



Organicology 2009 Highlights

February 26 ~ 28, 2009

Thursday Schedule

Intensives

Sustainable Business Intensive: Organic and Sustainable Food and Agriculture

There is growing recognition that over the next 100 years our agricultural and food systems will change dramatically; many of the resources we have taken for granted for so many years are in decline or have been contaminated. For the last century we have had resources at our disposal which we take for granted: cheap energy, surplus water, stable climates, fertile soils, plant genetic diversity, and plenty of farmers connected to the land. At the same time, consumers are increasingly looking to support farmers and businesses who share their concerns for social and environmental sustainability.

Today, organics have a strong and increasing mainstream foundation while striving to stay connected to the deep value roots of its history. As a new generation of producers, employees, and investors enter the organic market it is important for us to revisit the values and practices of sustainability, and explore our evolving understanding of how we can improve our systems.

This workshop was open to growers, processors, distributors, and retail/food service who wanted to learn the foundational frameworks to better understand and communicate the basics of “sustainability”, as well as practical tools to evaluate their practices. We presented specific ways food and agriculture are likely to be impacted by climate change, increasing energy prices, and other trends. Organic leaders shared stories of how they have successfully implemented sustainable practices in the areas of energy (carbon footprint), materials (packaging, office waste, etc), and human resource (avoiding burnout, growing healthy work culture, etc). This intensive provided insight, discussion, and information sharing will help improve efficiencies, educate customers, and continue the evolution towards sustainability.

Presenters: Fred Kirschenmann president of Kirschenmann Family Farms, Diana Crane, Sustainability Director for PCC Natural Markets, Elysia Hammond, Chief Ecologist, Clif Bar, Gil Friend, President and Chief Executive Officer of Natural Logic, Inc., Albert Strauss, Owner, Strauss Creamery, Ron Katz, Founder and President of Organic Apparel

Document Archive: [Intensive Flyer](#)

Organic Seed Production and On-farm Plant Variety Improvement

Do you want to grow seed on your farm for your own use or for sale? Focused on small to medium scale farms this course will deliver the production skills you need to produce seed and basic techniques to improve varieties for your local organic farming conditions. Learn how to grow wet and dry seeded crops including considerations of pollination, isolation, population size, crop management, equipment and the basics of harvesting, threshing, and cleaning seed. In addition, we will explore specific methods used in genetic selection and adaptation of the seed crop to the cultural methods and environmental challenges encountered under organic systems.

Presenters: Frank Morton, Wild Garden Seed: Don Tipping, Seven Seeds Farm: John Navazio, Organic Seed Alliance/ WSU: Micaela Colley, OSA

Document Archive: [Organic Seed Production Intensive Flyer](#)



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Organic Production

Crop rotations are a fundamental tool for sustaining organic production and enhancing soil resources. This intensive discussed how crop rotations impact soil quality, soil fertility, weed management, disease management, and insect pest management. Extension specialists in each area shared the most current information behind the principles of crop rotation. Using this real-life example from a Willamette Valley diversified vegetable farm, we examined the impacts of crop rotations and introduced two useful modeling tools —TEAM and RUSLEv.2. With the TEAM economic model, we studied crop-specific enterprise budgets based on the real production practices of Persephone Farm. To evaluate the impacts of rotation schemes on soil condition and soil quality, we used the RUSLEv.2 model developed through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Participants broke out into groups to analyze the modeling results of current production practices at Persephone Farm and to consider alternatives that could enhance soil quality and the bottom-line. Small group presentations and discussion at the end brought it all together, including an evaluation of the alternative production scenarios.

Presented by: Dr. Alex Stone, Vegetable Specialist, OSUNick Andrews, Metro-Region Small Farms Extension, OSU, Jeff Falen, Persephone FarmDr. Jim Julian, Agriculture Economist, OSU, Denise Troxell, Agronomist, NRCS, Dr. Dan Sullivan, Nutrient Management Specialist, OSUDr. Charles Merfield, Weed Specialist, Teagasc, Ireland

Innovative Livestock Production

Aimed at livestock producers, this course focused on innovative ideas that can be incorporated into any livestock operation. Homegrown forages can offer livestock nutritious, local feed while saving money. We learned about new forage options including high-sugar grasses, forage turnips and small grains from researchers and producers who have been trialing new alternatives.

Jim Taylor, a ruminant nutrition consultant, offered a holistic approach to balancing rations on pasture and forages. The Armstrongs, a father-daughter farming and dairying team discussed strategies for organic weed management in field corn and forages. What are options for generating energy on the farm? Brent Beidler, an organic dairy farmer from Vermont, shared his experiences converting a farm tractor to solar power. Alan Tank, CEO of Revolution Energy Solutions, described the technology, costs, and benefits of incorporating anaerobic manure digesters into a livestock operation, including tax incentives for renewable energy. Scott Robbins, NRCS Grazing Management Specialist, taught us how you can enhance conservation practices on your farm through participation in federally funded conservation programs.

Presented by: Mike Gamroth, Extension Dairy Specialist, OSU, Jon Bansen, Forest Glen Jerseys, Brent Beidler, Beidler Family Farm Jim Taylor, Tageberg Dairy NutritionLeland "Stan" Armstrong & Michelle Armstrong, Woodburn Fertilizer, Scott Robbins, Grazing Management Specialist, NRCS, Alan Tank, Revolution Energy Solutions

Local Food Systems

Local farms can provide healthy sustainable foods with a lower carbon footprint. Farmers however face many challenges in local, farm direct sales, especially when selling to institutions. With energy costs, distribution costs and other factors affecting the food industry how can we set up policies and infrastructure to ensure a stable and sustainable food supply. This intensive covered what infrastructure and examples exist and how to get involved to effect the change in local and sustainable buying and distribution. It covered examples of successes in direct sales to hospitals, schools and restaurants. Presented in partnership with Eco Trust and Portland Chef's Collaborative.

Speakers: Emma Sirois, Program Director for Health Care Without Harm, Oregon Center for Environmental Health, Holly Freishtat, Sustainable Food Specialist with Cultivate Health, Kristy Obbink R.D., Director of Nutrition Services for Portland Public Schools, Deborah Kane, Vice President of Ecotrust Food and Farms

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Book Reading and Signing ~ *Claire Hope Cummings*

Claire Hope Cummings is an environmental lawyer, journalist, and the author of *Uncertain Peril: Genetic Engineering and the Future of Seeds* (Beacon Press, March 2008). Claire's stories focus on the environmental and political implications of how we eat and how food and farming reconnects us to each other and the places where we live. She brings three decades of broad experience in agriculture to her work. She has farmed in California and in Vietnam, where she had an organic farm on the Mekong Delta. For four years she was an attorney for the United States Department of Agriculture's Office of General Counsel.



For the last 15 years, Claire has been active in the local food and farming movement in the San Francisco Bay Area, helping to found the Marin County food policy council, and serving on the boards of organizations such as Earth Island Institute, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Food First, and the Elmwood Institute—the predecessor organization for the Center for Ecoliteracy. Claire was awarded a Food and Society Policy Fellowship in 2001. She currently advises The Columbia Foundation's sustainable communities and food system programs.

Special Events

Talent Show

No-holds-barred, Talent Show with beer and popcorn! Bring your vocal chords, instrument, words, sense of humor, costume...whatever your particular talent dictates and join in a brilliant opportunity to see and be seen.



Seed Swap

Seed Swap with Beer and Popcorn —much more than simply seeds and beer drinking; an opportunity to share and “plant” seeds/laughs/stories that reach beyond our conference and into our respective communities.





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Friday Schedule

Workshops

Keynote ~ Paul Roberts

A journalist since 1983, Paul Roberts writes and lectures frequently on the complex interplay of economics, technology, and the natural world. Roberts has also written for The Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, and The (UK) Guardian and has appeared in Slate, USA Today, The New Republic, Newsweek, The Christian Science Monitor, Rolling Stone, and Outside magazine. The End of Food follows the successful publication of Roberts's first book, The End of Oil, published in 2004.

Roberts was a finalist for the National Magazine Award (1999) and for the New York Public Library Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism in 2005. A long-time observer of energy issues and politics, Roberts appears regularly on national and international television and radio news shows, including CNN's Lou Dobbs, the BBC, PBS NewsHour, MSNBC, CBS Evening News, and on NPR's Morning Edition, On Point, Weekend Edition, and Fresh Air. He lives in Washington State.



Fertilizers and Amendments for Organic Farming: Making Sustainable Choices

With the wide variety of fertility inputs available, how can you choose products that meet crop needs while meeting your goals for sustainability and not breaking the bank? We considered factors contributing to the environmental impact or "footprint" of an input: the energy needed to produce it, sourcing of raw materials, distance traveled to you. An input distributor offered information on product origins, manufacturing, and relative costs of different materials. We'll also hear from producers about their experiences developing fertility plans and integrating animal production on-farm to meet crop fertility needs.

Presented by: Darren MacFarlane, Sales Manager, North Pacific Ag Products Division, Kelly Hoell, Associate, Good Company, Chris Overbaugh, Winter Green Farm, Jim Bronec, Praying Mantis Farm.

Renewable Energy and Efficiency Opportunities For Your Business

The continued dependence on non-polluting renewable sources of energy poses many threats to the food trade from being hit with energy price spikes to contributing to global warming. This workshop focused on ways to reduce energy use and transition to renewable energy sources. We shared energy efficiency measures businesses can employ in lighting, heating and cooling, industrial refrigerators, warehouses and other buildings. Speakers discussed how to transition to renewable fuel sources and power systems in vehicles, as well as strategies for increasing distribution efficiency. Speakers shared including financial incentives and grants to make alternative energy investments pencil out. We invited leaders from the food trade who have undertaken various measures to share their experiences.

Presenters: Mark W. Kendall, Senior Policy Analyst at the Oregon Department of Energy; Dr. David Hackleman, Professor, School of Chemical, Biological and Environmental Engineering, OSU, Pamela Emerson and Waynd Elson, Environmental Protection Agency, Bill Chambers, Owner, Stahlbush Island Farms.

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Organic Certification 101 for Retailers and Processors

Although titled “101” this session will get into some of the hot topics in the marketplace for processors and retailers to be aware of. Going beyond just the basic requirements in the regulation, this workshop will cover topics such as setting up systems to protect organic integrity, label issues and messaging to your customers! After this session you will come away with a deep understanding of the regulations and how you can effectively communicate certification to your customers.

Presenters: Gwendolyn Wyard, Oregon Tilth Certified Organic; Brenda Book, Organic Certification Coordinator, WSDA Organic Program.

Managing Threats of Genetically Engineered Crops

Managing isolation and preventing genetic contamination is a challenge concerning the whole organic industry from seed growers to produce farmers, to retailers. This session covered strategies growers are using to protect their crop integrity and updates on GMO management strategies, regulations, and litigations in the industry.

Presenters: Matthew Dillon, OSA; George Kimbrell, Center for Food Safety; Frank Morton, Wild Garden Seed

Organic Agriculture, Web 2.0, and You!

In this age of technology and online consumers it is becoming increasingly important to have an online presence. This workshop will showcase tools from cyberspace that can help grow both your farm business and the organic community. Websites and e-newsletters can be incredibly effective marketing strategies that educate customers while also attracting new ones. We discussed strategies for farm-specific web design including tips for CSAs and online marketing. We also explored features of eOrganic, the new national organic agriculture web community, and eXtension website where you will be able to find detailed information on organic production.

Presenters: Dr. Alex Stone, eOrganic; Simon Huntley, Small Farm Central; Chris Jagger, Blue Fox Farm

Sustainable Business Performance Measurement Tools and Reporting

The trend toward sustainability reporting in business has focused increased attention on social and environmental metrics as key performance indicators. Since “what gets measured gets managed”, it is essential that companies select appropriate metrics to drive better decisions and better performance. This workshop covered common reporting frameworks (Global Reporting Initiative, GHG Protocol, Facility Reporting Project, etc.) as well a movement underway to develop sustainability benchmarking tools for the organic trade. No matter the size or scope of your business, there's a sustainability reporting approach that's right for you.

Presenters: Adam Zimmermam, Vice President, Director of Consulting Services, ShoreBank Enterprises Cascadia; Rob Sinclair, Sustainability Guide, Conscious Brands; Natalie Reitman-White, Executive Director, Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Association.

Farm Labor Issues—Policy Update & Domestic Fair Trade Initiative

Immigration and labor policy has a tremendous impact on the lives of the laborers who work in agriculture. This session, presented updates to policy trends. Speakers shared about pilot projects occurring throughout North America with the Fair Deal, the Agricultural Justice Project, the local fair trade network and others. We reviewed the principles, the application to join the Domestic Fair Trade Association and the progress on certification.

Presenters: Erik Esse, Local Fair Trade Networking; Rosalinda Guillen, Executive Director, Community to Community Development; Other TBD



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The Politics and Potential of Seeds

What is the real dirt on seeds? This session started with an overview of basic seed related definitions (OP, Hybrid, GMO) and then covered the big picture politics of seed and genetic ownership issues moving into more focused discussion of seed politics in the organic industry and seed production industry. Topics covered included seed industry consolidation, patenting and control, organic seed certification and international politics, organic seed regulations and NOSB, seed integrity, and concepts of naturalism.

Presenters: Matthew Dillon, OSA: John Navazio, OSA: Frank Morton, Wild Garden Seed

Organic Certification 101: The Next Generation of Farmers and Livestock Producers

What are the challenges for young farmers in starting an organic crop and/or livestock operation? This workshop connected the dots between understanding the certification requirements and successful farm planning. With a diverse set of presenters including young farmers and experienced certification staff, we covered topics such as seed sourcing requirements, pasture and feed requirements and evaluating inputs to the National List. Presenters discussed transitioning, preparations, and shared stories from several perspectives including taking an established family operation in a new direction and starting a new operation as a first time entrepreneur.

Achieving Economic Sustainability, Fostering an Integrated System

This workshop discussed issues of scale and economic growing pains in the organic trade moving into the mainstream. Is there a diminishing middle in organic? Can medium size producers, processors, retailers make it in a market that likes the very intimate and small, but that also buys from the very big? How can we create and sustain profitability of farms?

Presenters: Nash Huber, Owner, Nash's Organic Farm: David Lively, Marketing Director, Organically Grown Company

Special Events

Wine and Beer Social and Potato Tasting:

You never knew that potatoes could taste so good! We baked about 10 different potatoes (cut into bite size pieces), and then conference goers got to taste the various potatoes and rate them for appearance, flavor, texture and overall 'liking'. It isn't very scientific, but some potatoes are definitely favored over others. In the ancient ruins of Peru and Chile, archaeologists have found potato remains that date back to 500 B.C. The Incas grew and ate them and also worshiped them. They even buried potatoes with their dead, they stashed potatoes in concealed bins for use in case of war or famine, they dried them, and carried them on long journeys to eat on the way (dried or soaked in stew). Ancient Inca potatoes had dark purplish skins and yellow flesh. The Incas called the potato "papas".



Live Music ~ John Luna

Traditional Old Time Mountain Square Dance with live music by one of Portland's hottest old time string bands. John Luna, caller, learned dance calling in the Appalachian Mountain area and has been calling for nearly 30 years. All dances are taught before they're danced, and no experience is necessary to enjoy the dancing.

Live Music ~ DJ Brian Brandon

Renowned DJ Brian Brandon, takes the stage, spinning to make you shake-it till the sun comes up. If you attended OGC's 30th birthday bash, you will remember the house shaking dance party, lead by this one-man wonder we call "B".

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Saturday Schedule

Organic Exhibition

Keynote ~ Dr. Vandana Shiva

Vandana Shiva, physicist, feminist, philosopher of science, writer and science policy advocate, is the Director of The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy. She serves as an ecology advisor to several organizations including the Third World Network and the Asia Pacific People's Environment Network.

In 1993 she was the recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, commonly known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize". A contributing editor to People-Centered Development Forum, she has also written several works include, *Staying Alive*, *The Violence of the Green Revolution*, *Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge*, *Monocultures of the Mind* and *Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution, and Profit*, *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in Age of Climate Crisis*.



Trade Show

The Organic Exhibition is a must. Inspired by the magic that happens at farmer's markets across the world, where vendors, producers and eaters inspire one another's reality. Through introduction and conversation, this event will feature a wide array of displays, including seed companies, farm supply companies, farms, organic manufacturers and retail products. The Organic Exhibition is an ideal time for participants to network and share their own stories and how they incorporate sustainability into their own livelihoods. Participants will be able to meet some of the people behind the many aspects of the food they eat. From seeds to activist journalism, orchardists and food advocacy groups; from the packaging that gets food from farm to market—participants will engage in both a re-union of sorts and an inaugural process of getting to know one another in a market-styled environment. We can't wait to hear the hum of Organicology participants talking to one another on the show floor, to learn of the contacts made and to see what grows out of this organic, open cross-pollination within the organic food trade. Come. Interact. Share, laugh, take notes, and thank vendors for setting up their displays. Thank each other for giving time to the idea—to the movement—that food matters.

Saturday Sessions

Listening Session: From Seed to the Produce Communications On Produce Quality and Plant Variety Development

What size squash does a consumer really want? Why can't we get local spinach year around? How important is flavor in a carrot? This moderated panel discussion of seed growers, plant breeders, farmers, and produce buyers explored how they are currently communicating and how they could cooperate on improving produce quality and availability.



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Debate

Let's get ready to rumble!! Cage Match-ish Debate to keep us thinking-on-our-toes (with beer & wine and audience judges).



Pan Asian Evening Performance: Portland Taiko

Established in 1994, Portland Taiko Ensemble is an award-winning Asian American drumming ensemble. The performers weave rhythm, melody, humor and movement together into an exhilarating musical experience. By combining traditional and contemporary compositions and choreography, Portland Taiko Ensemble takes Asian American music into unexplored territory with its innovative and provocative creations. Taiko, the Japanese word for drum and the name of the art form, has its roots in ancient Japanese tradition and was used in religious ceremonies, community festivals and theater. The boundaries of villages were defined by the distance from which the community taiko could be heard.

The only professional taiko company in the Pacific Northwest, Portland Taiko Ensemble was honored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Composers Forum to represent the state of Oregon in Continental Harmony. The ensemble is also widely recognized as a leading group in the North American taiko community.

Live Music ~ The Pheromones

Rock out to the PHEROMONES: What you have experienced so far, has not prepared you for the way these guys will rock you!! A musical compound produced by organic animals that will influence your behavior with members of the same species. The Pheromones are an earthy mix of jump blues, rockabilly, and rhythm and blues with an eclectic modern sensibility. The band is made up of Midwestern and Northwestern farmers and plant breeders and they're sure to get your compost cooking! (Of course, all ingredients are certified organic.)

