

Organic Insights



Volume 2 No 4

22 July 2008

CARBON SCHEME MUST INCLUDE AGRICULTURE WITHOUT DELAY

NASAA has urged government to include agriculture in its Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme without delay. The call comes in an era of growing alarm at the rate of global climate change and more urgent calls for immediate action such as Al Gore's Re-powering of America, a program where the US should become carbon neutral within 10 years. The Garnaut report upon which the Government's Green Paper is based does not propose immediate offsets from agricultural emissions for inclusion in the scheme and the government proposes to wait until 2015 before including agriculture into the scheme.

Professor Garnaut, Government and the National Farmers Federation (NFF) have all shown reluctance for early adoption of agriculture in an emissions trading scheme. In NASAA's view their reluctance is based upon misconceptions, but there are some real difficulties for many agricultural systems to demonstrate their emission credentials.

The Australian Government has estimated that 16% of Australia's greenhouse emissions come from the agricultural sector. Additionally, government has said that including agriculture in the scheme from commencement would be difficult because of the problems associated with measuring agricultural emissions at various locations across Australia. NASAA says that the urgency of addressing growing carbon dioxide levels cannot be underestimated and agriculture has a real and direct contribution to make - particularly organic agriculture- which has some inherent advantages in its capacity to sequester to carbon.'

Dr Christine Jones, an internationally renowned and highly respected groundcover and soils ecologist states that 'we only have to increase carbon by a very small percentage on a very small percentage of Australian farms to make Australia completely carbon neutral.' The amount of additional carbon in soil that is required to have a significant impact is very small as is explained by authors including Alan Yeomans. The ways to do this are well known in organic agriculture and include using cover crops, deep rooted perennial plants and also exclude burning of crop residues such as cereal grain stubble. The importance of cover cropping carbon sequestration farming has been pointed out recently by a long study by Rodale Institute in the Unites States where it was demonstrated to be more successful than minimum till in building soil carbon. The critical importance of no stubble burning as a soil building

NASAA OPERATORS IN ORGANIC EXPO SUCCESSES

Hearty congratulations to three NASAA operators achieving the following awards to be presented at the Sydney Organic Expo later this week

Best Wine of Show and Best Red Wine of Show for their 2007 Shiraz: Random Valley Organic Wines #6172

Best White Wine of Show for their 2007 Yalumba Organic SA Viognier: The Yalumba Wine Company -#5268P

Best organic food product: Kailis Extra Virgin Olive Oil (Premium Blend): Kailis Organic Olive Groves #6291P

Best Preservative Free Wine of Show:for their 2007 PF Merlot: Wildstone Wines #6235





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activity has been elaborated by Sjikemstad who showed that it was the most significant factor of all in building soil carbon in Australian cereal cropping systems.

In addition to these facts one other important and perhaps definitive characteristic of organic agriculture is the absence of use of synthetic nitrogen products such as urea, ammonium nitrate and others. All of these require large inputs of fossil energy to synthesise and studies have revealed that volatilisation of nitrous compounds during and after application of these products to crops and pastures adds another large and even more deadly contribution to the atmosphere. It is this latter issue that suggests why the industrial agricultural sector represented by the NFF is reluctant to embrace an emissions scheme for agriculture while their emissions books are quite probably in the red.

The argument put forward by the NFF for more research would be laudable were it not for the urgency of the problem and the fact that we already know sufficient to allow for some trading or taxation of carbon within the carbon cycle. Carbon joins the world of resources as the new resource. For agricultural trading of this new resource to be overlooked is a damning indictment of policy makers and a snub for farmers who are in the business of cycling and sequestering carbon. It is useful to consider the work of Charles Walters, the well known mid western agricultural policy and philosophy commentator. His identification of raw materials economics and the primacy of raw materials markets over the burgeoning market place for money and credit could be no more relevant than today. The current collapse of the international financial and credit market illustrates and illuminates the need to return to the fundamental biological productivity of systems and the critical role of carbon within them.

The reduced energy dependence of organic agriculture and its capacity to trade energy savings or carbon sequestration in a future emissions scheme is illustrated by the ABARE figures for energy and energy dependent input to wheat and cropping in Australia. A full 27% of production costs associated with chemicals and fertilisers is neatly sidestepped by the organic producer which represents more than half the total energy and energy dependent inputs to the cost of production. The NFF use these and other figures to argue for the non-exposure of agriculture to an emissions trading scheme. They argue that verification and measurement of carbon accounting is not sufficiently developed, that international greenhouse gas accounting rules are inadequate and that there is a 'lack of demonstrable, commercially available abatement and sequestration options for all agricultural sectors.'

Many of these arguments can and have been rebutted but the last argument illustrates the difficulty for conventional agriculture. Conventional agriculture has become so dependent on energy inputs as a percentage of production costs (up to 50%) and the calorific return from agriculture versus fossil based calorific input being even less, suggests that it must be re-examined with some urgency.

NASAA calls on Australian farmers, policy makers and consumers to embrace organic agriculture as a first step to achieving carbon neutral agriculture in Australia. Details of this journey and the exact shape of the finished product may not be fully formed but that is no reason why the journey should not be taken up..

POSITIVE CARBON IMPACT OF ORGANIC FARMING QUANTIFIED

.....Organic practices can do better than anyone thought .and could counteract up to 40% of greenhouse gas output"....

Scientists at the Rodale Institute in the USA have proved that organic farming practices, can remove about 7,000 kilos of carbon dioxide from the air each year and sequester it in a hectare of farmland.

The scientists estimated that if all of America's 100 million hectares of cropland were converted to organic practices, it would be the equivalent of taking 217 million cars off the road. This is nearly 88 percent of all cars in the USA and more than a third of all the cars in the world.

Dr Paul Hepperly, research director at The Rodale Institute and Fulbright Scholar stated: "We've shown that organic practices can do better than anyone thought at sequestering carbon, and could counteract up to 40 percent of global greenhouse gas output."

"The important point about this ground breaking research is that the amount of CO₂ sequestered is based on what has been achieved through current organic farming practices. This is not a theoretical estimate as in some of the tree plantation models or unproven like the millions of dollars being spent clean coal or mechanical geo sequestration trials." says Andre Leu, Chair of the OFA.

The full article is at <http://orgprints.org/view/projects/conference.html>.



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OPINION FROM THE NASAA CHAIR

I attended IFOAM's Organic World Congress in Italy during June and used the opportunity to promote NASAA internationally, represent NASAA in numerous meetings and feel the pulse of our organic world on an international scale. Reports on these are interspersed elsewhere in this issue and are accompanied by pictures taken by NASAA operator Annemarie Brookman, for which we thank her.

I am pleased to report that pressures to dilute the IFOAM Standards were re-buffed which means that NASAA certification with the IFOAM Seal gives our operators a strong label to offer in their commercial dealings outside Australia.

Inevitably climate change provided a striking backdrop—or should I say foredrop—to the deliberations of the conference and to the burning issue of how agriculture is to be accounted for within this changed political landscape. Elsewhere in this issue we report on developments within Australia from the Carbon Coalition.

It is marvellous news that the draft new Australian Standard is about to be released for comment and input by 22 September 2008. The intention is that Standards Australia will publish the Standard in December 2008. A fuller report is given on pages 4 and 5.

Readers may have participated in a University of New England survey last year which NASAA facilitated for the research team. Although the report was to be published by BFA it had the imprimatur of independence as a UNE piece of work so NASAA assisted the researchers as we considered that our operators would benefit from the findings. Now at the point of publication it has come to light that the report has transformed into a vehicle for promoting BFA and its sectional interests. To protect NASAA's independence and that of our whole industry NASAA has had reluctantly to withdraw any reference to NASAA from the report.

Elsewhere in this issue we refer to our revised Guide to NASAA Labels and you will see that our standard program proudly offers integrated NASAA/IFOAM labels to all those operators under AQIS/IFOAM though with an opt out option for processors sourcing multiple ingredients under multiple certifiers where IFOAM product assessment requirements can get a bit tough.

I shall be attending the Sydney Expo later this week and will look forward to catching up with as many NASAA operators as possible then.

ROD MAY

NASAA AT THE SYDNEY ORGANIC EXPO

If you are in Sydney for the Sydney Organic Expo (July 25-27 2008) then come along to NASAA's stand and say "G'Day!".

Our stand number is **167**

NASAA will be promoting its values of Integrity, Quality and Service and the stand will be manned by certification staff Martin Hollebrandse and Nick Tabart. NASAA Chair/CEO Rod May will also be speaking at the event.

DETAILS are:

LOCATION: **Hall 1, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney**

TIMES & DATES: **Friday 25th July 2008 - 10.00am – 6.00pm (Trade Only)**

Saturday 26th July 2008 - 10.00am – 6.00pm

Sunday 27th July 2008 - 10.00am – 5.00pm





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DRAFT AUSTRALIAN ORGANIC STANDARD RELEASED FOR INPUT

Once finalised, the Australian Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Products will establish one uniform Standard to address industry and government needs and consumer uncertainty around marketing and labelling claims on organic products.



NASAA has strongly supported the concept of Standards Australia developing an organic standard for Australia.

The main reason for this position is that the Standards Australia' imprimatur will give our National Standard credibility in governmental circles and will lead to governments around the country referencing the standard in their legislation. Our industry needs this strengthening of regulation in the longterm and much-needed objective of getting organic legally defined within Australia and not just for the export market.

Not only do we need a credible standard vis-à-vis government but we need an objective standard as the bedrock in our industry which is clearly separate from any sectional stakeholder interest.

As soon as the standard is made available NASAA will review and analyse the content of the new draft standard and distribute the analysis to our operators. An edited version of the Standards Australia notice and call for comment is set out below.

"Consumers can soon be confident that the organic products they choose are truly organic as the development of an Australian Standard for the organic and biodynamic industry nears completion. Once finalised, the Australian Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Products will establish one uniform Standard to address industry and government needs and consumer uncertainty around marketing and labelling claims on organic products.

Developed by a broadly based committee of key stakeholders, the draft Australian Standard stipulates requirements for the production, preparation, transportation, marketing and labelling of organic and biodynamic products. It places particular emphasis on farming and management practices which promote the use of renewable resources and conservation of soil, water and energy resources.

Unprocessed products from plants, animals and fungi such as fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, mushroom and fibres, as well as processed products such as processed food, cosmetics and skincare products which are labelled 'organic' are covered in the draft Standard.

Mr Colin Blair, Deputy CEO of Standards Australia said the draft establishes minimum requirements to be met by growers and manufacturers for products that can be labelled 'organic' or 'biodynamic', creating a level playing field for growers, retailers and consumers. "At the moment, consumers looking to buy organic products have no uniform guarantee of quality and integrity. At the same time, legitimate organic farmers have no protection against the minority of growers misinterpreting or falsely claiming to follow organic agricultural practices," Mr Blair said.

"By establishing an agreed set of criteria for the way foods and other items labelled as 'organic' or 'biodynamic' are grown, produced, distributed and marketed, once published this new Australian Standard will clear up confusion for everyone.

"Growers and certifiers already adhering to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service National Standard will not need to make major changes to their practices if they wish to comply with the voluntary Standard as the AQIS Standard forms the basis of the draft Australian Standard," Mr Blair said.

The draft Australian Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Products:

1. Provides a national, consistent framework for the organic industry from the paddock to point of sale;
2. Sets out minimum requirements for growing products which can be labelled as 'organic', 'biodynamic' or 'in-conversion';
3. Provides clear definitions about what is organic and what is not;



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4. Protects consumers against unsubstantiated claims and misleading labelling;
5. Protects growers against misinterpretation and misleading use of organic agricultural practices and the term 'organic';
6. Provides a guide for farmers considering conversion to organic farming.

The draft Australian Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Products and supporting material will be available for public comment from 21 July 2008. Members of the public and interested parties are encouraged to review the documents and provide feedback to Standards Australia by 22 September 2008. Standards Australia is working towards publishing the Australian Standard by December 2008.

To read the draft Standard, visit the Standards Australia website at www.standards.org.au and click on Drafts for Public Comment in the left hand menu.

INTEGRITY WINS OUT AT IFOAM

After a period of several years leading up to the 2008 General Assembly of IFOAM in Italy, the membership has spoken clearly on the direction of the world peak body for organic agriculture saying that standards and integrity must be placed at the forefront of the movement and trade matters take a more balanced role in the affairs of the group.

Supported by strong contingents from France, Switzerland, Holland and the USA, NASAA has fought for over three years to reverse the worrying trend first noted in this millennium to “dumb down” standards and thereby diminish the reputation of IFOAM as a leader in favour of effecting a more rapid growth in organic agriculture. These concerns were held by many in the Adelaide General Assembly where NASAA hosted the world body’s prestigious three yearly meeting of membership in 2005. At that point the concerns were not sufficiently realised by most members who were prepared to see what IFOAM could do in the process of balancing its stated role as a leader and unification force in the organic world.

NASAA has believed for many years that IFOAM’s strength lies in its technical capacity and its ability to influence and lead the standards and definitions debates, and what we have seen for the best part of this last decade is the steady erosion of these attributes for reasons that still remain unclear.

Many delegates breathed a sigh of relief after NASAA’s and others’ supportive motions were easily passed in Italy so that IFOAM can now get back to its crucial work on biodiversity, organic textiles processing, organic cosmetics, organic forestry and social justice and start to tackle the even more pressing issues of climate change within organic standards.

NASAA’s position is that it does not deny the importance of trade within organic agriculture but it doesn’t see IFOAM as a trade organisation and there are plenty of other such bodies to protect and foster trade. Trade, of course, is integral, but more integral is integrity as that is now evident ever more clearly in Australia!

NASAA is confident that the voice of the membership in endorsing a return to integrity and leadership will be heeded by the new IFOAM world board which saw a substantial spill from the old representatives. The new board includes Andre Leu (Australia’s OFA Chair) who was a strong supporter of reform.

NASAA is certainly relieved and happy that the tide has finally turned and as an Australian leader in the movement to restore organic integrity in IFOAM. NASAA’s Chair Rod May summed it all up by saying “Once again we can promote our private standards and system as the defining one for organic agriculture and pave the way for developments in organic farming that bring regulators and markets with us, rather than being in the grip of economic rationalism. The next challenge is to ensure the same retention of integrity here in Australia”

IMPRESSIONS OF IFOAM 2008 IN ITALY



For free use around Modena



Organic seed production site



Organic parmesan opened



Organic market in full swing



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AND CONGRATULATIONS TO.....

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR DAN ETHERINGTON AM

For 25 years Dr Dan Etherington was an agricultural economist in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University, an overseas aid advocate and for the last 16 years he's developed and manufactured a coconut press with his company Kokonut Pacific, so villagers on South Pacific Islands could make their own oil. Kokonut Pacific has been certified by NASAA since 2004. He's been recognised for that work with a Member of the Order of Australia this year. Born and raised on a successful farm in Kenya, he's been teaching courses in sustainable agriculture at the Australian National University. He first conceived of the coconut press in 1992 and by 2005, 10,000 people were benefiting from it in the South Pacific.



LARK HILL WINERY NASAA #2519



Lark Hill was invited to submit our 2006 Pinot Noir for the London International Wine Fairs "Top 100" Tasting. In 2008 the focus was "Organic and Biodynamic Wines" with each member selecting 5 wines in each price category, from either Old or New World wineries, based on: overall quality, consistency, value for money and demonstrating typicity of origin or region. Lark Hill has had previous success in London with a 2001 Pinot Noir was judged equal 3rd at the London International Wine Challenge - placing Lark Hill amongst the best Pinot Noir producers in the World. Commentator Janis Robinson said this of our 2006 Pinot Noir that it was "delicate gentle red fruit. Subtle and gently savoury. Fruit is sweet but not confectioned. Warm but not spicity and long. More plum than strawberry. Dry, velvety. 13.5%". 2008 marks two milestones for Lark Hill - the vineyard is 30 years old, and it achieved full Biodynamic certification for the 2008 vintage.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS #8056

Samoan coconut growers Women in Business have won a contract to supply organic coconut oil to the international skincare firm, The Body Shop. The deal between certified organic farmers and the British-based firm will see Samoan virgin coconut oil going into the company's bath and body product lines. More than three tonnes of the oil, which will be sold under the Fairtrade label, has already been sent to the United Kingdom.

*Presenter: Jean Edwards
 Speakers: Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i, Samoan Women in Business, Barry Coates, of Oxfam New Zealand; Body Shop spokesperson Jane Hoben, coconut grower Tuputa Meafou*





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NEW CARBON COALITION FOR CHANGE LAUNCHED

World's Biggest Climate Change Solution:

You're Standing On It',

says the Carbon Coalition and (new) Soil Carbon Alliance



Three major agricultural and environmental bodies have joined forces to call for urgent action by the Commonwealth Government to remove the blockage to the world's largest terrestrial carbon sink and play a decisive role in the battle to avoid the 'major damage' to Australia's economy and environment as predicted in Professor Ross Garnaut Draft Report released in early July.

To promote the capacity of soils to capture and store carbon, farmers' climate change lobby group, the Carbon Coalition has joined forces with organics industry peak body the OFA, and environmental research and marketing experts, the Centre for Organic Resource & Enterprise (CORE), to form the Soil Carbon Alliance.

"We are calling on the Government to commission Australia's top soil carbon scientists to agree on a method for estimating amounts of carbon in soil so farmers can be encouraged to capture and store carbon at the maximum rate possible," says Michael Kiely, Convenor of the Carbon Coalition.

The Soil Carbon Alliance is appealing to Australia's soil carbon experts to join a list to be submitted to the Minister for Agriculture, Tony Burke, to overcome the "practical difficulties" the Government is having with soil carbon. "Some scientists say soil carbon is hard to measure. But soil carbon specialists, who measure carbon routinely, do not have a difficulty measuring it," says Michael Kiely.

The soil is a powerful carbon sink that can turn the tables on climate change if given a chance, according to the Alliance. It stores more carbon than the atmosphere and all the trees and vegetation on the Earth combined. Australia has more than 450 million hectares of land managed by farmers. There are 5.5 billion hectares of farmland in the world. "If farmers were to sequester half a tonne of carbon per hectare, we could extract more than 12 billion tonnes of CO2 from the atmosphere," says Mr Kiely. The world emits 8 billion tonnes more than it should each year. "Already farmers in WA are sequestering between 1 and 3 tonnes per hectare per year, according to Government – sponsored trials."

CEO of CORE, Eric Love, says 'the results are in: some of the best proofs that carbon farming is a powerful means of capturing and storing carbon in the soils come from trials of organic farming methods conducted over 25 years.'

CSIRO soil carbon specialist Dr Neil McKenzie recommended the appointment of expert panels in emergencies in 2002: "There is a strong case for maintaining several national panels to undertake expert assessments [when] decision-makers require advice on likely changes in soil and land resource condition and they cannot wait until there is statistical certainty in trends from long-term monitoring sites. Interim procedures are required so that assessments of change can be based on risk, probability and expert opinion."

Soil carbon has been a neglected field for scientific work (compared to the \$175million given to the coal industry to develop 'clean coal'.) This underinvestment has left Agriculture unprepared for joining the Emissions Trading Scheme.

"Recently the NSW Government cancelled an important soil carbon calculator project that would have brought trading closer. It cost only \$30,000. The bureaucrats have no concept of what they are dealing with," says Michael Kiely. "They need leadership."



TECHNICAL ISSUES ADDRESSED AT IFOAM

IFOAM CONFERENCE COMMENDED FOR ITS TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT:

The strong technical presentations at last month's IFOAM conference were to be commended. A number of these are referenced in this publication and can be downloaded from the web. An extensive array of plenary speakers were also featured, most of whom brought new dimension to our understanding of the relevance of organic agriculture and its application, and most welcome were those that pressed us to work harder to improve our systems and our performance. Chief amongst these was an outstanding contribution from IPCC member and joint Nobel Prize winner Jorgen V Olesen (Professor in Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change) who urged organic policy makers to work harder on climate change. He went on to say in personal comments that we need think "water" and not "temperature" when we think of climate change—an issue only too well understood here in Australia.

Other voices were wearing thin however and the self-congratulatory tirade from at least one well known advocate presents a weakness in the movement's drive for improvement. We cannot become victim of our self-congratulatory rhetoric and need to refrain from this practice wherever possible and this includes here at home where all too often we hear about our legendary feats in glossy journals.

The conference organisation was also to be commended and despite a few tricky moments negotiating the events held at widely separated venues within the city of Modena, the Italians' attention to detail was commendable. NASAA wishes to thank all those involved, especially the organisers for providing its attendant with the free registration as is a custom for those who have held the previous conference. The next World Congress is to be held in Korea in 2011.

NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR ORGANIC WINE PROCESSING

NASAA organic vigneron will be well aware of the removal of DAP from the national standards and possibly aware of the ongoing debate to see its reinstatement or replacement. New hope for a replacement for this chemical derived product, seen by many as an anathema to organic principles was presented at the organic vine and wine conference in Italy last month. The abstract is reproduced below courtesy of the 16th IFOAM viticulture conference and the full paper can be accessed at the following address <http://orgprints.org/view/projects/conference.html>. (Suppliers of the product include Orwine. www.orwine.org)

ORGANIC NITROGEN: A NEW SOLUTION FOR PERFORMING FERMENTATIONS?

Bonnefond, C.I, Blateyron, L.I, & Guerrand, D.2

This is a short synopsis of these researchers' findings which are of relevance to organic winemakers here in Australia.

*"Many musts from the south of France need a complementary supply of nitrogen to avoid sluggish fermentation. Mineral nitrogen or nitrogen under a complex form (ammonia and free amino nitrogen) is available in the oenology market. This preliminary work aims to evaluate a new form of nitrogen: organic nitrogen provided only from inactivated yeasts. First results show that use of organic nitrogen has the same effectiveness on the fermentation rate as a mineral or mixed nitrogen source and results in interesting organoleptic profiles: wines with more fruity flavours and more foremouth volume. Alcoholic fermentation performed by *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* yeast is a complex process in which nitrogen availability in must is largely implicated in the fermentation rate and aromatic compounds production. Indeed, the wine organoleptic profile clearly depends on nitrogen availability and, above all, on the present nitrogen form and balance.*

Because of recurrent nitrogen deficiency in grapes, especially in areas of southern France impacted by dryness, nitrogen additions during alcoholic fermentation became a common practice in winemaking. Commercial nitrogen is under either a mineral form (diammonium sulphate DAS or diammonium phosphate DAP) or a complex form (mineral nitrogen mixed with nitrogen from organic source: inactivated yeasts). In order to evaluate the impact of the "quality" of nitrogen on wines, the Cooperative Wine Institute (ICV^o) tested an experimental form of nitrogen produced only from an organic source. The aim of this preliminary work is to compare this new form of nitrogen with mineral and with complex nitrogen. We investigated whether organic nitrogen could be a new tool to develop fruity wines, free of sulphur off flavours and with controlled SO₂ productions".



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BITS AND PIECES

NASAA ORGANIC STANDARD AMENDMENT

This has been amended to allow anaesthetic for surgical treatment. A with-holding period of three weeks or that recommended for the product, whichever is the greater, will apply. Quarantine will not be required.

ORGANIC MACADAMIA GROUP FORMED

In the interests of improving the horticulture and commercialisation of their products, a group of established certified organic macadamia growers, the majority with ACO or NASAA certification, has established and registered “The Society of Australian Organic Macadamia Growers Incorporated”.

The growers’ group has recently negotiated a ‘pool processing contract’ and a competitive processing fee with a local certified organic processor. Members are responsible for their own marketing and sales.

The group welcomes new members, and is happy to provide support to those ‘growers in conversion’ and believes that there is a healthy future for organic macadamia nuts and products, such as butter and oil. If you are interested in becoming a member please contact Christine Rijks, 02 6628 3858 or at serendip@vtown.com.au

BUYING & SELLING ORGANIC FOOD—New Edition

Originally published in 2005 ‘Buying and Selling Organic Food’ has been updated with new and additional information.

The new edition is endorsed by the Organic Federation of Australia. It provides expert advice on; how consumers can make sure what they buy is organic; the importance of certified goods, an insight into the Australian organic industry, areas for consumer awareness; and why an increasing number of people buy organic. It includes important information for suppliers including planning, certification (and how to become certified), the do’s and don’ts of marketing, advertising and labelling and a summary of consumer protection and other regulation in relation to organic food.

The author, John Furbank, is a regulatory practice consultant and consumer advocate. He is a member of Standards Australia Food Sector Board and Standards Australia Committees for Food Products and Organic and Biodynamic Products. Available from SAI Global Publications Sales Centre, Phone 131 242, www.saiglobal.com/shopcom.au , sales@saiglobal.com (Code GB 018—2008, ISBN 1 921093 46 3)

AUSTRALIAN ORGANIC WOOL

Australian Organic Wool is wanting to hear from organic wool growers who are not practising mulesing or using anaesthetics during mulesing. We are looking at developing a range of organic knitting yarns, to complement our existing range, spun from non-mulesed organic wool. Growers should contact Mel McMillan on (02) 66 89 7041, mel@organicwool.com.au or visit www.organicwool.com.au

NEW RIRDC PUBLICATION

A recent edition to RIRDC’s organic publications is the book entitled “Going Organic with Rice and Soybeans—the third in a series with previous publications for vegetables and rangeland livestock. The publication provides a framework for organic conversion and discusses pathways towards conversion. It also describes possible methods for organic production of rice and soybeans, market potential, possible marketing strategies, the economics of production, processing requirements and quality assurance.

For more information contact Margie Thomson at RIRDC 02 6271 4100 or email margie.thomson@rirdc.gov.au;

ABS SURVEY COMING OUT SOON

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has just started sending out survey forms for the new Agricultural Resource Management (ARM) survey. Combining questions on agricultural commodities as well as resource management and use it is going out to about 30,000 farm businesses across Australia.

The data will be used to support discussions around the creation of trade contracts and provide information useful to agricultural industries affected by the current economic and physical environment. The information will also provide benchmark data for the Governments ‘Caring for Our Country’ initiative.



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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
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ADMIN MATTERS

ADDING ADDITIONAL ACREAGE AT REINSPECTION TIME

Producer operators are reminded that requests to add additional acreage to certification need to be applied for and receive in principle prior approval before inspection time.

Please remember to factor in sufficient time for this process well in advance of reinspection.

WELCOME TO NEW NASAA STAFF

We take this opportunity of welcoming to NASAA three new staff members:

MARTIN HOLLEBRANDSE as Certification Manager

AYA HYAKUBU as JAS Liaison Officer

TOM PORTAS as IT Systems Officer

Each of these positions is either new or expanded in scope and reflects NASAA's commitment to growing its services and improving its service delivery in our industry.

The Board looks forward to working with new and existing staff to deliver to NASAA operators a certification service based upon integrity and quality.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Each NASAA operator received a Client Satisfaction Survey form recently. If yours has not been returned in the reply-paid envelope please be reminded that we welcome all input—however positive or negative—on all aspects of NASAA's service, and, indeed on wider matters such as Standards etc.

ANNUAL FEE & DECLARATIONS

Many operators have used their survey response as the opportunity to get their Annual Fee and Declaration in at the same time—that all makes good use of one envelope and is hopefully a convenience for all concerned.

Please keep our postie busy with all these items coming! The deadline to pay, respond and declare is 31 July latest, please.

REVISED GUIDE TO NASAA LABELS RELEASED

We have recently revised the Guide to Use of NASAA Labels. It is available for download from NASAA's website/resource centre or on request from NASAA.

TEN GOOD REASONS FOR CHOOSING NASAA AS YOUR CERTIFICATION PARTNER:

1. AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST CERTIFIER OF ORGANIC
2. WORLDWIDE RECOGNITION — YOUR ORGANIC EXPORT PASSPORT
3. WHERE INTEGRITY COUNTS: ONE LABEL—ONE MEANING
4. SERVICING CLIENTS EQUALLY WHATEVER THEIR SIZE
5. SUPPORTED BY STATE-OF-THE-ART eCERT SYSTEM
6. SMALL PRODUCER CERTIFICATION COMPLIANT WITH THE NATIONAL STANDARD
7. THE QUIET ACHIEVER
8. SUPPORTING THE ROLE OF THE OFA
9. SUPPORTING THE STANDARDS AUSTRALIA PROCESS
10. AN INSTITUTION WITH INTEGRITY