



ORGANICOLOGY

Organic Seed Workshops and Speakers at Organicology

Portland, Oregon
February 10 – 12, 2011

Whether you're a farmer, plant breeder or policy wonk, the 2011 Organicology Conference offers seed workshops and speakers for everyone. Gather with the organic food and farming community for a three-day event to discuss a sustainable food future. Agenda items focused on seed and seed-related topics are listed below – from policy and seed production intensives to organic plant breeding discussions and a seed swap. For more information, and to register, visit www.organicology.org.

SEEDS INTENSIVE – February 10 (9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.)

Are you a farmer with basic seed growing experience interested in taking your on-farm seed production to the next level? The Seeds Intensive offers participants a deeper look at the fundamental techniques of seed production; lessons in cover crop seed production methods for lettuce, onions, carrots, beets, and a variety of Brassica crops; and guidance on how to improve seed quality, manage isolation distances, avoid genetic contamination, and select seed crops for local adaptation while maintaining healthy, diverse crops.

Presenters: Micaela Colley, Executive Director, Organic Seed Alliance; Jodi Lew-Smith, Director of Research and Production, High Mowing Seeds; John Navazio, Senior Scientist Research and Education, Organic Seed Alliance; Joel Reiten, Seeds of Change; Don Tipping, Producer/President of Family Farmers Seed Cooperative, Seven Seeds Farm.

POLICY INTENSIVE – February 10 (9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.)

The organic sector had significant gains in the last Farm Bill. We're a growing body of producers, processors, retailers, consumers and activists, and with additional efforts we can increase our impact on the 2012 Farm Bill. Policy Intensive participants will discuss meeting goals in the next farm bill cycle in the areas of organic research, conservation, GMOs, competition, and other organic provisions. Participants will also discuss messaging and leveraging our weight as an organic community, and how to better engage food companies, farmers, and consumers in federal food and farm policies.

Presenters: Michael Sligh, Rural Advancement Foundation International; Liana Hoodes, National Organic Coalition; Fred Kirschenmann, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture; Andrew Kimbrell, Center for Food Safety; Ariane Lotti, Organic Farming Research Foundation; Eliav Bitan, New Era Agriculture; Laura Batcha, Organic Trade Association.

The Study of a Sustainable Food Future



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STATE OF ORGANIC SEED WORKSHOP – February 11 (10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Organic Seed Alliance published the first State of Organic Seed Report and Action Plan in 2010. The report included results of a national survey regarding organic farmers' attitudes and experience with organic seed, reports on organic breeding initiatives, and an analysis of challenges by crop type with recommendations for collaboration from the organic community toward solutions. This session is a follow-up on the report to continue the discussion on "the seed we need." Participants will be able to download the report prior to the discussion for review and share their own experience and vision for how to improve organic seed systems to meet the needs of organic farmers. Panelists will include professionals from the seed industry, breeders, farmers, and seed advocates. After brief presentations we will have a roundtable discussion on organic produce variety needs and issues. Participants bring a diversity of perspectives on the challenges, priorities and opportunities for organic seed development.

Presenters: Matthew Dillon, Organic Seed Alliance, and other panelists TBD

ORGANIC PLANT BREEDING COLLABORATION – February 11 (2:00 – 4:30 p.m.)

Farmers need varieties that perform optimally in organic systems yet most varieties they rely upon were bred for and under non-organic conditions. Learn about national collaborative efforts of plant breeders, farmers, and seed companies to breed and trial varieties in and for organic systems. Participants will learn how to get involved and how to access organic trial results.

Presenters: Micaela Colley, Executive Director, Organic Seed Alliance; Stephen Jones, Director, WSU Research and Extension Center at Mt. Vernon, Washington State University; Laurie McKenzie, Graduate Student, Oregon State University; Jim Myers, Professor Dept. of Horticulture, Oregon State University; Lane Selmen, Faculty Research Associate, Oregon State University.

IS GMO CO-EXISTENCE A REALITY? – February 11 (2:00 – 4:30 p.m.)

The biotechnology industry and U.S. regulatory authorities both assert that "co-existence" is a reality, yet many organic farmers and seed and food companies already experience contamination of genetically engineered (GE) material in their fields and food products. Participants will hear an update on legal issues and cases involving GE crops and discuss why the regulatory frameworks in place fail to protect the integrity of the organic label. Discussions will also include the importance of a federal Farmer Protection Act; Seed Matters, a new collaboration between advocacy groups and the food industry on seed issues; and the roles of testing and labeling in tackling the contamination problem.

Presenters: Matthew Dillon, Director of Advocacy, Organic Seed Alliance; George Kimbrell, Senior Staff Attorney, The Center for Food Safety; Michael Sligh, Director, Rural Advancement Foundation USA (RAFI).



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SEED SWAP – February 10 (8:00 – 9:00 p.m.)

Saving, sharing, and trading seeds is a fundamental farmer right which marks the birth of agriculture. Today it represents a powerful act of ensuring open access to genetic resources, preserving and increasing biodiversity, and acquiring varieties adapted to your bioregion. Bring your seeds to share if you've got them, but no seed or seed experience is required to join in the seed swap. Some envelopes will be provided, but extra bags and envelopes are encouraged. Next spring sow your garden or farm with seeds from the Organicology community. Seed saving information and experts will be on-site.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Stephen Jones – February 10 (7:00 – 8:00 p.m.)

Stephen Jones, Ph.D. Director, WSU Research and Extension Center at Mt. Vernon Professor and Scientist, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences Washington State University Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research & Extension Center. Dr. Stephen Jones is currently director of the Mt. Vernon Research and Extension Center. He teaches graduate courses in Advanced Transmission Genetics and the History and Ethics of Genetics. Dr. Jones serves on the Advisory Board of the Land Institute in Salina, Kansas. His research has been mentioned in Audubon, Newsweek, The Wall Street Journal, National Public Radio, Bill Nye the Science Guy's PBS show "The Eyes of Nye," CBS News, the documentary film "Not For Sale" and other national and international news journals.

Andrew Kimbrell – February 11 (8:30 – 9:30 a.m.)

Andrew Kimbrell became Executive Director of the International Center for Technology Assessment (ICTA) in 1994 and Executive Director of the Center for Food Safety in 1997. He is one of the country's leading environmental attorneys, and an author of several articles and books on environment, technology and society, and food issues, including 101 Ways to Help Save the Earth (1990), The Human Body Shop, The Engineering and Marketing of Life (1993), The Masculine Mystique (1995), Your Right to Know: Genetic Engineering and the Secret Changes in Your Food (2006) and general editor of Fatal Harvest: The Tragedy of Industrial Agriculture (2002) and the Fatal Harvest Reader (2002). His articles on law, technology, social and psychological issues have also appeared in numerous law reviews, technology journals, popular magazines and newspapers across the country.

Jim Hightower – February 12 (8:30 – 9:30 a.m.)

National radio commentator, writer, public speaker, and author of the book, Swim Against The Current: Even A Dead Fish Can Go With The Flow, Jim Hightower has spent three decades battling the Powers That Be on behalf of the Powers That Ought To Be - consumers, working families, environmentalists, small businesses, and just-plain-folks. Twice elected Texas Agriculture Commissioner, Hightower believes that the true political spectrum is not right to left but top to bottom, and he has become a leading national voice for the 80 percent of the public who no longer find themselves within shouting distance of the Washington and Wall Street powers at the top. Hightower is a modern-day Johnny Appleseed, spreading the message of progressive populism all across the American grassroots.