

## Organic Conference Call Notes for July 7, 2005

Host: Helene Murray Scribe: Milt Haar, Participants: John Beckwith, Bud Markhart, Meg Moynihan, Pauline Nickel, Paul Porter, Jim Riddle, Lori Scott and Harry Sabal

1. Interviews for the state organic coordinator position began today. Conference call was a little shorter because several participants are involved in the interviews.
2. Information exchange
3. Pauline invited everyone to attend the University of Minnesota Day – Southwest. The event will take place at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July. Pauline shared highlights of the day's events; please, see website for details. Milt and Lori are busy preparing for the day.
4. Jim informed the group that the current Organic Advisory Task Force held its final meeting. A new task force has been authorized, but has not been filled.
  - a. The 1<sup>st</sup> draft of rules for research variances has been drawn up by the NOSB. The current rules are not clear. Ask Jim if you are interested in the details. Seats are available on the NOSB. Application is encourage; see website for details.
  - b. Centrol Crop Advisors are working on a certification or specialization for organics. Some programs such as crop insurance require a crop advisor.
5. Meg:
  - a. Business as usual at the Department of Agriculture despite the state government budget problems
  - b. Some organic dairies are providing a premium during the transition phase. The Department would like to let people know about this opportunity
  - c. Applications for producer cost share are going out. Apply early because funds are limited.
6. Bud:
  - a. Introduced Harry Sabal from Belize. He is visiting for 6 weeks learning about organics. He would like to see and learn as much as possible. If you know of any events, please let him know.
  - b. Week after next Bud will attend the American Horticulture Society meeting. There he will present a paper on transplant sweet corn in organic production and participate on a panel looking at developing organic curriculum at Universities
7. Paul reported that organic field day at Waseca went well. An interesting visit to Sunrich Soybean Processing where soybeans are processed for soy milk
  - a. Stop by and see the student organic farm on the St. Paul campus
8. Helene would like your feedback on the proposed lecture series "Eating Right? The Rhetoric and Ethics of Organic, Local, and Slow Food"

Next meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup>; Bud will host and John will scribe