



Floods 2008

CROP VARIANCE APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR COUNTIES DECLARED A DISASTER IN 2008 BY GOVERNOR CULVER

On June 9, 2008, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) requested a temporary variance to the organic crop rotation requirement from the National Organic Program. The variance, 205.290(b) has been granted through an application process for the shaded counties which have been declared a disaster area.



Shaded areas are approved disaster counties

If your farm is located within this area, you ***MUST*** complete the requested form prior to changing your crop rotation.

This variance allows farmers within the affected areas to plant “back-to-back” crops during the 2008 crop season if necessitated by rain or flood conditions. Hopefully this option will help alleviate some economic hardships suffered by farmers across the state by the historical rains and flooding.

If you are certified by IDALS and would like to request a variance form, please contact us at 515-281-7656. If you are certified by another certifier, please contact them for assistance.

June 20, 2008

Issue 7

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- * No Spray Signs
- * Updates
- * Product Labeling

INSPECTIONS

Inspections are underway. If you have concerns regarding how the flooding may impact your inspection, do not hesitate to call us.

SAVE YOURSELF
TIME-BE PREPARED!

RECORD KEEPING IS A MUST

The 2008 crop season is in full swing and we know you are busy, but don't forget that accurate record keeping is essential to your organic operation. According to organic regulation 205.103, a certified operation must maintain records concerning the production, harvesting or handling of agriculture

products that are intended to be sold, labeled, or represented as organic. These records must fully disclose all activities and transactions of their certified operation and must be maintained for not less than 5 years beyond their creation.

"NO SPRAY" SIGNS ARE HERE !!



In the last newsletter, we informed you about "minimizing risks" and introduced you to the Sensitive Crops Registry. We are now pleased to present you with the "No Spray" signs.

In addition to apiaries, pesticide-sensitive crops including vineyards, orchards, certified organic,

and fruit and vegetable crops have been incorporated into this registry. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship received \$10,000 from the Iowa Aerial Applicators Association to help support the development and cost-share assistance of the "No Spray" signs. The aluminum signs are 12" X 18" and can be purchased on a cost-share basis at a rate of \$5.00 each.

The signs should be posted at the physical location of the pesticide sensitive crop at a height above the crop canopy that will make the field markers visible to both ground and aerial applications.

If you have a certified organic operation of one acre or more, don't miss this opportunity to help protect your farm. In order to obtain a sign, you must be registered in the directory. To become part of the Sensitive Crops Directory, you can now register online at www.iowaagriculture.gov. To register go to the Horticulture and Farmers Market Bureau webpage and click on the "Sensitive Crop Directory Link."



Picture taken at check presentation to Department for the Sensitive Crops Program. Picture includes members of IDALS, aerial applicators, producers and growers.

HELP US PROMOTE YOU!



Fresh Facts

In 2007, IDALS received funding through a USDA Specialty Crops Grant Program. The grant request was written to include assistance for marketing of Iowa's specialty crops. After meeting with growers and discussing their marketing needs, brochures were developed for some of Iowa's specialty crops including: apples, asparagus, pumpkins and strawberries. Through this grant funding source, we are very excited to offer the "Fresh Facts" series of brochures.

Each brochure contains educational, nutritional,

and historical or local facts as well as several recipes. In addition, there is a blank area on each brochure for you to affix your business stamp or label to help you establish repeat business.

You may view these brochures on our website. Requests to receive these brochures free of charge have been mailed. If you would like to receive a supply and did not receive the request form, you may call or email us to check on availability.



UPDATES!!

Farm Bill

On May 12, the 2008 Farm Bill was passed. A summary of the organic provisions of the farm bill include:

- * \$22 million in mandatory funding over 5 years for organic certification cost share (an increase of \$17 million!); anticipated implementation is in 2009
- * \$5 million for funding of an organic data collection initiative and a new program to provide financial assistance for organic conservation within the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- * \$78 million for the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (a competitive grants program)
- * Retention of the organic crop insurance surcharge

To read more on the farm bill go to:

http://www.sustainableagriculture.net/fb_reports.php

Farm to School Program

Great news for the Farm to School Program! The Farm Bill also includes a provision allowing local schools to establish a purchasing preference for locally produced fruits, vegetables, dairy and meats for school meals.

Iowa Farm to School Program

Progress is being made here in Iowa. We believe that the success of this program depends on strong local networks of individuals and organizations familiar with their community's resources and needs. To do this, we have developed "Farm to School Chapter Packets." These packets are now available for individuals or groups interested in starting a local Farm to School chapter. The packets help inventory local resources and provide guidance and support in starting local groups. By being a vested group, you greatly enhance the chance of long-term success. Contact our office to obtain your Farm to School Chapter Packet today!

PROMOTING PROCESSED ORGANIC PRODUCTS THROUGH LABELING

With the continued growth in the organic industry, your product has more visibility than ever. The label you use may be the main tool you have to persuade the consumer to choose your processed product. While your label should be used as a marketing tool, it also needs to be informative to the consumer. Here are some things you should review when developing your label.

After you have established whether your product is "100 percent organic," "organic" or "made with organic," this information may be displayed on the principle display panel, information panel, and any other panel of the package as well as on any labeling or marketing information concerning the product. You have the option to use the USDA seal and/or the IDALS seal, as well as your certifier's contact information such as address and phone number.

Packages making an organic claim must contain the phrase "Certified organic by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship." (no acronym allowed.) Please note that the name of the certifying agency is required regardless of which certifier is used.

Additional information regarding labeling can be found in the National Organic Program (NOP) Regulations 205.300—205.311.



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IT'S A BOY!

Congratulations to our inspector Matt Miller and his wife Monica on the birth of their new baby boy. Henry Augustine will join big brother Peter in the Miller family.

ORGANIC BUY/SELL SPOT**Wanted**

32 certified Organic Jersey Cows that will freshen Aug-Oct.

For Sale

No listings

Send us your e-mail request and we will post the information here. The role of IDALS will be to forward your e-mail information to interested parties, so please include all contact information in your e-mail. It's free; and you have an interested audience. You may contact Tammy Stotts by e-mail at tammy.stotts@iowaagriculture.gov.

THE IMPACT OF FLOODED FIELDS ON ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

"Due to recent flooding of agricultural land throughout the United States, many reporters, farmers, inspectors, extension agents, food shoppers, and others are wondering about the impact of flooding on organic certification of affected fields and products" this excerpt from a paper written by Jim Riddle entitled "Impact of Flooding on Organic Food and Fields," addresses some of the issues affecting organic producers that have fallen victim to flooding. The article can be viewed at <http://organicecology.umn.edu/archive/impact-of-flooding-on-organic-food-and-fields>.

The specific National Organic Program (NOP) requirements that may apply to flooded fields and crops are §205.400 (f), General requirements for certification; §205.670, In-

spection and testing of agricultural product to be sold or labeled "organic"; §205.671, Exclusion from organic sale; §205.201(a)(5), Organic plan requirements for monitoring; §205.272(a), Contact with prohibited substances; and §205.290, Temporary variances. If land is verified as contaminated with prohibited substances and needs to undergo transition to regain eligibility for certification, §205.202 Land requirements, would apply.

If you have flooding concerns that may affect your organic eligibility, please contact our office for assistance. There is some tolerance allowed and we ask that producers call us before making any changes to the farming system or organic labeling. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis and may not be cause for concern.