad targeted to organic dairy producers. Advertising on the site is FREE for all organic dairy producers and just \$25 per month for all others. Please check it out at www.wodpa.com for full details.

I am really looking forward to this year's conference and hope to see you all in Corvallis.

Thank you,
Darby Heffner, Secretary

THANK YOU! WODPA thanks its dairy producer sponsors for their much valued financial contributions to the execution of WODPA's mission. It is through their generous financial support that WODPA is able to pursue its mission to preserve, protect, and ensure the sustainability and integrity of organic dairy farming across the west.

Our calendar year 2015 dairy producer sponsors, through 9/16/15, are:

\$1.50 per Milking Cow

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THE WAIT IS OVER

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THANK YOU, Associate Members! WODPA thanks its Associate Members for their support of WODPA and its mission to preserve, protect, and ensure the sustainability and integrity of organic dairy farming across the west.

Our calendar year 2015 **Associate Members**, through **9/16/15**, are:

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Shafer Commodities, Inc
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Myth Busting Commonly Held Beliefs About Organic: Article 1 ~ The science behind organic production ~

C.A.Daley, Ph.D. Organic Dairy Education & Research Program California State University - Chico

The last 10 years has produced a number of interesting peer reviewed studies that provide the organic industry with the "science" needed to "debunk" the myths. Historically, there had been tremendous resistance by many land grant institutions to participate in organic research. This was due, in part, to outside pressures from private sector organizations with big money and strong biases against biological farming.

The USDA at long last institutionalized organic research by dedicating \$17.5 Million to the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative. This is thanks to the efforts of a strong lobby such as the Organic Farming Research Foundation, California Certified Organic Farmers and the Organic Trade Association. Naturally, this allocation is a mere drop in the bucket compared to the hundreds of millions spent on R&D for mainstream conventional agriculture by the USDA. Even so, it's a place to start.

The following information is all peer reviewed "science." It provides insight into why organic farming practices are the perfect solution for a hot/dry planet and invalidates many commonly held beliefs about organic.

Organic Myth #1: "Organic farming can't feed the world". There are multiple long-term studies, conducted in the U.S., that clearly demonstrate organic farming practices provide more long term, sustained abundance, compared to



the average conventional practice. The most recent study was conducted by Iowa State University (ISU) and published by the American Society of Agronomy in 2013. The "Long-Term Agro-ecological Research (LTAR) Experiment"

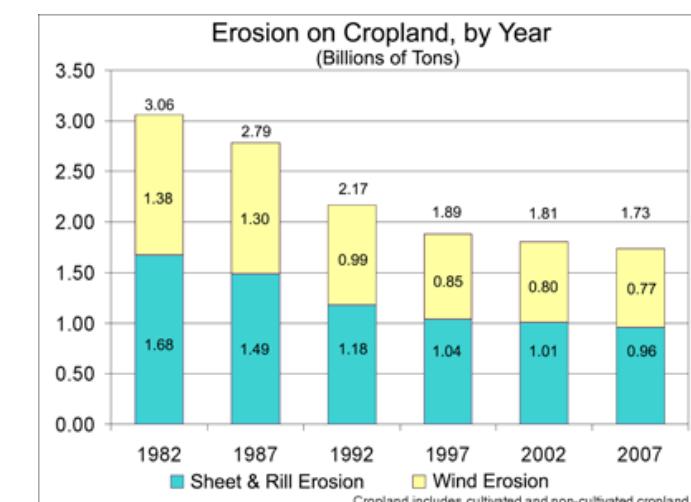
began in 1998. By 2002 (4 years later), all organic cropping systems were producing at similar levels of productivity as their conventional counterparts. In 2009 the soil

organic carbon (SOC), total nitrogen, and extractable K and Ca were 5.7%, 9.5%, 14.2% and 10.8% higher in the organic

soils respectively. In addition, the biological activity in organic soils was 40% higher.¹

Of course, there have been a number of single season contrasts conducted under less than desirable soil conditions where intensive chemical-based agriculture out performed organic. These types of studies have given rise to the myth that organic agriculture cannot "feed the world". Unfortunately, these contrasts do not truly represent the production potential of an "organic system" (emphasis on the word system). They simply serve as a reminder that our soils have become depleted by over tillage, monoculture and nitrogen-base fertilizer use.

The good news is that degraded soils can be rehabilitated and revitalized. Dead soil seems to respond well to compost (a soil probiotic) and animal manures, coupled with minimum



or no-till and organic crop rotations. In particular, crop rotations that include legumes for the additional nitrogen fixation seem to recover at a faster pace. Recovery rates are dependent on soil type and the degree to which the soil has been

Table 1. Effects of surface residue cover on runoff and soil loss.

Residue Cover	Runoff	Soil Loss
%	% of rain	tons/acre
0	45	12.4
41	40	3.2
71	26	1.4
93	0.5	0.3

abused. Once the "engine" recovers, the organic yields meet or exceed conventional cropping systems without all the

¹ Delate, K., et al., 2013. The Long-Term Agroecological Research (LTAR) Experiment Supports Organic Yields, Soil Quality, and Economic Performance in Iowa. ACSESS DL: doi:10.1094/CM-2013-0429-02-RS

expensive inputs.² The secret to crop productivity lies within the soil.

Not only has our nation's soil been depleted nutritionally, much of our topsoil has eroded due to conventional tillage. The National Resources Inventory (NRI) has shown a steady rate of soil loss over the course of the last several decades.³

To better understand these losses, Purdue University studied the impact of soil cover (plant residue) on soil erosion. Data from this study are found in Table 1. Bare soils do not absorb rainfall at the same rate as covered soils. Under these conditions (zero residue cover), nearly ½ of the rainfall is lost or not absorbed. The runoff steals topsoil at a rate of 4-12 tons/acre depending on topography. Sediment from runoff settles in our waterways and rivers, carrying with it pesticide residues and fertilizers that have devastating impacts on aquatic species. One extreme example of impaired waters is the "dead zone" found in the Gulf of Mexico. This area can no longer support life as a result of excessive nutrient flow from agricultural runoff into the Mississippi River. These additional nutrients caused a mega algae bloom that has literally sucked the life out of these waters.⁴ Both nitrogen and phosphorus can stimulate algal growth and contribute to hypoxic situations downstream. What most farmers don't realize is that less than 50% of applied conventional fertilizers are actually taken up by crops; 30-40% is leached into ground and surface waters and the rest is lost into the atmosphere.⁵

The data is clear, organic production can feed the world. In fact, organic is the only type of production agriculture that can accomplish this goal without destroying the planet in the process.^{6,7}

Organic Myth #2 "Organic farming is inefficient"

The Rodale Institute conducted one of the longest running side-by-side comparisons of organic vs. conventional farming in our history. Their data shows organic systems used 45% less energy than conventional systems and was 28% higher in production efficiency (inputs/outputs).

Rodale also demonstrated that organic production

² Ahmad W., et al., 2014. Recovery of organic fertility in degraded soil through fertilization and crop rotation. J Saudi Society of Ag Sci. 13:92-99.

³ <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/nra/nri/results/?cid=stelprdb1041887>

⁴ David, M.B., L.E. Drinkwater, and G.F. McIsaac, "Sources of nitrate yields in the Mississippi River Basin," Journal of Environmental Quality 39 (2010): 1657-1667.

⁵ Smil, V., "Nitrogen in crop production: An account of global flows," Global Biogeochemical Cycles 13 (1999): 647-662.

⁶ <https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/CT/CT-1.html>

⁷ Pimentel D., et al., Organic and Conventional Farming Systems: Environmental and Economic Issues: July 2005 Report 05-1

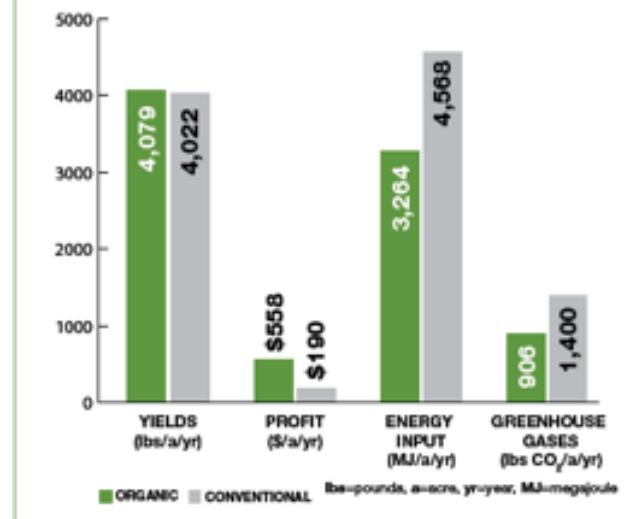
outperformed conventional under drought conditions, due in large part to increased soil organic matter.⁸ Researchers also learned organic farming reduced greenhouse gas emissions per unit of production and sequestered more carbon from the atmosphere.

Organic farming is not "inefficient", it's actually MORE efficient at producing food per unit of input than a more conventional approach. It also treads more lightly on the planet in the process.

Organic Myth #3 "Organic food is no different from conventional"

Studies have shown that organically grown apples, tomatoes, strawberries, and blueberries—have higher levels of certain minerals and phyto-nutrients than their non-organic counterparts. The University of California, Davis, examined the differences in the flavonoid content of organically and non-organically grown tomatoes. The study was conducted over a 10-year period. It showed that the levels of quercetin, the major flavonoid found in tomatoes, were 79% higher in organic tomatoes than in non-organic. Levels of kaempferol were 97% higher in the organic tomatoes.⁹ Both compounds

COMPARISON OF FST ORGANIC AND CONVENTIONAL SYSTEMS



⁸ Rodale Institute, "The Farming Systems Trial"

⁹ Mitchell, A.E., Y.-J. Hong, E. Koh, D.M. Barrett, D.E. Bryant, R.F. Denison, and S. Kaffka, "Ten-year comparison of the influence of organic and conventional crop management practices on the content of flavonoids in tomatoes," The Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry 55 (2007): 6154 -6159.

are potent antioxidants that support immune function.

The Agricultural Research Service study found that organic highbush blueberries had significantly higher levels of fructose, glucose, malic acid, phenolics, anthocyanins and antioxidant activity than fruit grown non-organically.¹⁰ During a two-year study at Washington State University, researchers compared 13 different strawberry varieties grown organically and conventionally. The organic strawberries had an 8.5% higher total antioxidant activity, 9.7% more ascorbic acid and 10.5% more phenolic compounds than non-organic strawberries.¹¹

Organically grown fruits and vegetables are more nutritionally dense than their non-organic counterparts and provide an extra boost of vitamins and minerals along with richer flavors. In addition to higher levels of phyto-nutrients, organic foods are significantly lower in pesticide residues that have been linked to chronic disease and certain types of cancer.^{12,13,14}

Organic differences can also be found in animal products. Organic milk comes from cows grazed on pasture as a requirement for certification. Lush forage diets produce milk with higher conjugated linoleic acid content.¹⁵ This potent antioxidant is just one of many phyto-nutrients that distinguish organic milk from its conventional counterparts. So the next time someone says "milk is milk", you will have the data on your side.

Conclusions

You should feel great pride as an organic farmer. You have had the courage and the fortitude to step out from the pack as pioneer in the ecological farming movement. We all come to organic for a number of reasons. In the end, we all want to know that we made these changes in our farming operations for the right reasons.

¹⁰ Wang, S.Y., C.-T. Chen, W. Sciarappa, C.Y. Wang, and M.J. Camp, "Fruit quality, antioxidant capacity, and flavonoid content of organically and conventionally grown blueberries," J. Agric. Food Chem. 56 (2008): 5788- 5794.

¹¹ Reganold, J.P., J.D. Glover, P.K. Andrews, and H.R. Hinman. "Sustainability of three apple production systems." Nature 410 (2001): 926-930

¹² Guillette E.A., et al., An Anthropological Approach to the Evaluation of Preschool Children Exposed to Pesticides in Mexico. Environmental Health Perspectives. Vol 106:No.6; June 1998

¹³ Rueben S.H. Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk: What we can do now. 2008-2009 Annual Report President's Cancer Panel.

¹⁴ Gasnier C., et al., Glyphosate-based herbicides are toxic and endocrine disruptors in human cell lines. Toxicology 262: 184-191.

¹⁵ Dhiman, T.R., G.R. Anand, L.D. Satter, and M.W. Pariza, "Conjugated linoleic acid content of milk from cows fed different diets," Journal of Dairy Science 82 (1999): 2146-2156.

My goal is to help you understand those reasons.

This article is the first of a series of articles that will detail the scientific evidence in support of organic farming practices.

The benefits are real and they are significant.



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Succession Solutions for Farm Families

- By Kevin Spafford, Legacy by Design LLC Chico, CA

For an agribusiness owner, nothing is more precarious, or crucial, than transitioning the operation from one generation to the next. For most families, the farm represents a lifetime of work. It is a testament to effort, a source of pride, and the result of a lot of angst. If you've been researching your options, no doubt you've come to realize there's no single solution to planning for succession. The process is often ill-defined and the outcome chancy.

Following a defined process for succession will improve efficiencies and promote desired outcomes. I recommend a Comprehensive Succession Solution, addressing each key element of the planning model – Ownership Transition, Financial Security, Leadership Development, and Estate Tax Provision. The six step planning process includes:

1. Family Meetings / Communication Strategy:

Meeting on a regular basis will not only expedite the planning process, it will keep everyone informed. It may take a series of meetings to clearly pin-point your goals, research alternative transition methods, make decisions, and implement recommendations. Initial meetings may start with reviewing succession planning principles, detailing goals, and defining the terms of your transition. Always convene in a neutral location, with a written agenda, and pre-established ground rules (i.e. "don't dredge up the past").

2. Discovery / Goal Setting:

Discovery is the process of learning everything possible about you, your operation, and your succession intentions. This step involves a thorough analysis of all available information, both emotional and factual, to guide recommendations. Effort and candor directly affects the outcome and the satisfaction you'll realize in the process. It's important that each interested party be allowed to speak freely and share their concerns in a safe environment. In addition to your facilitating advisor, discovery will involve other professionals instrumental in the planning process including legal counsel, accounting, financial and, in many cases, a banker.

3. Preliminary Plan:

Preliminary planning is often referred to as the 'try-on' phase in the succession planning process. Initial recommendations are made and the owner considers the ramifications of planning decisions relative to goals and objectives. In this phase you should receive a cash flow/financial analysis, a summary of the findings and, in some cases, alternative recommendations.

4. Final Plan:

A final plan should really be referred to as a 'working' final draft. A succession plan must remain dynamic; it's only final until the next review. In the early stages of

the process, however, you will get a lot of things right. You'll implement changes to fortify the operation, ensure personal financial security, and start the transition to new owners. The meat of the final plan is an implementation schedule with actionable steps to achieve your succession goals.

5. Implementation:

Without action, everything is for naught. Implementation is the process of writing the legal documents, creating the financial instruments, adopting the accounting practices, and learning the leadership practices for a smooth transition. In the implementation phase, each professional is included and responsible for completing their respective discipline in the plan.

6. Annual Review:

As you experience the planning process and learn more about the value of succession, you're in a position to refine your goals and implement strategies for improved efficiencies. Your plan must adapt to the changing legislative landscape, business environment, societal structures, familial responsibilities, and growing capabilities of a new leader. A plan must be applicable to a growing operation and provide for opportunities.

Meeting for the annual review allows for review of the entire planning process and ensures that the process adheres to all of the comprehensive plan's components. Twelve months after full implementation is an ideal time to evaluate progress and update your succession objectives. Keys to a successful transition are good communication, clear objectives, readiness, a planning model/process, and action. Your ultimate goal is an operation that will endow the family for generations to come. As you begin the journey, this planning tool will help you settle on some specific goals for the farm, your family and the future.

Kevin Spafford and his firm Legacy by Design (Legacy-by-Design.com) serve the succession planning needs of farmers, ranchers and agribusiness owners. Email Kevin@Legacy-by-Design.com or phone 877-523-7411.

Proper Planning Puts You in the Driver's Seat

- By Kevin Spafford, Legacy by Design LLC Chico, CA

Hang up your boots and move on to the next profession, retire to a cabin in the woods, take up residence on your boat, or spend time with grandchildren? Most people romanticize about retirement; at times it sounds like the reward at the end of a long journey. At other times, it seems like a torture of a thousand unknowns. As a dairy producer, like most business owners, you've spent your entire life nurturing the operation, growing a customer base and managing finances. So the reality of cashing out, stepping away and living a life of leisure is a bit foreign and uncomfortable. But what if you could, in good conscience, prepare yourself with a retirement option?

Whether your motivation is a step into the next life phase, or learning how to control and better anticipate an unknown future, comprehensive succession planning is designed to help. The process empowers business owners to strategize the next steps and it creates options for a wide variety of potential outcomes. It allows you to control the terms and conditions of an ownership transition. It provides financial security for the family. A plan mitigates the estate tax and transfer obligations, and it prepares the next generation (related or unrelated) to assume the responsibilities of leadership. Properly planning for succession puts you in the driver's seat; it maximizes your control over both known and unknown circumstances.

For an ownership transition to be effective, it must provide positive outcomes for the owner, the family and the operation. When properly executed, a comprehensive succession plan will offer you options; the final decisions are always up to you. Succession—transitioning your business to a well-prepared next generation—should be a part of your retirement plan. That transition should include financial security, which allows for peace of mind. It must include provisions to mitigate the estate tax and provide for premature death. A comprehensive plan always includes some method for leadership development. The following four elements will be included in a complete succession plan:

Ownership Transition

This element of the plan details the process for transferring ownership to a well-prepared next generation. It may be as simple as identifying a buyer, then establishing the terms and conditions of the transaction. In most cases, creating the transition plan requires financial planning for retirement, a contingency plan for non-performance and a method of gradual transition. As you evaluate alternatives for ownership transition, maintaining a continuity of management strength will be an important objective for both buyer and seller.

As an experienced owner, you should commit time to helping the next generation transition to the management role. Accepting the mantle of responsibility is a learning process; there is a lot of value and wisdom in experience.

Before you exercise the option to retire, know what you're going to do with your time. Most owners only know work; invest some time now in learning a new hobby, refining your golf game, or planning for your next business venture. Measure each negotiation for the probability of taking the operation back due to default or other non-performance factors.

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Financial Security

A well-crafted plan provides financial security for each ownership household dependent on the continuing success of the operation and/or the proceeds from the sale. Each affected family must measure the financial results of the proposed succession plan to determine the effects on their financial security. Good financial management is imperative for lasting security. All too often business owners become tied to a sale that does not yield long-term positive results or may go sour. Such outcomes are typically due to a lack of factors that could have been avoided with some due diligence.

Letting go and walking away is a one-way street. An owner should carefully budget finances, including a real inflation factor. Keep in mind that medical care increases with age and medical costs tend to inflate at a much higher rate than the economy in general. Though it's okay to work in retirement, your financial security should not hinge on an ability to perform full-time.

Leadership Development

Most next-generation leaders have a solid education and good experience. Many potential buyers know the fundamentals and perform requisite duties, yet most have not been owners. A plan for developing leadership skills, including business management, team development, project coordination, business design and professional growth, is critical to operational growth and lasting success.

No matter what level of experience a new owner brings to the operation, he or she often struggles with the obligations of ownership. You should be willing to guide the new owner through these early challenges. Helping the new owner learn to work with existing employees will smooth the ownership transition. Further, you may suggest a comparable owner (not an adjacent competitor) willing and able to mentor and help your new owner sort through the unfamiliar quandaries.

Estate Tax Provisions

Common estate planning techniques can compromise the integrity of an operation. An estate tax plan must protect the integrity of the operation, plan for appropriate distributions and mitigate the estate tax liability. It should protect the family from untimely death and ensure your family's financial security. Above all, your personal estate planning documents should parallel your succession plan provisions.

Many attorneys don't understand the distinctions of succession planning. Make sure you're working with someone who knows and can articulate the differences. Your estate planning documents should reflect your specific goals; they should not be a boilerplate rendition of commonly accepted provisions. It's also vital to ensure the long-term security of your spouse and the family.

Why leave a lifetime of work up to chance? With a little knowledge, a comprehensive planning model and some time you may forestall the unthinkable and plan for the desirable.

The Decisions You Make and the Actions You Take

- By Kevin Spafford, Legacy by Design LLC Chico, CA

It seemed innocent enough for him to say, possibly because we were on the phone and may never see each other face to face. This son of a dairy owner was referring to discussions about succession with his dad and sisters. It was a truthful effort to answer my question of whether the family ever had a meeting to talk about this very sensitive subject. Though I couldn't see his face, he was noticeably uncomfortable, but he didn't know what else to say.

If this sounds like you and your family, maybe it's time for an intervention. A succession plan shouldn't wait. It's too important. You've got too much riding on it and they depend on you. Planning for succession answers a lot of questions. It addresses a smooth ownership transition. It allows you to control the outcome and ensures the next generation is prepared to lead the organization. It ties up a lot of loose ends and maintains the family's financial security through myriad potentially devastating contingencies. Planning for multigenerational success adds value to your business and sends a clear message of care to those you value most.

A written succession plan should include provisions for the following:

- **Ownership transition** – which addresses specifically the how, when, to whom and under what conditions ownership in the operation will transfer to the next generation. Even if your children aren't ready, ownership may change hands for some other unforeseen/disastrous circumstance and you should be ready.
- **Financial security for all active family members** – it's why you go to work, to provide your family, and those active in the business, financial security. Beyond planning for an ownership transition and the transfer of business assets, your plan should include a basic financial plan. This plan should include budgeting, retirement planning, investments outside the operation, etc., for each family actively involved in the operation.
- **Leadership development for successors and mentors alike** – the primary job of leadership is to develop others who can take the business to new heights. Succession planning is not a panacea for making sure the next generation is ready; however, it should include the structures and systems for a smooth transition. Those structures include family employment policy, defined

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¹ GPTA values are derived from the USDA-CDCB dairy genetic evaluation system using CLARIFIDE data.

² Zoetis data on file. Results from analysis of cumulative 3K and 6K results reported from USDA-CDCB dairy genetic evaluation as of September 2012 and associated submission data.

³ Source: USDA-CDCB evaluation for CLARIFIDE-tested Holstein females ≤ 12 months of age as of April 2014. Median value for NM\$ in this data set = 22%.

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wages/employment guidelines, operating agreements, performance reviews, etc.

- **Estate tax provisions** – rest assured, no one wants to pay Uncle Sam any more than absolutely necessary. The estate tax is constantly in play and your success makes you a target. In planning for succession, mitigating the estate tax is the easiest of all contingencies to address. With enough time and compromise [read: planning], the estate of a family business owner will not be subject to the tax.

We Owe Each Other Clear Communication

- By Kevin Spafford, Legacy by Design LLC Chico, CA

Whether you're among the senior, middle, or younger generation, communication is your responsibility. As co-workers, family members, partners, and employees, we owe each other candid dialogue---which includes clear statements, open ears, and certain feedback.

Aspire to follow these three guidelines in all your interactions, especially as related to family, succession, and business. It's during those times when our:

- Emotions are high and our patience low,
- Tempers are flaring and our fuse is short,
- Pressure is building and there's no relief.

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The following may help in these situations:

- **Listen to learn.** In our Legacy workshops, we do an exercise that is very instructive for everyone. We break into groups by generations, and share ideas about what each generation needs from the others, and what each offers to the other generations. The older gen almost always offers capital, land and experience—the exact three needs of the younger generation. On the surface this might not sound amazing, but outside of the workshop, this conversation might never happen. In a safe environment, we can have constructive discussions.
- **Allow others to surprise and inspire you.** Like the cliché, "The older I get the better I was," you're not as good as you think you are, and neither are they. Reining in the self-confidence and allowing room for others to perform will generate surprising results. I never tire of seeing the youth and enthusiasm of a young producer or an aspiring farmer. On the other hand, I appreciate the common sense and wisdom of a long-time producer. Participating in a conversation, working side-by-side or solving a common problem is always more fun (and rewarding) with an open mind.
- **Make allowances.** Nobody is perfect. Forgive yourself and allow others to make mistakes. Though it's sometimes painful, expensive, and time-consuming, an error can be

the best teacher. Making a mistake is one way to reinforce the learning opportunity in a situation. We all make mistakes, and if we're growing an operation and trying new things we'll continue to make mistakes. Mistakes are part of the trial-and-error process in learning efficiencies and testing effectiveness.

If Your Succession Matters, Hire a Professional

- By Kevin Spafford, Legacy by Design LLC Chico, CA

Planning for succession is a serious business. The endeavor may require the assistance of legal, financial, and accounting professionals. Some cases may call for the oversight of a family business consultant or even a family psychologist. Your goals, the family's circumstances, and business matters will dictate the type of professionals who should be involved in your planning process.

To facilitate the discussion and keep things moving in the right direction, you may wish to hire or appoint a professional to spearhead the process. She or he can specialize in any of the respective professions, but should be comfortable conducting the meetings, holding others accountable, and keeping all involved parties informed.

Your facilitator should be experienced in business planning and leadership development. She or he should be conversant in legal, financial, and tax matters. It will help if that person is especially well-versed in family relationships and can navigate the nuances among the generations. Using the following questions as an interview guide may help you select the professionals who will help your family achieve success and create a lasting legacy.

1. What are your qualifications to facilitate the succession planning process/contribute to the succession planning discussion and help us make good decisions regarding our family's long-term financial security?
2. If you've offered succession planning advice/assistance in the past, how long have you been serving the succession planning needs of family farmers/agribusiness owners?
3. How many families have you helped through the succession planning process? Please describe your succession planning process in detail.

This is just a sampling of the type of questions that should be asked. It's important for you to be comfortable with the professionals who are advising your family. You should understand their methodology. You should be satisfied with their advice and know it's based on your goals, not just their level of professional competence.

Most importantly, you should feel confident acting on their recommendations---not in blind faith, but rather as a trusted resource to help guide you and your family through a process designed to generate a satisfying result.

Callie Brodt Receives HOPE Scholarship

Callie Brodt is one of two student recipients of the 2015 Horizon Organic Producer Education (HOPE) scholarships. Each recipient will receive \$2,500 towards their education, encouraging them to enter the field of organic agriculture. In launching the HOPE Scholarship in 2007, Horizon Organic® became the first national organic dairy brand to offer a scholarship program designed to build the next generation of organic leaders.

Callie Brodt (Ferndale, Calif.), age 21, is a four-time recipient of the HOPE

Scholarship. Callie will graduate from Chico State in the spring of 2016 with a degree in agriculture business. Callie is the granddaughter of Horizon farmer Jim Walker of Walker Dairy, and the sister of Horizon farmer Colton Brodt of Brodt Dairy. Callie credits the HOPE Scholarship for growing her passion and interest in organic farming. Callie plans to use her degree to help promote organic dairy farming. "I hope to continue to educate people and teach them not only the basics of organic agriculture, but also the overall importance of it," she said. "I believe that organic agriculture is a promising part of our future as farmers." HOPE Scholarship committee member Steve Gilman said that: "Callie shows an extraordinary level of commitment and passion for the success and growth of organic agriculture."

"The continual rise in demand for organic food in the U.S. is proof that consumers are more conscious of their choices," said Mike Ferry, president of Horizon. "

The 2015 HOPE Scholarship winners share our passion to educate communities on the merits of organic agriculture, and we are proud to assist their efforts to pursue careers that will help meet consumer demand for organic."

The scholarship recipients are chosen annually by a committee of prominent organic community leaders. The 2015 committee included: Tracy Favre, organic inspector and former chief operating officer, Holistic Management International (HMI); Steve Gilman, policy coordinator at Northeast Organic Farming Association Interstate Council (NOFA-IC); Margaret Scoles, executive director, International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA); Faye Jones, executive director, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES); Bob Scowcroft, a long-standing organic advocate who has served in various leadership positions for 35 years; and Glenda Yoder, associate director, Farm Aid.

NASS Releases 2014 Organic Survey Results

On September 17, 2015, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the results of its 2014 Organic Survey. The following is information pulled from NASS documents addressing the survey.

NASS reported that in 2014, the United States had 14,093 (12,634 certified and 1,459 exempt) organic farms producing \$5.5 billion in organic products. Milk's share was \$1.082 billion or about 20 percent of the 2014 organic products sold. Milk was the top product sold, followed by: eggs, \$420 million; broiler chickens, \$372 million; Lettuce, \$264 million; and apples, \$250 million.

The top field crops were corn for grain at \$155 million and hay at \$139 million. Milk cow sales totaled \$69 million.

The 2014 total of 12,634 certified organic farms was an increase of 1,731 farms over the 10,903 reported in 2008.

Certified and exempt farms together accounted for 3.7 million acres of organic production in 2014, down from 4.1 million acres in the 2008 survey. Of the 3.7 million acres of organic production, certified farms accounted for 3.6 million acres. Organic operations own approximately three fifths of the land they farm organically and rent from others the rest of the land they use for organic production.

"Organic farms spent \$4.0 billion in production expenses in 2014, including \$19 million for organic certification. By far the two largest expenses for organic production were for feed and hired labor, which together were 46 percent of production expenses. In comparison, for all U.S. farms, these two categories accounted for 33 percent of production expenses, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture."

Additional information can be found at http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Organic_Survey/.

NOP Response to NOSB Recommendations

On September 3, 2015, the National Organic Program (NOP) responded to recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board's (NOSB) April 2015 meeting. Two of those recommendations are of interest to organic dairy producers. Specifically, the NOSB has recommended adding Acidified Sodium Chlorite (ASC) and Zinc Sulfate to section 205.603 Synthetic substances for use in organic livestock production.

NOTE: Both materials remain prohibited while the NOP carries out the necessary rulemaking to add them to the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.

The following is taken, with clarifying edits, from the NOP's response to the NOSB.

Acidified Sodium Chloride

Acidified Sodium Chlorite (ASC), was petitioned for addition to the National List at §205.603(a) as a disinfectant, sanitizer

and medical treatment. It was also petitioned for addition to §205.603(b) as a topical treatment, for use on organic livestock as a pre and post teat dip. The NOSB found it to be an important ingredient in teat dips and recommended its addition to the National List at §205.603(a).

ASC, acidified with citric acid is currently on the National List as an allowed disinfectant for direct food contact under §205.605(b). Over several NOSB meetings and much discussion, NOSB determined that ASC satisfies the impact on human health and the environment criteria, and is compatible with organic agriculture. NOSB received public comments indicating a strong need for ASC as an effective alternative teat dip in cases of microbiological resistance to teat dips currently listed.

NOSB recommended adding ASC at §205.603(a) as follows: Acidified Sodium Chlorite, allowed for use on organic livestock as a pre and post teat dip treatment.

NOP Response:

"The NOP has reviewed the NOSB's recommendation and plans to initiate rulemaking for public comment to add acidified sodium chlorite (ASC) to the National List for use in organic livestock production. If finalized, the use of ASC would be limited for use on organic livestock as a pre and post teat dip treatment."

Zinc Sulfate

NOSB considered a petition to add zinc sulfate to §205.603(b) for use as a foot or hoof treatment and recommended addition to the National List as petitioned. The recommended annotation is: for use as a foot or hoof treatment only.

The petition supported zinc sulfate's allowance for use as a footbath for control of foot rot in livestock, particularly dairy cattle, sheep and goats. Commercially, zinc sulfate is manufactured from zinc ore mined from underground or open pit mines. Zinc ores are extracted in more than 50 countries and zinc sulfate is most commonly produced by the interaction of zinc salts and sulfuric acid.

NOSB supported the recommendation based on evidence that zinc sulfate would provide a tool for treating foot diseases in livestock and would therefore promote animal welfare.

NOP Response:

"The NOP has reviewed the NOSB's recommendation and plans to initiate rulemaking for public comment to add zinc sulfate to the National List for use in organic livestock production. If finalized, the use of zinc sulfate would be limited for use as a foot or hoof treatment only."

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Please join us for our Fall Conference and Trade Show.

When: Tuesday and Wednesday October 27-28, 2015.

Location: Oregon State University – Alumni Center, Corvallis, OR.

Hotel Rate and Reservation:

The single and double occupancy room rate is **\$114.00 per night plus tax. This is a special group rate which expires on October 3, 2015. Reservations made after October 3, 2015, will be at the prevailing rate at that time.** For reservations please go to www.wodpa.com for the link to the hotel. Alternatively, you can call the Hilton Garden Inn 541-752-5000. **Mention WODPA when making your reservation.**

Conference Rate and Registration:

The registration fee is **\$100 per person for payment received before October 14, 2015.** The rate increases to **\$125 per person beginning October 14, 2015.** Conference meals are included with the registration fee; however, the cost of meals exceeds the cost of registration. Please help us plan an accurate number of meals by registering before October 1, 2015. To register for the conference, please complete the registration form found on our website at www.wodpa.com.

Trade Show booth registration:

Trade Show booth registration fee is **\$500 per booth and includes one registration** to all conference events and meals.

Additional conference admissions are available for **\$100 per person. Booth payment is due by October 1, 2015.**

To register, please complete the trade show registration form found on our website at www.wodpa.com.

Where to Register: Mail your registration and payment to:

Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
2485 Notre Dame Boulevard
Suite 370-162
Chico, CA 95928

Additional Details: We are posting conference updates as they occur. As sponsorships are received and trade show vendors register, those listings will be updated. **Please periodically check our website at www.wodpa.com for conference updates.**