

APPENDIX A: THE WISCONSIN ORGANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

The 12-member, private-sector Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council includes organic farmers and businesses, as well as certifier, nonprofit and consumer representatives. The purpose of this council is to provide Wisconsin agencies with guidance on educational, market development, policy and regulatory issues as they relate to organic farming, food production and marketing. The council meets regularly with an interagency team including representatives of agriculture-related state and federal agencies. It is a standing council of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and is coordinated by DATCP Organic Specialist Laura Paine.

Background

The state's support for organic agriculture started in 2004, when Governor Doyle set a goal for Wisconsin to "lead the nation in organic agriculture." In 2005, the governor's office held an organic summit and convened a task force to develop recommendations for fostering growth in the organic agriculture sector.

Priorities identified by the task force included creation of an educational and promotional program for Wisconsin organic products; establishment of programs that facilitate networking among organic farmers; development of coursework, degree programs and research on organic agriculture at University of Wisconsin campuses and the state's technical colleges; and support and technical assistance for enhancing organic processing capacity. The task force's report to the governor can be found at www.organic.wisc.edu.

The first steps in accomplishing these priorities have been completed. They include:

- Creation of an organic agriculture specialist position in DATCP's Division of Agricultural Development in April 2006.
- Creation of an organic research and education coordinator position at the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences in August 2006.
- Establishment of the Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council and an interagency team in 2007.

The Advisory Council membership includes three organic farmers, three organic business representatives, a certifier, a representative of a non-profit educational organization, a consumer representative and three at-large members (page 28). Members are appointed by the DATCP Agriculture Board to three-year, staggered terms. The Advisory Council was initially seated in February 2007 and has since met three to four times annually. Agencies working with the council include DATCP, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency, the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, UW-Extension and the Wisconsin Technical College System.

Council members and agency staff work together to support and promote organic farming. Their activities can be divided into several broad categories, including projects undertaken under the auspices of the Organic Advisory Council and the council members' participation in the efforts of outside organizations and agencies. The Organic Advisory Council also provides input, recommendations and support for programs and policies made at the state and federal levels.

Organic Advisory Council Activities and Accomplishments

The Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council was formed in 2007. Since then, it has worked in a number of direct and indirect ways to support growth of organic agriculture in Wisconsin and nationwide. Below are several of the council's accomplishments.

Organic Advisory Council sponsored projects:

- Created and updated annually a directory of organic farms and businesses in Wisconsin (2010).
- Created an online registry of organic farms for pesticide applicators to reduce the potential for spray damage (2010).
- Developed marketing materials for organic farmers and marketers—*A Consumer's Guide to Organic Food*—supported by a \$9,900 Specialty Crops Block Grant (2009).
- Supported and contributed to *Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin* biennial status reports (2007, 2009, 2011).
- Developed a report and recommendations for DATCP on the flooding in southwestern Wisconsin in 2007 and its impact on organic farmers (2007).

Organic Advisory Council member participation in committees and other efforts:

- Organic representative on the Wisconsin NRCS State Technical Committee (ongoing).
- Spearheaded efforts to make available CEU credits for the Organic Farming Conference (ongoing).
- Cooperated with UW-Extension to provide an organic session at the 2011 Crop Production Conference (2011).
- Provided input and technical assistance to DATCP staff on nutrient management planning for organic farms (2010).
- Organic farmer representative on the DATCP ATCP 29 pesticide rule advisory group (2010).
- Provided support and educational resources to assist DATCP staff in working with pipeline companies that cross organic farms (2008).

Written recommendations & letters of support:

- Supported a sustainable and organic agriculture focus to the CALS search committee for the new dean (2011).
- Supported exemptions for small, organic and specialty markets for certain provisions being considered by the USDA Dairy Industry Advisory Committee via Bob Wills, a member of the committee (2010).
- Supported Wendy Fullwider's successful application to the National Organic Standards Board (2010).
- Provided a letter of support for graduate student Martha Rideout's recommendation to add organic herd health management to the UW School of Veterinary Medicine curriculum (2009).
- Provided comments on the interim final rule for the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (Docket No. NRCS-IFR-08005) (2009).
- Provided comments on Docket No. APHIS-2008-0023: Importation, Interstate Movement, and Release into the Environment of Certain Genetically Engineered Organisms (2009).
- Initiated and supported an advertising complaint by DATCP's Consumer Protection Division against Wal-Mart regarding their shelf labeling of co-mingled organic and non-organic products (2007).
- Provided comments on the NOP organic pasture rule (2008-09) and recommendations on organic farming needs for the 2008 Farm Bill (2007).

Advice and recommendations to agencies and organizations:

- Support for and input on UW Organic Agriculture Field Days (ongoing).
- Provided technical input and advice to NRCS on training technical service providers for organic transition planning (ongoing).
- Participated in public comment period during NOSB meeting in Madison, Wisconsin in November 2010 (topics addressed included animal welfare standards, pasture rule, organic hops and organic certification cost share program).
- Suggested names for an organic representative for the Wisconsin Seed Law (ATCP 20) advisory group (2009).
- Provided input and recommendations to the Wisconsin Institute for Sustainable Agriculture interim chairs as they conducted their listening sessions (2009).
- Provided recommendations to DATCP on Wisconsin Seed Law state pre-emption wording, and got pre-emption of local ordinances removed from the final rule (2008).

Current Organic Advisory Council Members

Organic Farmers

Rebecca Goodman (term ends 4/30/14)

Northwood Farm
Wonewoc, WI

Chris Malek (term ends 4/30/12)
Malek Family Stewardship Farm
Stevens Point, WI

Rich Lange (term ends 4/30/13)
Lange Farms
Platteville, WI

Organic Business Representatives

Mike Schulist (term ends 4/30/13)
Wisconsin Organic Marketing
Alliance cooperative
Custer, WI

Jerry McGeorge (term ends 4/30/12)
Organic Valley
La Farge, WI

Ken Seguine (term ends 4/30/14)
Hay River Pumpkin Seed Oil
Prairie Farm, WI

Non-Profit Representative

Harriet Behar (term ends 4/30/14)
Midwest Organic and Sustainable
Education Services
Gays Mills, WI

Consumer Representative

Jennifer Casey, RD, CD (term ends 4/30/13)

Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Ctr.
Milwaukee, WI

Certification Representative

Bonnie Wideman (term ends 4/30/12)

Midwest Organic Services
Association
Viroqua, WI

At-Large Members

David Engel (term ends 4/30/12)
Rising Sun Jersey Farm
Soldiers Grove, WI

Christine Mason (term ends 4/30/14)
Standard Process, Inc.
Palmyra, WI

Altfred Krusenbaum (term ends 4/30/13)
Krusen Grass Dairy Farm
Elkhorn, WI

Interagency Team

Pat Murphy
NRCS State Office

Laurie Makos
Iowa County FSA Office

Kevin Shelley
UW Nutrient & Pest Mgmt.
Program

Jed Colquhoun
UW-Extension Horticulture

Molly Jahn
UW CALS

Duane Klein
DATCP-ARM

Erin Crain
WI DNR

Cate Rahmlow
WI Econ. Development Corporation

Randy Zogbaum
WI Technical College System

Don Jaworski
Assoc. Dean, Agriculture Services
Northeast WI Technical College

Val Dantoin Adamski
Northeast WI Technical College

Mike Powers
WI DATCP-Division of
Agricultural Development

Jonathan Rivin
UW Stevens Point, College of
Natural Resources

Coordinators

Laura Paine
Grazing & Organic Ag Specialist
WI DATCP-DAD

Erin Silva
UW-Madison Agronomy
Department