



## TIME TO APPLY FOR COST-SHARE IS RUNNING OUT!

### THE DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 16, 2009

The Cost-Share Program offered through the National Organic Program (NOP) for the 2008/2009 certification year will expire on November 16, 2009. **Funding remains for individuals that were certified between the dates of October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009.** This program is open to all certified organic farmers regardless of which certifying agent was used. The program allows for 75% reimbursement of organic certification fees up to \$750. IDALS customers receive an application with their completed certificates. Non-IDALS customers should contact their

certifier to receive an application. Send completed application to our office. Applications are also available at: [www.agriculture.state.ia.us / AgDiversification/organic Cost-Share.asp](http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/AgDiversification/organic%20Cost-Share.asp)

This program is not being utilized to the fullest extent and we encourage each of you to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.

A similar Cost-Share Program has started for the federal fiscal year that began on October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

October 28, 2009

Issue 12

#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- \* Budget shortfalls bring some changes
- \* New Market for Organic Products

#### DATES TO

#### REMEMBER!

- \* Cost-share applications for 08-09 postmarked by 11/16/09
- \* New USDA Program—Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food



## IDALS AUDIT FINDINGS AND WHAT THAT MEANS TO YOU

As stated in the previous newsletter, Agricultural Marketing Services' Audit, Review, and Compliance Branch (ARC) on behalf of the National Organic Program (NOP) conducted the 2.5 year mid-term audit of the IDALS certification program in July. As is with any audit, there are always areas to strengthen. As a result of this audit, we have been reassessing the time lapse between re-

questing information from our clients and the follow up that occurs after receipt of missing or incomplete materials. We are putting tools into place to help us improve our tracking time. This will require cooperation from our customers. By working together to get the information to you in a clear and concise manner, we are certain we will improve upon this turnaround time.

## DID YOU KNOW?

While the results are not yet available for the Organic Production Survey, the results from the 2007 survey are published. Below are just a few results listed in the survey. To view the entire survey, go to <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>.

- The number of farms in the U.S. has grown by 2201 farms from 90,655 in 2002 to 92,856 in 2007;
- The largest increase is in small farms 1 to 9 acres which experienced a growth of 3,898 from 4,811 farms to 8,709 farms;
- Estimated value of farmland and buildings also increased significantly from an average cost per acre of \$2,005 to \$3,388; however the total farm production expenses also saw sizeable increases.

## 9TH ANNUAL IOWA ORGANIC CONFERENCE

Don't miss an opportunity to educate yourself with the latest news from experts in the field of organics. This year's conference will be held at Iowa State University's Scheman Building on December 5th. The keynote speaker for this event will be Jerry DeWitt, Director for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Jerry will share his experiences with organic farmers in Iowa, the United States and the world.

This year's Iowa Organic Conference will include sessions on:

- Transitioning to Organic Farming
- Marketing Organic Produce

- Building Carbon in Your Soil
- Government Programs for Organic

A trade show of organic products and services will be held during the conference with time for networking. An all-organic Midwest-grown lunch will be included with registration.

Additional information can be obtained by going to their website at: <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/organic09/home.html>.



## IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

It is not too early to begin speculating or planning for 2010. Every five years it is necessary to complete a new application. 2010 will usher in the need for all crop producers to complete a new application. You can expect the application to look a little different as we continue to make efforts to simplify and bring more clarity to the process. Currently certified operations will automatically receive renewal applications.

The early bird application date will remain March 15th; however, the last date to apply for certification through IDALS will be May 1, 2010. This will increase our efficiency when scheduling inspections and should aid in the timeliness of these inspections. We encourage you to consider receiving your application **electronically**. Not only will this save time and money but it will also make updating your application easier. Please contact us before December 15, 2009. Applications will be mailed out in early January. Please begin preparations now.

## TRACKING INFORMATION JUST GOT EASIER



(From USDA/AMS) We, at USDA/AMS are very excited about this new National Organic Publication! Our vision with this report is to combine ALL organic prices we collect into one report to give users a transparent glimpse at the organic grain and feedstuffs market on a national level. These are prices from the West Coast to the Upper Midwest,

and the Eastern Cornbelt to the East Coast. We will also work to report contract prices and include graphs of current information.

The link to the latest organic price report is located below:

Upper Midwest Organic Grain and Feedstuffs [http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw\\_gr113.txt](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/nw_gr113.txt)



## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

More and more often today's consumers rely on the internet to find the products they are seeking. Directories are a quick easy source that provide a compilation of goods or services. The time and energy required to complete a comprehensive directory is extensive, and as soon as it is completed, it is often times outdated.

The organic directory will be updated using current information as of October 2009. The directory will provide

consumers with name, address and phone information and will be accessible through search data which will consist of farm name, city or county. Producers will be listed according to the following product categories: "agronomic", "horticulture", "livestock" and "dairy". All IDALS certified producers will be listed. The directory will be updated in as timely a fashion as possible as changes occur.

## CAN YOU HELP?

Budget shortfalls affect all of us. As we continue to deal with budget cuts and the impacts they have on us personally and here at work, we are asking that you help us conserve our precious resources whenever and wherever feasible.

Help us save staff time, postage and paper by:

- Remember, making your own copies of your application and all supporting documents saves us time and energy and saves you a \$25 copying fee;
- Submitting all requested information the first time;
- Consolidate your requests, please plan ahead and request all information anticipated for the season (i.e. clean truck affidavits);
- Make the electronic conversion! Forms and applications can be sent or retrieved from our website electronically saving paper, postage and time;
- Make each newsletter count. Please let us know what you'd like to see. For the time being we will be reducing the number of times a year the newsletter is issued from 4 to 2. We will try to make the newsletters as informative as possible and will continue to notify you of pressing issues.

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# Happy Harvest!

## ORGANIC BUY/SELL SPOT

### Wanted

Farm help on organic farm in the Correctionville area—may lead to mgmt opportunities.

### 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](mailto:tammy.stotts@iowaagriculture.gov).



## KNOW YOUR FARMER, KNOW YOUR FOOD

A new initiative was launched by USDA last month to help develop local and regional food systems and spur economic opportunity. Secretary Vilsack said "Reconnecting consumers and institutions with local producers will stimulate economies in rural communities, improve access to healthy, nutritious food for our families, and decrease the amount of resources needed to transport our food."

The following actions may aid in this initiative:

- USDA's Risk Management Agency allocated 3.4 million in funding for collaborative outreach and assistance programs to socially disadvantaged and underserved farmers (example of this addresses food safety and regulations of marketing to schools and similar institutions).

- USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service proposed regulations to implement a new voluntary cooperative program under which select state-inspected establishments will be eligible to ship meat and poultry products in interstate commerce, providing another marketing opportunity.
- USDA's Rural Development announced \$4.4 million in grants targeting local business cooperatives to aid in the process of production-to-consumption, again expanding local market opportunities.

Additional opportunities will be available as this program evolves. To keep abreast of the latest information, go to their website: <http://www.usda.gov>