

# Organic Perspectives

## Special Edition: International Cooperation

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### Next Newsletter in March 2004

This edition is dedicated to recent news on the international organic products market. For further information, contact Stephanie Riddick, (202) 205-3771, [Stephanie.Riddick@fas.usda.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Riddick@fas.usda.gov).

### European Organizations Move Towards Joint Certification

Organizations from Switzerland, Germany, and Austria have developed a joint coordinating body for inspection and certification, based in Lebring, Austria. The organizations include: Austria Bio Garantie, bio.inspecta, Intact, and Naturland. According to *BioFach*, "The results of the inspections of farms and processing companies will be recorded digitally with the software currently under development. On completion of the certification process, customers can download their result as certificates via the Internet". The process is being tested and is expected to be more efficient than the current procedure. This joint certification development may be a model for future certification in other nations.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.Biofach.de>.

### Japan to Develop Organic Livestock Standards

According to the *Organic Standard*, Japan's Ministry of Agriculture Fishery and Forestry will draft organic standards for livestock. The Ministry plans to implement new standards by 2005. The Japanese Organic Livestock Feed Standard Committee is in the process of reviewing organic livestock standards in the United States and European Union, as well as the Codex guidelines. Committee members include industry officials for cattle, swine, poultry, and dairy farming as well as consumer group leaders. Food quality, and environmental concerns are some of the interests of consumer leaders.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.organicstandard.com/>.

### British Columbia Recognized by NOP

The USDA National Organic Program (NOP) determined that the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries program is in conformity to the technical standards of the USDA NOP. This allows organic certification organizations to apply the NOP standards to products that will be sold, labeled or represented as organic in the United States.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop>.



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## OTA Members Awarded USDA Value-Added Grants

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) reports that four member companies were awarded grants totaling \$1,113,800 from USDA's Rural Development Agency. These grants encourage the development of value-added products and projects, in order to enhance job creation and economic development in rural areas. The Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants program was authorized under the 2002 Farm Bill with grant awards exceeding \$28.7 million.

Source: For more information visit the Organic Trade Association <http://www.ota.com> and USDA Rural Development at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

## Bolivia: The High Cost of Foreign Certification

"Many grower organizations complain about the constantly increasing demands of the certifiers, especially in terms of documentation and internal inspections," reports Joachim Milz from the consulting company Ecotop Consult. The resulting administrative costs are barely covered by the extra revenues that can be achieved by marketing organic products. The persistent economic crisis in Bolivia over the last few years has also led to the situation in which many consumers cannot afford organic products. This is now to be counteracted by drawing up national growing standards and certification guidelines, according to the findings of the conference on "National Certification of Organic Products". "The aim is to develop growing standards that are appropriate to Bolivia's cultural and ecological variety and prepare certification terms that small farmers can also understand and afford," Milz said.

Source: Further information is available from the *BioFach* newsletter at <http://www.BioFach.de>.

## East African Nations Cooperate on Organic Agenda

Representatives of East African Nations (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, etc.) met in Arusha, Tanzania to discuss regional cooperation, certification and related issues in December, 2003. The *Organic Standard* reports that the agenda focused on how organic

organizations in the region can improve the certification process for developing countries, adapt to import rules of major international markets, and collaborate for the increase of organic agriculture in the region. Stakeholders were identified as exporters, farmers, importers, governments, certification bodies, and inspectors. Each country plans to form a national group and will hold internal consultations and make recommendations at the next meeting. Government officials from several nations were significantly involved in the discussions. The group reportedly concluded the meeting agreeing that more cooperation is needed. They plan to meet again in March, 2004 at the IFOAM coffee conference in Kampala, Uganda.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.organicstandard.com>.

## UNCTAD Recommends Organic Production for Tropical Fruits

"The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is urging developing countries to increase organic tropical fruit production to seize growing export markets in the industrialized world," reports the *Australian Organic Advantage*. A detailed report says that demand is expected to grow 10-30 percent over the next five to ten years. However, developing countries currently face serious difficulties in meeting technical requirements of importing countries. So the report recommends that developing countries implement food quality and safety programmes and try to conform to regulatory and market requirements. The complete study with 330 pages can be downloaded.

Source: For more information visit <http://www.BioFach.de>.



## USDA News

### FAS Organic Products Web Site

The FAS Organic Products Web site at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/organics/organics.html> offers constant updates in the "Hot Markets" section. Visit the page frequently for the latest news!

The most recent [FAS international reports on organics](#) markets and issues includes:

- Korea: Organic Market Update
- Czech Republic: Organic Products Market Brief
- European Union: Conclusions on EU Action Plan for Organic Farming

### Trade Shows: 2004 Shows are Coming Up Soon!!

#### Alimentaria (Barcelona, March 8-12, 2004)

We invite you to exhibit your products under the USA Pavilion at Alimentaria in Barcelona, Spain, March 8-12, 2004. Alimentaria, a biennial event, is the largest food and beverage exposition in the Iberian Peninsula. Organic agriculture and demand for organic products is a sector that has been growing. Organic products have gained their space in hypermarket shelves, and Alimentaria 2004 will be an excellent opportunity for U.S. companies to exhibit organic products in a show visited by buyers of all food distribution chains in Spain. In 2002, Alimentaria received more than 3,000 exhibitors occupying 82,000 net square meters of floor space, with 141,000 professional visitors from 80 countries.

#### BioFach Germany (Nuremberg, February 19-22, 2004)

The FAS Trade Show Office and the FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs at the American Embassy in Berlin invites you to exhibit your products under the USA Pavilion at USDA-endorsed BioFach 2004 at the Exhibition Centre in Nuremberg, Germany. BioFach, held annually, is the world's largest organic trade show.

For more information on exhibiting at these international events, contact Sharon Cook in the USDA/FAS Trade Show Office at [Sharon.Cook@usda.gov](mailto:Sharon.Cook@usda.gov) or (202) 720-3425.

## Upcoming Events

For a complete list of events, visit the FAS Organic Products Web site "[Calendar of Events for the Organic Industry](#)".

### International

- **February 19-22, 2004** – BioFach, Germany. World Organic Trade Fair. For more information visit <http://www.naturalproducts.co.uk>.
- **March 14-15, 2004** – The Natural Trade Show, Brighton, England. For more information visit <http://www.naturaltradeshow.com/>.
- **March 24-28, 2004** – Third International IFOAM Coffee Conference, Kampala, Uganda. For more information visit: <http://www.fao.org/organicag/meet-e.htm>.
- **April 4-5, 2004** – Natural Products Europe/Organic Products Europe. For more information visit <http://www.naturalproducts.co.uk>.

### Domestic

- **March 4-7, 2004** – Natural Products Expo West (Organic Products Expo – BioFach America), Anaheim, CA. For more information visit <http://www.naturalproductsexpo.com>.
- **April 16-18, 2004** – National Nutritional Foods Association-Midwest, Louisville, Kentucky. For more information visit <http://www.nnfmw.org/pages.index.cfm>.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- ❑ FAS, **AgExport Services Division's Organic Page** <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agx/organics/organics.html>
- ❑ **National Organic Program** Web site - <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop>

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Editor's Note: As publishers of *Organic Perspectives*, USDA-FAS AgExport Services continuously strives to maintain a partnership with the organic food community by sharing information and providing export assistance through our many export program services. For more information on how we might support your company in establishing opportunities abroad, please contact us at (202) 205-3771.