On November 8 the National Organic Program (NOP) published a Final Rule on Periodic Residue Testing. The rule is significant because it clarifies a provision of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990 and the regulations issued thereunder that require periodic residue testing of organically produced agricultural products by accredited certifying agents. While residue testing has always been a part of organic product oversight and is required by the OFPA, this final rule specifies the minimum amount of testing that must occur and clarifies the types of residues that may be tested.

Beginning January 1, 2013 organic certifying agents are required to test samples from at least 5 percent of the operations they certify on an annual basis. Operations that are subject to testing include USDA organic farms and food processors across the United States and throughout the world. Residue sampling may be performed on soil samples, tissue samples, water, or finished product. Additionally, NOP does not intend for the testing to be limited to pesticides residues. As clarified in the final rule, certifying agents may conduct testing for any prohibited substances or excluded methods, including pesticides, contaminants metals, genetic engineering, hormones, or antibiotics. This clarification is of critical importance because it may likely expand the scope of testing beyond current practices.

In response to concerns expressed in comments, NOP has clarified that operation selection for residue testing is not intended to be “random” and may include risk factors such as number of products produced, split operations, size of the operation, and high-value or high-risk crops, or other criteria deemed appropriate by the certifying agent. Also in response to concerns raised about reporting all test results “promptly” to the Administrator, NOP amended the reporting requirements under section 205.670 to reduce the reporting burden on certifying agents, by eliminating the requirement to submit all residue testing results. This final rule DOES NOT however change the responsibility for reporting by certifying agents when residues are found in excess of federal regulatory tolerances established by EPA or FDA. The final rule indicates that certain residue testing results that are in violation of EPA or FDA requirements must be reported to the appropriate State health agency or foreign equivalent. The final rule also does not change the existing requirement that the results of all analyses and tests must be made available for public access, unless the testing is part of an ongoing compliance investigation.

NOSB Approves Biodegradable Mulches

by Jack Kittredge

At their October Providence, RI meeting the National Organic Standards Board heard testimony from organic farmers in favor of biodegradable mulches such as BioTelo, an Italian product made from non-GMO corn. The board voted to put those mulches on the National List with the following provisions: (ii) Biodegradable biobased mulch films to be reviewed and meet the following criteria:

a) Completely biodegradable as shown by:
1) meeting the requirements of ASTM Standard D6400 or D6888 specifications, or of other international standard specifications with essentially identical criteria, i.e. EN 13432, EN 14995, ISO 17088; and
2) showing at least 90% biodegradation absolute or relative to microcrystalline cellulose in less than two years, in soil, tested according to ISO 17556 or ASTM 5988.
b) must be biobased with content determined using the ASTM D6866 method;
c) must be produced without organisms and/or feedstocks derived from excluded methods;
d) grower must take appropriate action to ensure complete degradation.

The National Organic Program (NOP) is expected to implement the NOSB recommendation next year.

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Section B: Supplement on Beginning Farmers

The National Organic Program (NOP) is the volunteer body which maintains organic purity through selection of items to be on the National List, meets in Providence in October, 2012
Lard for Sale - Certified organic lard from pastured pigs available from Many Hands Organic Farm in Barre, MA. Our focus is raising healthy, happy animals on woods and pasture for exceptional quality and flavor. In addition to woods forage and vegetation, our pigs are fed Nature's Best organic grains, organic whey from a local dairy, and a blend of sprouted organic grains. We make lard with the fat-back and leaf lard from our pigs. Great for cooking, frying, and baking! $20/quart or $10/pint. We sell locally and will ship in the US. Please call 978-355-2853 or email farm@mhof.net.

Farm for Sale in South Hero, Vermont. 183 acres. Restricted by easement and option to purchase at agricultural value. Vermont Land Trust seeks buyers who will farm commercially. $429,500. Contact Jon Ramsay at (802) 533-7705 or jramsay@vtl.org or go to www.vtl.org/sawyerbay

Full Moon Farm in Hinesburg, Vermont invites hard-work-loving individuals to commit to enhancing our farm. Our 300-member certified organic meat and vegetable CSA is now hiring a cooler/distribution manager, lands manager/machine operator, and experienced farmhands to help our farm operate at its fullest potential. For more information on our farm and each of these positions, visit our website at: www.fullmoonfarminc.com or email Rachel: nevitrac@gmail.com

Teachers Wanted for Spring and Summer Programs at Natick Community Organic Farm. Be part of a fun Community Farm that provides productive open space, farm products, and "hands-on" educational experiences for all ages, year round. This historic Farm, in the midst of a suburban landscape, provides a unique opportunity for children of all ages to connect with food production. All our programs allow children the opportunity to participate in and observe activities that are part of a working organic farm. The Farm is an exciting laboratory for understanding and appreciating our interconnected world. Join a community promoting sustainability. more info at www.natickfarm.org

Advertise in or Sponsor The Natural Farmer

Advertisements not only bring in TNF revenue, which means less must come from membership dues, they also make a paper interesting and helpful to those looking for specific goods or services. We carry 2 kinds of ads:

- The NOFA Exchange - this is a free bulletin board service (for subscribers or NOFA members who get the TNF) for occasional needs or offerings. Send in up to 100 words and we’ll print it free in the next issue. Include a price (if selling) and an address, E-mail or phone number so readers can contact you directly. If you don’t get the paper yourself you can still send in an ad - just send $5 along too! Send NOFA Exchange ads directly to The Natural Farmer, 411 Sheldon Rd., Barre, MA 01005 or (preferably) E-mail to TNF@nofa.org.

- Display Ads - this is for those offering products or services on a regular basis! You can get real attention with display ads. Send camera ready copy to Bob Minnoci, 662 Massachusetts Ave. #6, Boston, MA 02118 or Bob@nofamass.org. Enclose a check (to “TNF”) for the appropriate size. The sizes and rates are:

  - Full page (15” tall by 10” wide) $460 $500
  - Half page (7 1/2” tall by 10” wide) $215 $240
  - One-third page (7 1/2” tall by 6 1/2” wide) $125 $175
  - One-fourth page (7 1/2” tall by 4 7/8” wide) $95 $135
  - One-sixth page (7 1/2” tall by 3 1/8” wide), or (3 3/4” tall by 6 1/2” wide) $85 $90
  - Business card size (1 1/2” tall by 3 1/8” wide) $20 $25

Note: These prices are for camera ready copy on clean paper, or electronically in jpg or pdf format. If you want any changes we will be glad to make them - or to typeset a display ad for you - for $45 (which includes one revision - additional revisions are $10 each). Just send us the text, any graphics, and a sketch of how you want it to look. Include a check for the space charge plus $10 for Display Ads or Sponsors

Frequency discount: we give a 25% discount for year-round ads. If you reserve the same space for four consecutive issues your fourth ad is free! To receive the frequency discount you must pay for all the issues in advance, upon reserving the space.

Deadlines: We need your ad copy one month before the publication date of each issue. The deadlines are:

  - January 31 for the Spring issue (mails Mar. 1)
  - April 30 for the Summer issue (mails Jun. 1)
  - July 31 for the Fall issue (mails Sept. 1)
  - October 31 for the Winter issue (mails Dec. 1)

Disclaimer: Advertisers are helping support the paper so please support them. We cannot investigate the claims of advertisers, of course, so please exercise due caution when considering any product or service. If you learn of any misrepresented use of our ads please inform us and we will take appropriate action. We don’t want ads that mislead.

Contact for Display Ads or Sponsors: Send display ads or sponsorships with payment made out to “TNF” to our advertising manager Bob Minnoci, 662 Massachusetts Ave. #6, Boston, MA 02118. If you have questions, or want to reserve space, contact Bob at (617) 236-4893 or Bob@nofamass.org.

For Sale: Organically-fed, free-range beef, pork, chicken. Fresh-frozen. Available Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM from workshop freezer. Natick Community Organic Farm, Natick, MA more info at www.natickfarm.org

For Sale: 47 Acres – Coy Hill Rd., Warren, MA, $140,000 or joint venture. Call: Suzette Cote 413-
The Natural Farmer

A-

by Ben Grosscup, Conference Coordinator

We are looking forward to a vibrant and engaging NOFA Summer Conference next year. For many Summer Conference attendees, there is a strong desire to connect with other farmers who share common interests. We have hired Kate Kennedy as the new Fair and Entertainment Coordinator, and she will be charged with facilitating groups interested in meeting up at the fair. If you have a topic and you’d like to bring people together around it at next year’s NOFA Summer Conference, please contact Kate Kennedy at lysistrata125@gmail.com, and she will try to help you make the meeting happen.

Call for Workshops

Every year the NOFA Summer Conference recruits creative and enthusiastic presenters for workshops for adults, teens, and children. And we do this recruitment pretty far ahead of time. The call for workshop proposals for the 2013 Conference will go out in December 2012 if you’d like to propose a workshop but didn’t get the call, please get in touch. The call will also be posted on the website: www.nofasummerconference.org.

The conference features workshops for adults on a full range of topics connected to organic agriculture, ecological sustainability, and community building: alternative energy and the environment; animal husbandry; crop-specific workshops; farm economics and management; farming and the community; farm tours; food and family; food preservation and cooking; fruits, nuts, and trees; garden and greenhouse; herbs and flowers; international agriculture; land care; marketing; nutrition and health; of the spirit; politics and policy; practical skills; soil fertility; social justice; and urban agriculture. If you would like to submit a workshop proposal or get on the list to be personally reminded about the call for workshops, contact: Ben Grosscup ben.grosscup@nofamass.org or call at 413-549-1568.

There will be a Children’s Conference (ages 2-12) and a Teen Conference (ages 13-17), which explore many themes in common with the adult workshops in a manner that is appropriate for each age. If you want to submit a proposal for the either Conference, contact Valerie Walton at aallspice@aol.com or (978) 689-0716.

The sooner you submit your workshop proposal, the better. We encourage you to submit one by December 31, 2012. The vast majority of decisions on accepting workshops will be made by the end of January 2013.

All workshop presenters receive free conference registration and a $50 honorarium for presenting a 90 minute workshop.

Interested in Sponsoring?

If you want to sponsor or advertise your business and gain excellent exposure for your products and services, including a logo and website link placement on the NOFA Summer Conference website, see this link to last summer’s sponsors: http://www.nofasummerconference.org/sponsors.php.

Larger level sponsors also receive exhibit space and registration. Businesses and farms are also welcomed to simply exhibit and advertise in the Program Book. For more information, contact Bob Minnoci: bob@nofamass.org or 617-236-4893.

Please help us thank these Friends of Organic Farming for their generous support!
Proposition 37 Review

compiled by Jack Kittredge

In a major political effort in 2011, California activists were able to gather over a million signatures and place on the 2012 state ballot an initiative (Proposition 37) that would require the labeling of many foods in California containing GMO ingredients. Initial polling said the measure had overwhelming support among state voters. The biotech and food industries raised $46 million dollars to defeat it, however, and proponents were able to raise only $9 million. A series of negative TV ads (many of which contained false and deceptive information) claiming the measure would result in higher food prices, lost jobs, and frivolous lawsuits blanketed the airwaves during October. Proponents were not able to effectively respond, public support melted away, and in the final vote the measure was defeated. For those not able to follow this important event at the time, we are presenting a number of short items by both proponents and opponents which give important facts and draw some salient lessons for the future. On the following 2 pages are graphics which indicate who spent how much to influence the outcome of the Proposition 37 vote.

California Right to Know, USA, Press Release dated November 7, 2012: “Yesterday, we showed that there is a food movement in the United States, and it is strong, vibrant and too powerful to stop. We always knew we were the underdogs, and the underdogs nearly took the day. Dirty money and dirty tactics may have won this skirmish, but they will not win the war. Today, we are more than 4 million votes closer to knowing what’s in our food than when we started. This is a victory and a giant step forward. We are proud of our broad coalition of moms and dads, farmers, nurses, environmentalists, faith and labor leaders who did so much with so few resources to bring us to this point, and we will carry forward.”

No on Prop. 37, USA, Press Release dated November 7, 2012: “While millions of more votes are still left to be counted, it appears voters rejected Proposition 37 in California, the flawed and misguided food labeling measure. The No on 37 campaign, a coalition of family farmers, doctors, scientists, researchers, Nobel Prize winners, retailers, food companies, business groups, tax payer groups and community groups, said Californians saw through Prop. 37 and rejected the measure. From the beginning, No on 37 allies argued that Prop. 37 was more than just a simple labeling measure, pointing out that it was misleading, costly and unnecessary based on the science of genetically engineered foods.”

Food Safety News, USA, article dated November 7, 2012: “By a much larger margin than expected, California voters have decided they can live without labels on genetically modified food, a decision that means the state will not be at odds with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s policy of not labeling GM foods, which goes back more than two decades. By a vote of 53 to 47 percent, the Golden State voted ‘No’ on Proposition 37. The vote was a stunning reversal for an initiative that easily started out with more than two-to-one support in California. One national pollster last March found that nine out of ten Americans supported labeling GE foods. But after what rates as a fully engaged campaign for California, Prop. 37 saw that support evaporate under the pressure of a paid campaign by opponents and the ‘Yes’ campaign’s failure to write and explain the law they wanted voters to pass.”

Genetic Engineering News, USA, article dated November 8, 2012: “In their campaign against the measure, opponents of the measure – a coalition of GMO seed companies, farmers, chain retailers and larger food producers named ‘No on 37’ – successfully spent $46 million to warn that Right-to-Know will cost California households up to $400 annually, as producers pass on costs whether they try to substitute with organic or non-GMO ingredients, according to a report issued for GMO supporters by Northbridge Environmental Management Consultants. The cost to consumers would be reflected equally in the cost to businesses. Not only do businesses have the costs that they have to pass on to consumers, but they would also have whatever additional costs they would have for liability as a result of this law,” Mark C. Goodman, a partner in the San Francisco office of the law firm Hogan Lovells, told GEN.”

Council for Responsible Genetics statement dated November 5, 2012: The Council for Responsible Genetics is in fundamental disagreement with the recent statement from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in which it offered assurances that genetically modified foods (GMOS) are safe and that therefore labeling of foods containing GM ingredients is unnecessary. The AAAS leadership did not reach this decision, a response to Proposition 37 in California, by a vote of its membership. We are deeply concerned that a scientific body such as the AAAS would take such an action without giving a complete review of the science behind its statement. As scientists, they should know that citing a few studies in favor of their position can no longer be considered a compelling argument. Indeed, the AAAS Board did not conduct a thorough analysis of the literature, nor did they include studies that could cast doubt upon their conclusions. The truth is we do not know conclusively what the long-term effects of growing and consuming GM crops will be… Yet we know enough to have valid concerns. The plant genome is not like a Lego set; it is more like an ecosystem. You simply cannot predict the safety of gene inserts unless you do the testing.”

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“Slow Money Principle #1: We must bring money back down to earth.”

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The Natural Farmer Winter, 2012-13

"Yesterday, we showed that there is a food movement in the United States, and it is strong, vibrant and too powerful to stop. We always knew we were the underdogs, and the underdogs nearly took the day. Dirty money and dirty tactics may have won this skirmish, but they will not win the war. Today, we are more than 4 million votes closer to knowing what’s in our food than when we started. This is a victory and a giant step forward. We are proud of our broad coalition of moms and dads, farmers, nurses, environmentalists, faith and labor leaders who did so much with so few resources to bring us to this point, and we will carry forward.”
Prop 37: Your right to know.  
GMOs: Corporate charlatans versus organic heroes

The GMO divide — let’s all reward the true organic heroes

Please make your voice heard by signing the petition at cornucopia.org
Financially contributed against Prop 37 or Member of GMA

- Bristol Farms (Carson, CA) $2,500
- Holiday Quality Foods/Sav More Foods $2,500
- El Super (Latina Bodega Corp) $5,000
- Safeway (GMA member – contributed $2,002,000)
- Starbucks (GMA member – contributed $2,002,000)
- Target (member of GMA – contributed $2,002,000)

Missing in Action

- Central Market
- Bristol Farms
- El Super
- Safeway
- Starbucks
- Target

Assumptions:
- Whole Foods, a $10 billion corporation, contributed $25,000 two days before the election.
- If Whole Foods contributed $25,000 for every store, as Good Earth Natural Foods did, their total contribution would have been $7,775,000.
- This would be comparable to the $8,100,000 contribution to the “No on 37” campaign by Monsanto, a similar-sized, $11 billion corporation.

Financially supported Prop 37

- Good Earth Natural Foods (Fairfax, CA) $25,000
- Whole Foods (nationwide) $25,000*
- New Leaf Community Markets (Northern California) $8,539.01
- People’s
- The Wedge Co-op (Minneapolis, MN) $1,000
- Whole Foods, a $10 billion corporation with 311 stores, contributed $25,000 two business days before the election. If Whole Foods contributed $25,000 for every store, as Good Earth Natural Foods did, their total contribution would have been $7,775,000. This would be comparable to the $8,100,000 contribution to the “No on 37” campaign by Monsanto, a similar-sized, $11 billion corporation.

The GMO Divide — Let’s All Reward the True Organic Heroes

Please make your voice heard by signing the petition at cornucopia.org
Take the Sustainable Path

Sign up for the Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care

This course provides the education needed for an understanding of organic land care design and maintenance.

New England Regional Course
February 11 - 14, 2013
Three Rivers Community College
574 New London Turnpike
Norwich, CT 06360

Pennsylvania Course
January 14-17, 2013
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
100 N. 20th Street - 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Sign up at organiclandcare.net/education/accreditation-course

News Notes
compiled by Jack Kittredge

MOFGA's Russell Libby

Libby Resigns as MOFGA Executive Director
Russell Libby, who for 17 years has been the Executive Director of the Maine Organic Farming & Gardening Association, stepped down as of November 2 to take a position as MOFGA Senior Policy Advisor. Heather Spalding is the Interim Executive Director.

Libby led the organization through much of the growth of the organic movement and during the entire period of the National Organic Program, for which MOFGA is an accredited certifier. He supervised the capital campaign that resulted in the Common Ground Education Center in Unity, Maine, which hosts the Common Ground Fair and is MOFGA's headquarters, and oversaw the Association’s growth to become one of the largest associations of organic farmers and supporters in the country.

source: MOFGA press release, October 16, 2012
(continued on page 10)
PRIVATE VERMONT FARM
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183 acres. Southern Vermont Farm and Antique Homestead for Sale. End of Town road. Rare ability to shut out the outside world. Perfect for farming, gentleman farming or 2nd home. Ideal location for a CSA, 2.5 hours to Boston markets, 4.5 hours to NYC markets. Approx. 16 acres open fields and 16 more easily cleared. Large swimming and fishing pond, streams and trails leading to magical spots for exploring or quietly enjoying. Land has been used to raise sheep, heritage turkeys, chickens, and planted with blueberry and raspberry bushes, a few fruit trees, as well as experimental hills of hops. Beautifully restored 1799 era 3BR, 2BA home with wide-pine floors, fireplaces, beamed ceilings and an enclosed sleeping porch that overlooks the pond. Barn for equipment and small flock of sheep or goats plus poultry raising outbuilding. Woodlands are marked for a timber sale and/or your own firewood needs. $500,000.

Inquiries: sovtfarm@gmail.com
Book Reviews

Farms With A Future, Creating and Growing a Sustainable Farm Business
by Rebecca Thistlethwaite
$29.95, Paperback, 336 pages
review by Eve Springwood Minson

Just as it is a great gift for a beginner farmer to find a compassionate, patient and experienced mentor in life – one that helps us navigate the somewhat tumultuous waters of growth and change as we test our wings - so it is meaningful when someone decides to take time out from life to share their experiences of success or failure in their field of expertise. How valuable to be guided by someone’s wisdom as we move forward and make decisions about how to make positive steps forward in our businesses, and when to move forward with our new ideas. It’s the guidance we all hope for in all aspects of life.

Lucky for us, this is the gift that Rebecca Thistlethwaite gives us with her new book, Farms with a Future. Rich with the wisdom she and her husband, Jim Dunlop, garnered from years of farming in California – at first, seat of the pants and small scale – then full throttle production. After intense business development, they decided to step back, evaluate what they wanted for themselves and their business, and learn more before they crafted their own next steps. During this time, they traveled and worked with other farmers across the U.S. who are using innovative practices to not only farm well, but farm smart. We are the recipients of what they’ve learned from their hard-won experience and dedication to helping the rest of us. I think you’ll agree that we are all glad they made that decision.

With her no-nonsense attitude that can only come from crashing headfirst into mistakes and learning the hard way, Thistlethwaite takes us through many of her and her partner’s misadventures, and then shows us how to do something smarter. With excellent examples from a family farm in every chapter, along with various resources, and a “take home message” section also in each chapter, the book is a dense, but not boring how-to read that promises to become recommended reading for anyone willing to take a sobering look at the prospects of a farming career. You will no doubt go back to Rebecca’s book again and again, mining it for the next nugget of good advice. I’m sure we’ll also be hearing about Rebecca’s workshops in the near future, to get the full experience of the take-homes. I certainly already know I want to sign up for that when she comes to my neck of the woods!

Topics in this extremely helpful book range from marketing, land, financing, farm planning, equipment and infrastructure, soil and water management, harvest and processing, record-keeping and regulatory compliance, accounting, human resources and juggling family and work, add-on enterprises and value-added products. While the information in some chapters can be daunting in its scope (do we really have to figure all of that out right from the start?), it does however reflect the reality of not only following one’s bliss into a farming career, but also what it means to work hard from dawn to dusk, and hopefully make real money at the end of the day. Thistlethwaite makes a point of returning to that important benchmark over and over again – she wants to make sure people are making a real living at the end of their fiscal year and are in the black. Bottom line? If you aren’t looking at all the details she suggests, daunting or not, you will miss something important that can affect business decisions and outcomes. I will readily admit I learned something new on every page.

In her thoughtful way, Thistlethwaite takes into account many parts of farming that people sometimes don’t want to think about, and again we must thank her for her perseverance. She is willing to ask the reader to look carefully at what they are doing, why they are doing it, and looking internally to see what they are cut out for. She is fearless in asking tough questions and helping the reader understand not only the complexities of farming, but more importantly the focus of the book, which is the business of farming. Unfortunately far too many people, when they are getting started with their farming careers, forget that their efforts need to eventually pay all the bills including the mortgage and health care. And this is what the author does seamlessly – addressing the many details that are all too easy to forget when we plunge headlong into farming without a business background. Rebecca focuses on producing a quality product with carefully thought-out marketing, and successful strategies.

I heartily recommend this book to any beginner farmer, as well as seasoned farmers looking for a fresh perspective as they move into their next stage of business development. The reader will certainly notice that Rebecca’s plucky personal evolution and growth as a farmer and business person is also something we can track in ourselves and plan for over time. That first bold step we take as entrepreneurs is only one in a long string of necessary courageous moves and innovations we will need to embrace to create a long term sustainable farming business. With support and cutting-edge information like this, we are the recipients of what they’ve learned in their field of expertise. How valuable to be guided by someone’s wisdom as we move forward and make decisions about how to make positive steps forward in our businesses, and when to move forward with our new ideas. It’s the guidance we all hope for in all aspects of life.

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The State Agriculture Councils of The Humane Society of the United States seek to ensure that animal production systems are humane to animals and sensitive to the environment.

To learn more, visit humanesociety.org/agcouncils.
US Study Shows GM Crops Caused Increase in Pesticide Use
A peer-reviewed study analyzing the impact of GM herbicide and insect tolerant crops on pesticide use, utilizing data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agriculture Statistics Service, has shown that major GM crops have increased overall pesticide use by 404 million pounds from 1996 through 2011. Overall pesticide use in 2011 was about 20% higher on each acre planted to a GM crop, compared to pesticide use on acres not planted with GM crops.

In addition, herbicide-tolerant crop technology has led to a 527 million pound increase in herbicide use in the United States between 1996 and 2011. In 2011, use of herbicides was 24% more than in the absence of herbicide-tolerant crop technology. This is a result of increased weed resistance (around two dozen “superweed” species) mainly to Roundup (the brand name of the herbicide glyphosate, sold by Monsanto) causing farmers to use a greater number of herbicides, and in greater volumes, including herbicides that the herbicide-tolerant crop technology was meant to displace.

A detailed summary of the study’s major findings, along with important definitions of terms used in the study, are available online at http://bit.ly/esekenbrookmajor.


USDA’s AC21 Coexistence Plan Fails to Address Contamination
The USDA created an Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture in 2011 to promote coexistence of natural and transgenic farming. AC21 is composed of representatives of both biotech and organic food companies, conventional farmers, state and university ag experts, and organic farmers. One of the charges of AC21 was to develop a plan to compensate farmers who suffer losses due to contamination from transgenic crops. The committee is developing a plan to be voted on this fall -- using crop insurance -- which ignores the responsibility of the biotech companies or farmers using biotech crops and leaves full responsibility for securing insurance, establishing proof and value of contamination, and prior intent to produce an identity preserved product on the victim of contamination.

source: The Organic & Non-GMO Report, October, 2012

Minnesota Jury Acquits Raw Milk Farmer of Criminal Charges
On September 20 a Minnesota jury found farmer Alvin Schlangen not guilty on all three criminal misdemeanor counts for violations of the state food and dairy code. The case was referred by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and brought by the Hennepin County prosecutor’s office. The Department alleged that Mr. Schlangen sold raw milk off the farm, that he handled food without first possessing a food handler’s permit, and that he distributed misbranded and/or adulterated dairy products. A fourth charge on a labeling violation was dropped at the beginning of his criminal trial.

Schlangen, a volunteer manager for the Freedom Farms Coop (FFC), was raided by MDA twice in 2010 and once in 2011; the department seized thousands of dollars worth of the members’ food. The specific charges against Schlangen stemmed from the March 2011 raid in which MDA impounded Schlangen’s truck and confiscated all of the club members’ food on it. The cooperative has leased farm animals and pays for their care. As the managing member of the coop, Mr. Schlangen provides a service by delivering nutrient-dense food to FFC members. Throughout the three-day trial, the courtroom was packed with members of the Freedom Farms Coop who supported Alvin. The

(continued from page 7)
**National Dairy Quality winner:**

“We see fewer mastitis cases... counts stay low.”

— Jeremy Holst

I remember the first cow I used Udder Comfort™ on 4 years ago, and I’ve been sold on it since. It’s a tool in the toolbox for quality,” says Jeremy Holst, operating Holst Family Farms, Lake City, Minn., with parents Curtis and Maren. They milk 100 cows and are National Dairy Quality Gold Level winners for the second year, with 2011 SCC of 81,000.

“We used to run somatic cell counts of 300 to 400,000. When I came back from college (Univ. of Wisconsin FISC) in 2005, we made some changes and were pushing close to 100,000, but still treating a lot of cows to get there.

“In January 2007, I started using Udder Comfort blue lotion after each milking for 5 to 7 days for any cow showing signs of mastitis. And, whenever we have subclinical cows show up with a high SCC on the DHIA, we go after them with Udder Comfort for 3 to 4 days, sometimes 10 days. The key is: We stick with it.

“A couple years ago, we started using the Udder Comfort spray on fresh heifers for 3 to 5 days to get the blood flowing.

“Their start out with less edema and nice, soft udders. We rarely see a case of mastitis in first lactation heifers who’ve had this when they come in.

“Overall, we strive to keep cows clean and healthy. We check quarters using the Mas-D-Tec. Udder Comfort fits here because I like natural products that work with the cow. Every year, we see fewer mastitis cases in the herd and less need for antibiotics in lactation. Our counts stay low to average 80 cents on the bonus, and we have less worries about treated cows. We’ve tried other products, but I stick with what works.”

**Plantskydd**

I just wanted to say thanks for a great product that made my life easier, and to tell you some success stories that I, and others, have experienced using the new Plantskydd Granular Repellent.

A couple of years ago I had a herd of 30 whitetail deer crossing my field. Their game trail went right through a field where I was planning to plant corn. Rather than put up a fence, I decided to use your new granular Plantskydd product. I dumped 40 lbs in a drop spreader to pull behind my garden tractor, and put down a 3-foot border around my field. Next, I rubbed out the tracks on the game trail so I could see how effective Plantskydd was. The deer always crossed during the night. Well, the next morning there was not a track to be found. And none for the rest of my growing season!

I have a small truck farm where I grow vegetables to sell at Farmer’s Markets as well as to supermarkets. Deer just love beet tops—

I have had them eat a 100 foot row in one night! Last year, when my beets came up, I put some granular Plantskydd in a spreader and applied it around the outside row of the beets. The deer didn’t eat a bite. The key is to get the product down before the deer start nibbling. Later in the spring, my pickers came and told me the deer had been eating the zucchini. I took out the spreader and made one trip around the patch applying Plantskydd, and the deer stayed out until after harvest.

We have such a deer problem in the valley that, when I tell folks in my garden seminars about your product, they jump right on it. Hooper’s Garden Center, in Kalispell, Montana, sent one of their customers to me, desperate to see if I could help them save a $30,000 investment in flowers that were to be planted for a special event on a large estate. I sent them to the CHS Country Store (also in Kalispell), where they proceeded to clean all the Plantskydd Granular off the shelf. The estate put in an order for 50 more 20 lbs bags this year.

The Plantskydd Granular is my favorite repellent because: 1) it works; and 2) it is quick and easy to use—no mess, no fuss.

Sincerely,

Bill Clanton. Kalispell, Montana, April 7, 2010

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Aurora Dairy settles fraud claims for $7.5 million
Aurora Dairy, a giant factory farm operation with locations in Texas and Colorado, agreed to pay plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit who felt defrauded after purchasing private label milk labeled as organic in Walmart, Costco, Target, Safeway and other large grocery chains. The USDA concluded that the dairy was in violation of NOP rules for failing to provide pasture, using non-organic subcontractors, and bringing conventional cows into their organic operations.
source: Acres, USA, November, 2012, & Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association Newsletter, Autumn, 2012

AMA supports mandatory GMO safety testing
The American Medical Association recommended mandatory safety testing of genetically modified foods at its June annual meeting. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not currently require any safety tests of GM foods.
source: The Organic & Non-GMO Report, July/August 2012

Animal ID still on table
The USDA is still planning to implement an animal ID program affecting animals (primarily cattle) involved in interstate commerce. A coalition of ranchers, consumers, and advocates is challenging the USDA’s plans and has protested to the Congressional Office of Management and Budget arguing that the plan is too costly and destructive of small farms and businesses. They cite North Dakota State University estimates of costs as high as a billion dollars per year, including equipment and labor for tagging and recordkeeping.
source: Acres, USA, August, 2012

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(continued from page 10)

(continued on page 15)
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Absentee Ownership Fuels Fracking

According to a study by researchers in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, ownership of land in the Pennsylvania counties with the most Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling using hydraulic fracturing techniques, called "fracking," is concentrated among relatively few residents and people living outside the counties. The majority of residents in those counties (such as Sullivan, Tioga and Lycoming) own little of the total land area and thus have little "voice" over leasing decisions.

source: Acres, USA, September, 2012

French Research Spells Trouble for GMOs

Gilles-Eric Seralini and his colleagues in CRIIGEN at the University of Caen in France released a report in September of his recent research into the long-term health effects of glyphosate herbicide and animal feeds derived from genetically engineered glyphosate tolerant plants. The study found that RoundUp and the genetically modified corn resistant to it can cause tumors, multiple organ damage and lead to premature death. Rats exposed to even the smallest amounts developed mammary tumors and severe liver and kidney damage as early as four months in males, and seven months for females, compared with 23 and 14 months respectively for a control group. GM crops have been approved for human consumption on the basis of 90-day minimal feeding trials. But three months is the equivalent of late adolescence in rats, who can live for almost two years (700 days).

In a current coordinated attack on Seralini and his research findings on the long-term effects of glyphosate, Monsanto and its spokespersons accused Seralini of using a strain of rats that were particularly susceptible to tumors, that too few rats were used in the research, and that the trials were too short in duration. In fact, as Seralini pointed out, his team used the very same few of rats used in all of Monsanto's (and others') trials and that he followed the same protocol as Monsanto did in the trials which won them approval of their GE crops – except that Seralini's trials lasted considerably longer and consequently produced significant evidence of harm that Monsanto did not want to recognize.

source: The Ram's Horn, October, 2012

UN: Chemicals Damaging Health and Environment

In a study released on September 5, the U.N. Environment Program warned that the increasing production of chemicals, especially in emerging economies where there are weaker safeguards, is damaging the environment and increasing health costs. Of the more than 140,000 chemicals estimated to be on the market today, UNEP said only a fraction have been thoroughly evaluated to determine their effects on health and the environment.

The report collected scientific, technical and socio-economic data for the first time on the global production, trade, use and disposal of chemicals, their health effects, and the economic implications. UNEP's Executive Director Achim Steiner said the world is increasingly dependent on chemical products, from fertilizers and petrochemicals to electronics and plastics, for economic development but he said "the gains that chemicals can provide must not come at the expense of human health and the environment."

UNEP said chemicals have become so important to daily life in today's world that the value of their output has grown to $4.12 trillion, compared to $171 billion in 1970. From 2012 to 2020, chemical production in North America and Europe is expected to grow by about 25% compared with growth of about 50% in the Asia-Pacific region, about 40% in Africa and the Middle East, and about 33% in Latin America. "Studies projecting trends to 2050 forecast that global chemical sales will grow about 3% per year to 2050," the report said.

source: The Associated Press, September 6, 2012

Brazil Fines Monsanto for Soy Ad

Monsanto Corporation has been fined $250,000 by a Brazilian court for misleading GM soy seeds in 2004. The ad touted the seeds as beneficial to the environment, which Judge Jorge Antonio Maurique felt was "very questionable". An estimated 85% of Brazil’s soy, or 62 million acres of it, is GMO.

source: The Organic & Non-GMO Report, October, 2012

Experts Blast Stanford Study Doubting Organic Nutrition

A much discussed study released by scientists at Stanford University in September which challenges the nutritional benefits of organic food has been questioned by organic advocates. Charles Benbrook, professor at Washington State University, reviewed the literature reviewed in the study and found several unmentioned key benefits of organic, including increases of 10% to 30% in several nutrients. Representatives of both the University of Minnesota and the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services (MOSES) cited groundwater protection from nitrates and absence of pesticide residues as other benefits.

source: The Organic & Non-GMO Report, October, 2012

Arsenic in Your Food?

New tests by Consumer Reports have found that rice products on grocery shelves contain arsenic, many worry some levels. Arsenic not only is a potent human carcinogen but also can set up children for other health problems in later life. In virtually every product tested the organization found measurable amounts of total arsenic in its two forms. They found significant levels of inorganic arsenic, which is a carcinogen, in almost every product category, along with organic arsenic, which is less toxic but still of concern. The Environmental Protection Agency assumes there is actually no “safe” level of exposure to inorganic arsenic.


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Whole Foods to Open Stores in "Food Deserts"

Walter Robb, co-CEO of Whole Foods, has announced a plan to accelerate growth of the retailer. In smaller markets and areas lacking access to fresh produce. Examples are new stores in Detroit, West Des Moines, Wichita and Chicago's South Side. The company’s revenues are estimated to be $11.7 billion in 2012 and it has hopes to have 1000 stores nationwide.

source: The Organic & Non-GMO Report, October, 2012

HFCs Denied Whitewash

The Corn Refiners Association had petitioned the FDA to allow them to nutrition labels, to call high fructose corn syrup by a new name, "corn sugar". Opponents suggested that the move was motivated by the more "natural" sound of the new name. The FDA, however, has turned down the plan.

source: Acres, USA, November, 2012
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Vermont
- Brattleboro Food Co-op, Brattleboro
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- City Market / White River Co-op, Burlington
- Co-op Food Stores, White River Junction
- Dottie’s Discount, Brattleboro
- Hunger Mountain Co-op, Montpelier
- Middletown Natural Foods Co-op, Middletown
- Plainfield Food Co-op, Plainfield
- Putney Food Co-op, Putney
- Rutland Area Food Co-op, Rutland
- Springfield Food Co-op, Springfield
- South Royalton Food Co-op, South Royalton
- Stone Valley Community Market, Poultney
- Upper Valley Co-op, White River Junction

Massachusetts
- Berkshire Co-op Market, Great Barrington
- Dorchester Community Food Co-op, Dorchester (Start-Up)
- Green Fields Co-op Market, Greenfield
- Leverett Village Co-op, Leverett
- McCaskill’s Co-op Market, Shelburne Falls
- Merrimack Valley Co-op, Lawrence
- Old Creamery Co-op, Lenox
- River Valley Co-op Market, Northampton
- W&D Otis Co-op Market, Williamstown

New Hampshire
- Grafton Food Stores, Hanover & Lebanon
- Great River Food Co-op, Walpole (Start-Up)
- Littleton Food Co-op, Littleton
- Manchester Food Co-op, Manchester (Start-Up)

The Neighboring Food Co-op Association
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Connecticut
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(Continued from previous page)
New York

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Tri-County Conference: NOFA Tri-County Conference, Manchester Community College, Manchester, CT, for more info: 860-697-1001 or info@nofamass.org or NOFA-NY Winter Conference, 65+ workshops, at the Community College, Norwich, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or organiclandcare.net

Calendar

Friday, January 11: Organic Lawn and Turf Day; Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Boylston, MA, for more info: Caro Roscelli, caro@nofamass.org or 508-360-0874

Saturday, January 12: NOFA/Mass Winter Conference with keynote speaker Karen Washington, Worcester, MA, for more info: Cathleen O’Keefe at 413-387-2136 or webmaster@nofamass.org or www.nofamass.org

Sunday, January 13: Direct Marketing Conference, South Royalton, VT, for more info: 802-434-4122, info@nofafvt.org or nofamass.org/DMC

Monday, January 14 – Thursday, January 17: NOFA 2013 Accreditation Course, Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or organiclandcare.net

Thursday, January 24: Organic Lawn Care Certificate Course, Manchester Community College, Manchester, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or organiclandcare.net


Saturday, January 26: Getting Started in Organic Farming Conference, Goodwin College, East Hartford, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or cintafo.org

Saturday, January 26 and Sunday, January 27: NOFA-NJ Winter Conference with keynote by Eliot Coleman, pre-conferences by Michael Phillips and Ellen Ecker-Ogden, Lincroft, NJ, for more info: www.nofanj.org, info@nofanj.org, 908-371-1111

Thursday, January 31 - Saturday, February 2: Soil and Nutrition Conference: Putting Principles into Practice, for more info: 413-635-3174 or ben.grosscup@nofamass.org or www.nofamass.org

Saturday, February 9 and Saturday, April 20, and Sunday, August 25, and Sunday, November 9: Four Seasonal Workshops on Small-scale Orcharding for the Homeowner, Ashfield, MA, for more info: Alan Summerfield, 413-625-9613 or alansur-meran@hotmail.com

Monday, February 11 – Thursday, February 14: NOFA 2013 Accreditation Course, Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or organiclandcare.net

Saturday, February 16 & Sunday, February 17: NOFA-VT Winter Conference, 65+ workshops.
Monday, February 25 – Saturday, March 2:
Natick Community Organic Farm Sugaring Tours, Natick, MA, for more info: (508) 655-2204; jechristensen.norganic@verizon.net or www.natickfarm.org

Tuesday, February 26:
Organic Lawn Care Certificate Course, Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT, for more info: 203-888-5146 or organiclandcare.net

Friday, March 1:
Organic Dairy & Field Crop Tours, Natick, MA, for more info: 01005, (978) 355-2853, or rebecca@nofamass.org

Friday, March 1 and Saturday, March 2:
NOFA-NH Winter Conference with pre-conference intensive on Friday and Winter Conference on Saturday, Laconia, NH, for more info: info@nofanh.org, (603) 228-6492, email: membership@nofan.org, or join online at: www.nofanh.org

Saturday, March 2:
Natick Community Organic Farm Maple Magic Day Pancake Breakfast, Natick, MA, for more info: www.natickfarm.org

Saturday, March 2:
Winter Conference with keynote David W. Wolfe of Cornell University, Wilton, CT, for more info: 203-267-2204; davidw@cornell.edu

Winter Conference with keynote David W. Wolfe of Cornell University, Wilton, CT, for more info: 203-267-2204; davidw@cornell.edu

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Massachusetts: Low-Income $25, Individual $40, Family/Farm/Organization $50, Large Farm/Business $75, Premier Business $125, Supporting $250, Lifetime $1,000
Contact: NOFA/Mass, 411 Sheldon Road, Barre, MA 01005, (978) 355-2853, or rebecca@nofamass.org or join on the web at www.nofamass.org

Contact: NOFA-NH, 4 Park Street, Suite 208, Concord, NH 03301, Ph: (603) 224-5022, Fax: (603) 228-6492, email: info@nofanh.org, website: www.nofanh.org

New Jersey: Student/Intern $20*, Individual $40*, Family/Farm $70*, Business/Organization $150*, $10 additional per year for subscription to “The Natural Farmer”
Contact: NOFA-NJ, 334 River Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844, Phone: (908) 371-1111 x 6, Email: aramano@nofanj.org or join online at: www.nofanj.org

New York: Green Membership $20*, Brooklyn Special $40 (in conjunction with Brooklyn Food Coalition), Gardener/Consumer $40, Family/Farm $60, Nonprofit Organization $75, Business $125
Contact: NOFA-NY, 249 Highland Ave., Rochester, NY 14620, Voice: (585) 271-1979, Fax: (585) 271-7166, email: membership@nofany.org, www.nofany.org

Rhode Island: Student/Senior $20, Individual: $25, Family $35, Business $50
Contact: Membership, NOFA RI, c/o Dan Lawton, 247 Evans Road, Chapoquet, RI 02814, (401) 523-2635, nofan@live.com

Vermont: Individual $30, Farm/Family/$40, Business $50, Sponsor $100, Sustainer $250, Basic $15-25*
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