

Overview of the past year

Intro of outgoing board- Many thanks to Maury Wills, Jim Koan, David Sliva, Tom Rosenfeld and Harry Hoch. They are the group that has led the progress of our group. The group is now a formal association, bylaws have been approved and funding to continue the work and growth of the association is in place.

Clarification of the Association compared to the Network

The Organic Tree Fruit Network OTFN- is an informal group, with over 400 participants who have joined the informal organic tree fruit network list serve. This is the group the Deirdre Birmingham was instrumental in forming over 5 years ago. There are no membership fees and anyone can participate in the listserv as long as the discussions on the listserv are focused on tree fruit production. The Network participants are welcome to participate in all education opportunities provided by the Association.

The Organic Tree Fruit Association – OTFA- is a formal membership based group. The Mission of OTFA is to serve the interest of organic tree fruit growers and advance the organic tree fruit industry through Education, Research and Advocacy.

Intro of Bridget and the work she has been doing- Bridget O’Meara has been working under the leadership of the board. She worked with Harry Hoch to write a USDA Specialty Block Grant that will fund some education, research and final structuring of the association. The outline of the grant is on the OTFA web page. Bridget will also be the moderator on the network list serve.

Board Elections

Harry reviewed the board members nominated before the meeting. He asked for any nominations from the floor. He reviewed the voting procedure and explained the write in process. Bridget counted the votes and the absentee votes. Election results showing the top five candidates area as follows:

Jackie Hoch
Tom Rosenfeld
Greg Mund
James Lindemann
Tom Galazen

Proposed officers based on who received the most votes from OTFA members are:

President: Jackie Hoch
Treasurer: Tom Rosenfeld
Secretary: Greg Mund

Committee Descriptions and sign up

Education Committee- Needed to guide and lead the educational components of the group.

Initial interested members: Greg Mund and Jim Koan

Initial focus of the education group

1. Grower seminar on Organic Certification with Cissy Bowman (Indiana Certified Organic) could be held in conjunction with Great Lakes EXPO in 2010 **and** in conjunction with Organic Farming Conference/ Organic University in 2011.
2. Fact Sheet on transiting to organic certification developed for seminars.
3. Field days (2010) – solicit membership via listserv for possible locations and dates.
4. More informal orchard walks could be listed on website.
5. Just Picked – needs direction/content and schedule of deadlines per issue for advertisers.

Research Committee- Needed to continue the research work of the specialty block grant that Harry Hoch and Bridget have been working on.

Initial interested members: Harry Hoch, Sam Kedem, Ken Mandley, Dan Barker, Paul Whitaker

Initial focus of the research group

1. Survey results – to be compiled analyzed by committee in order to determine priorities (also published on website/newsletter).
2. OFRF grant deadlines – May 17, 2010 (and November 15, 2010).

Potential- Policy Committee- initial discussion about the future possibility of the group developing policy positions on Organic issues. Hold for future work after developing the educational and research committee.

A signup sheet was available for interested parties to join the education and research committees. The board will determine which board member will lead each committee and the committee leaders will recruit other interested parties

Next steps

New board to meet electronically or by phone

Board Agenda items to be discussed-

- Discuss the recommend executive board and confirm the board
- Determine board membership on committees- and more clearly define committee goals and timelines
- Discuss and determine the approach to some items need to be completed for the general operation of the association
 - Review bylaws for adjustments needed- Greg suggested a review clarification of a few points in the bylaws
 - Determine who and how to complete the filing of a non-profit status.