



Justice for Beef Northwest Workers and Fair Food!

After months of organizing efforts, including a picket line and leaf-letting by OCA, UFW, and Teamsters outside Whole Foods Markets on October 4-5 in 35 states, the United Farm Workers (UFW) and Beef Northwest, the company that fattens cattle for Country Natural Beef, have reached a tentative agreement to settle their ongoing labor dispute. The Organic Consumers Association, in conjunction with UFW and the Teamsters, has supported the workers' efforts at Beef Northwest through ongoing consumer education and marketplace pressure campaigns. This victory marks a historic milestone in OCA's campaign to eliminate labor exploitation and support workers' rights in the \$60 billion organic and natural foods sector. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15550.cfm

President-Elect Obama: Please Support Organic Food and Farming

A likely turning point in history took place on November 4th with the election of Barack Obama, a politician who has consistently voiced his support for family farms and organic agriculture, among other progressive positions. Organic consumers and farmers now have an incredible opportunity to shape the future of federal farm and food policy. President-Elect Obama is in the process of formulating policy, assembling his transition team, and considering nominees for Secretary of Agriculture, among other important positions. The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for directing the US Department of Agriculture and its \$90 billion annual budget, including the National Organic Program, food stamp and nutrition programs, and agriculture subsidies. Throughout his campaign, and since his election, Obama has stressed that he wants to hear from the public in order to formulate his policies. Let's all take him up on his invitation. Please sign the OCA's petition letter to President-Elect Barack Obama today and urge him to take a stand in support of organic food and farming. After you sign this petition, please forward it to everyone you know. We need to raise our common organic voice on a massive scale, if we are to move the new Administration and the nation in a healthy, just, sustainable, and organic direction. Take Action:

salsa.democracynaction.org/o/642/petition.jsp?petition_KEY=1737



An Overview of Obama's Agriculture Policies

- 1 · Support for hunger and conservation programs in the Farm Bill.
- 2 · Expand Country of Origin Labeling requirements on food products.
- 3 · Support for organic farmers and transition to organic programs.
- 4 · Increase farm extension service programs to attract more youth to farming as a career.
- 5 · Encourage the use of technologies to produce power from animal wastes, and farming practices that reduce energy use and maintain soil health.
- 6 · Increase incentives for farmers to plant trees, restore grasslands and manage the land in a way that better absorbs CO₂.
- 7 · Campaign pledge to support mandatory labeling for genetically engineered foods.

organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15536.cfm

Speak Out at the NOSB Meeting

Next week, the members of the National Organic Standards Board will meet in Washington, DC, to take action on several hot topics for the organic community. These include grower-group certification; biodiversity conservation; the use of handling materials, processing aids and packaging aids (sanitizers, diatomaceous earth, nitrogen, ozone, and carbon dioxide) on foods labeled 100% organic; the commercial availability of organic seed; organic aquaculture standards (fish feed, net pens, and oysters, clams mussels and scallops), and organic pet food standards.

OCA's Washington, DC representative, Alexis Baden-Mayer, will be presenting testimony on behalf of OCA on these topics. She'd like to quote OCA members in her testimony. Please send your thoughts on NOSB recommendations and discussion items to alexis@organicconsumers.org.

United Nations Says Africa Could Grow More Food With Organics

A new study released by the United Nations indicates that the best way to increase food production in Africa is to shift to organic farming practices.

According to the study, African farmers who have already transitioned to organic production are seeing yield increases, on average, of 128% percent. Organic farming practices build healthier top soil, allowing plants to develop deeper root systems, thus providing greater resilience in extreme drought conditions. organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15278.cfm

Quote of the Week

"We are alarmed by the growing number of people who have been taken to jail for simply possessing organic products." -Ronnie Cummins, OCA's National Director, quoted in a *USA Today* article about problems surfacing with law enforcement drug testing kits. The kits are showing false positives in the field, causing innocent people to be arrested. According to *USA Today*, "Legal products and plants are testing positive: chocolate for hashish; rosemary for marijuana; and natural soaps for the "date-rape drug" GHB." organicconsumers.org/articles/article_15278.cfm

Our Work Depends On You

We know times are tough for everyone right now. That's why the OCA continues to work for consumers, family farmers, our environment, and our most precious assets, our children. We want to continue fighting the good fight, as well as bring you *Organic Bytes*, but we need your donations to survive these financially difficult times.

If you enjoy *Organic Bytes* and believe the world is a better place with OCA's nonprofit work, please consider donating today. Any size of donation is helpful and appreciated. Donate online at: organicconsumers.org/donations.htm