

January 2008

Hello, we hope you have a wonderful 2008!

It is time to begin the Annual Update process for your NOFA NY Certified Organic, LLC organic certification. We look forward to working with you in the coming year. Your update paperwork is enclosed. *Please note, if you are able to receive information from us via e-mail, please make sure this area in the Update Addendum is completed accurately.*

Here are a few reminders:

~ **Completed applications must be returned with a postmark date no later than February 28, 2008.** *Applications received after this date will be assessed a late fee of \$125.00. Non-compliance notices will be issued for applications not received within two weeks of this date. If you are unable to submit your application on time, please contact us.*

*If you will not be continuing your certification for 2008, please notify the office in writing and surrender your organic certificate by the February 28, 2008 application deadline.* This will allow you to leave our organization in good standing and be eligible to apply for certification again at any time. If this step is not followed, we are required to issue a Notice of Noncompliance and then a Notice of Proposed Suspension and then a Suspension notice. **This costs the program \$5.00 for every mailing and staff time.**

**Fees:**

~ We are continuing the "Early Bird" discount of \$50.00 off the 2008 certification fee. To qualify for this discount, your application must: 1) be **complete**, including **all** required forms, 2) include payment of the **entire certification fee**, 3) be received in the certification office by **February 8, 2008**.

~ If you choose not to take advantage of the Early Bird discount, one half of your 2008 certification fee is due with the application. The second half of the fee is due in the certification office by August 1, 2008. This will allow us to automatically update NY Ag & Markets for the reimbursement program. If any portion of the annual certification fee remains unpaid after August 1, 2008, a Notice of Noncompliance will be issued and a \$30.00 billing fee will be assessed.

**Additional forms required:**

~ Your completed 2007 Applied Amendments/Spray Record and Harvest Records **must** be submitted with your update application. Be sure to indicate on the form if no amendments were used. For livestock producers, Dairy/Livestock Medication Records, and Purchased Feed Logs are also required. New copies are enclosed for use in 2008.

**Organic Seed Requirement:**

~ Please make every effort to source organic seeds for your 2008 crops. There is a good supply available. A **minimum** of three **viable sources** of organic seeds must be contacted before using untreated seed. Companies that do not sell organic seeds are not considered to be a valid contact. You must **clearly**

document your seed search and have it available for the Inspector to review during your inspection. Keep all tags, receipts, etc. **If a genuine effort is not made to source and use organic seeds, it will be considered a Noncompliance.**

~ Please remember that the use of any treated seeds will disqualify a field from certification for three years. If organic seeds are not available in the form, quality or quantity that you need, and you use untreated seeds, **you must submit proof that they were untreated and a Non-GMO statement for each variety.**

**Please update the following:**

~ **Field Information for 2008:** Please complete this form per the instructions on the form. If you are planning to grow the crops listed in the 2007 box with additions, please make those additions in the 2008 box. \*If you are adding new fields or pastures in this year, a map of the new field/pasture, New Field History form and New Field Affidavit are required. *Crops from new fields may not be fed or sold as organic until certification is completed.*

~ **Equipment List:** If there are no changes, please indicate this. Please list any new equipment added or disposed of after the "2008" date.

~ **Certified Animal List** (for Livestock Producers): Please review and update the enclosed list. Indicate animals sold, born and purchased. Be sure to obtain certification documentation for all purchased animals. Birthdates should be entered in a mm/dd/yy format. **Information for all new animals, whether farm raised or purchased must be supplied.** For all producers that are certifying chickens, we are sending the Pastured Poultry Addendum for completion. If you are using a stationary house poultry system with a fenced outdoor access area, please note this on that addendum. Please make sure outdoor access records are being maintained.

~ **Products List:** Please review and update the enclosed list by checking the box for the appropriate category of use. Add any new products being used.

***\*\*\*The National Organic Program has provided training to certifiers that the producer must exercise all options in the regulations for pest, herbicide and fungicide control before using products. If a producer has used all of the methods in the regulations sections 205.201 thru 205.207, they may use products allowed per the National List. This is sections 205.601 and 205.602 for crops and 205.603 & 205.604 for livestock. The producer must be able to verify compliance to the National List of all ingredients, including inert ingredients, in a product they use. The producer also needs to update their certifier as soon as possible of the need to use that product. The biggest cause of non-compliances is the use of unapproved products. Before use of a product, obtain all information including all ingredients, including inert ingredients and submit them to the certification office for approval. If you are unable to obtain all ingredients, we will do our best to assist you. If we do not succeed, the product will be prohibited for use. If the product has already been used this will remove the area from certification for 3 years. In the case of livestock, it is out of certification forever. \*\*\****

~ We strongly encourage you to update your notification letters with all applicable agencies. This helps protect you in case of spraying near your property.

**IMPORTANT:** Once again, a reminder that audit trail records, including harvest records, are required to be maintained for your crops. The inspector will review these records at the time of the inspection visit.

~ Be sure to make a copy of all 2008 forms for your records before sending them to the office.

- Your application must be completed in PEN. Any applications submitted in pencil will be returned, and will delay processing.

The 2008 NOP Standards and the NOFA NY Certified Organic, LLC Guidance and Policy Manuals are currently being printed. An updated 2008 version will be mailed to all producers by the end of February.

### Common Questions & Answers

- There is a Seed and Seed Treatment list in the Organic Addendum. Do I need to transfer my records onto this page and submit them? No. You **do** need to have a listing of non-certified seeds used and why they are being used versus certified organic. These **do** need to be submitted with your application. Please indicate if any inoculants are used and please make sure that you have obtained a non-gmo statement for the treatment. Please also remember that any pelleting materials **must** conform to the regulations. Please e-mail or call the office before purchasing any pelleting treatments, if you are unsure.

- Did I hear something about a reimbursement for certification fees? Yes. For New York, please contact Phil Bibbo at NYS Ag and Markets, at 518-457-2195 for further information; for Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at 717-772-8354.

*Please be sure complete and return all forms, postmarked by February 28, 2008, to avoid the assessment of a late fee*

If you have any questions on the re-certification process or forms, please call the office. We are here from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. We do have a voice mail system, so if all lines are busy, please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Thank you for continuing your certification with us. Have a great 2008 growing season!

Best Wishes from NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC staff