



under the oak

The Voice of Organics in the Atlantic / La voix de l'Industrie biologique de l'Atlantique

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On The Fence Post

It seems like the summer has just begun yet the nights are already cooling down. It's been a busy few months for ACORN, and it promises to get busier as we approach the fall months. ACORN hired Laura MacKay as our new Executive Assistant in early June. Laura lives in Halifax and works part time for GPI Atlantic (Genuine Progress Index), doing interviews with farmers. Laura is working on the website, harvest fairs, membership, conference, and much more. She can be reached at 902-425-1797/ info@acornorganic.org.

Rob Assels of Advocate Communications Group has put a tremendous amount of work into ACORN's Input Project. We aim to launch the new online input database by October 1st. The project has taken a bit longer than expected, but when you see the detailed database, it will be apparent why more time was needed. (See Input update, pg.2)

ACORN has also hired Pro Agri Consulting (Bev Connell) and Morton Horticultural Associates (Gary Morton) to carry out the Marketing Research and Action Plan. Bev and Gary have extensive connections with the agriculture industry in this region. They will be presenting an interim report by October 31st. (See Marketing update pg.2)

The 2004 conference planning is in full swing with a dedicated team of volunteers. The conference will be held in Charlottetown, PE, March 25-27th. ACORN is partnering with the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC), to organize a one-day potato symposium prior to the conference. The conference committee aims is to make this year's conference as accessible as possible, while continuing to provide available on the ACORN website by September 15th. (See Conference update pg.3)

Our annual report is finally complete and available on the website. If you want to know how successful we were in achieving our goals last year, please read all about ACORN's activities in 2002. We are always looking for keen volunteers to help with our ongoing projects. Contact Laura or Jennifer if you are interested.

With the fullness of the summer harvest,
Jennifer Melanson
ACORN Director

President's Message

It's been a busy spring in the garden and here at ACORN. A big welcome to Laura MacKay, as our newEA. She's been a great help so far and we look forward to her input over the next year. This year's conference is back in PEI and is shaping up to be a great one. As usual we are looking for volunteers for both the planning process and for on site stuff. There is also an upcoming AGRI-FEST in NS and we would like to have an organic presence. To that end Av Singh is forming a committee to plan what the organic community can do. Contact him or the office to contribute your talents. We've decided to delay our calendar project until next year to give everyone more time to send in their contributions. One thought is to have all contributions on display at the conference and have a vote on submissions as well as allow people to contribute items of interest. There are a number of projects on-going and waiting to happen when people are ready to commit their time. If you feel you are able to contribute your talents contact the office to see where we can best utilize them.

Enjoy the pickings and all the best with the harvest.

Doug
Doug Brown, ACORN President

Great to Be Here

My work is about contributing to the well-being of natural and human systems. I am very happy to be working with ACORN, an organization that has inspired me since its formation.

My interest in food and food issues stem from a recent summer experience working on an organic farm on the Eastern Shore. It was



there that I found out that I could very successfully grow radishes, but not necessarily have anyone to eat them at the harvest. I forgot to do my market research, including some hard thinking about how many radishes I myself could eat! A new recipe was born... radish relish...and I still have an ample supply of it, fortunately/unfortunately.

As the EA at ACORN, I am working on many initiatives, such as a map of the certified organic producers and processors in the region, coordination of ACORN's participation at harvest fairs throughout the region in August/September, conference planning, volunteer coordination, membership drive, communications (website and monthly emailouts, in particular) and many other duties. I welcome any suggestions you may have about how these things can work better for you.

Looking forward to meeting many of you at the upcoming conference. Enjoy the rest of the summer season.

Laura Jean MacKay
ACORN EA

ACORN's Vision

ACORN aims to enhance the viability and growth of the Atlantic Canadian organic agricultural community through a unified regional network

ACORN's Board of Directors

President- Doug Brown
(ProcessorRep)

Vice President- Fred Dollar
(PE Producer Rep)

Treasurer- David Cozac
(Retail Rep)

Secretary/Member-at-Large- Av Sing (NS)
NSOGA - Al Stewart

OCIA-NB- Karen Davidge

OCIA-PEI- Raymond Loo (PE)

MCOG- Larry Slipp (NB)

NS Producer- Brian Boates (NS)

NB Producer- Gerry Caissie (NB)

NL Producer- Judy Lien (NL)

Member-at-Large- Av Singh (NS)

Input Project Update

The Input Project is almost complete!. ACORN's Organic Input Project will be launched on October 1st. Plan to go online and check out the hundreds of input listings, technical descriptions, and source lists. Rob Assels of Advocate Communications Group, and his team of researchers and writers have spent many months putting this valuable information together. All of the information will be available in a searchable database, thanks to the technical wizardry of Roy Galloway (Galloway Systems Ltd.). ACORN received \$7000 additional funding through NB's Agricultural Environment Management Initiative (AEMI) Program to create the database and promote the project.

ACORN thanks the work of Organic Specialists- Claude Bertheleme and Susan MacKinnon- who spent many days reviewing the project contents

Organic Market Research Study and Action Plan Initiated

ACORN is pleased to announce the successful launch of a major organic market research project, following up on the recommendation of the Task Group on Organic Agriculture. The objectives of the project are to address a need for new market research information to support the direction and future growth of Atlantic Canadian organic production at four main levels: i) Regional: Atlantic Canada, ii) National, iii) the USA, and iv) the world.

Market research data is required to determine the size of the retail market, the key opportunities for expansion and to support the creation of a strategic approach to the marketplace. In an effort to determine the size of existing organic production base in Atlantic Canada a survey will be conducted later this fall. Your cooperation and input would be appreciated.

The successful proposal comes from a joint initiative between **ProAgri Consulting Limited** and **Morton Horticultural Associates**. Bev Connell and Gary Morton will lead a team of industry experts including organic producer, Norbert Kungl; researcher, Colleen O'Flaherty; and co-founder of the Natural Products Institute in Massachusetts, Bob Burke in the completion of the project.

Gary and Bev state; "The growing demand for organics coupled with the supply of imported organic products to this region would indicate an opportunity for this region. Our focus will be to both: identify and verify the unique opportunities and the appropriate scales to be achieved by Atlantic Canada growers to access those markets."

They conclude in their approach that; "Atlantic Canada organic producers need information based on sound practical implementation experience that can help each producer and ultimately the organic industry in Atlantic Canada grow to exciting new levels of success."

Over the next 4 months, producers, processors and suppliers are encouraged to actively participate in this project. Your comments, ideas, suggestions and concerns are welcome and should be forwarded to the contacts below. They can be contacted by phone, fax or e-mail at the following numbers.

Bev Connell
Phone: 902-798-2114
Fax: 902-798-2542
e-mail: oroagri@ns.sympatico.ca

Gary Morton
902-679-1467
902-679-0923
mha@accesswave.ca

ACORN

4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW CHARLOTTETOWN, PE, MARCH 25-27TH, 2004.

Conference Update

ACORN's 4th annual Conference and Trade Show will be in Charlottetown, PE, March 25-27th, 2004.

Conference highlights include:

- A one-day potato symposium in partnership with the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) with keynote Carlo Leifert from the Tesco Centre for Organic Agriculture in the United Kingdom
- Chef's demonstration with the PEI Culinary Institute
- 2 days of concurrent workshops focused on crops, livestock, agritourism, business and marketing
- 1st annual ACORN silent auction
- Tasty organic meals and buffets
- And more!

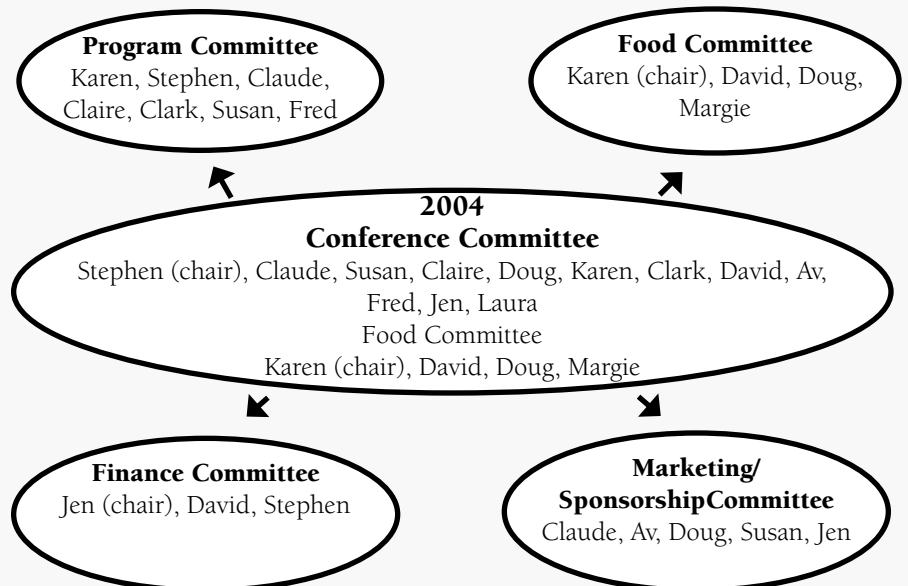
ACORN will be accepting proposals for workshop presenters for the 2004 conference. Full details and application will be available on the ACORN website by September 15th.

The 2004 Conference Committee:

Stephen Beck- Chair- 902-894-9999/ stephac@beckglobal.com
Doug Brown- Past Chair- 902-665-5044/ dougbrown59@hotmail.com
Karen Loo- loofarm@isn.net
Fred Dollar- kentdale@pei.sympatico.ca
Clark Phillips- wgbf@nbnet.nb.ca
Claude Bertheleme- claude.bertheleme@gnb.ca
Susan Mackinnon- sdmackinnon@gov.pe.ca
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David Cozac- ab307@fan.nb.ca
Margie Loo- mloo@web.net
Laura MacKay- 902-425-1797/ info@acornorganic.org
Jennifer Melanson- 902-632-2523/ admin@acornorganic.org

We want your ideas and feedback!

Please get in touch with any member of the 2004 Conference Committee with your ideas and suggestions. We will have regular updates on the website over the next eight months to keep you informed.



ORGANIC AND RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE SPECIALIST HIRED



Kentville and Truro, Nova Scotia – Organic farmers and smaller farming operations now have a new resource.

Effective immediately, Dr. Av Singh, recently the Extension Co-ordinator at the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada, has joined AgraPoint as the Organic and Rural Infrastructure Specialist.

Dr. Singh has extensive experience in organic agriculture, with a foundation in forage and grazing management. He has worked at the University of Minnesota in pasture-based livestock production, received his doctorate from the University of Manitoba in grazing tolerance in alfalfa and studied management intensive grazing as part of a Masters at the University of Guelph. Dr. Singh currently serves as a board member of the Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN).

“Av brings a great deal of experience to AgraPoint in a number of key areas: organics, field and forage crops and livestock,” said AgraPoint Executive Director Dale Kelly. “His expertise in the province’s growing organics sector, coupled with his other skills and commitment to rural development, makes him a terrific complement to the overall AgraPoint team.”

As Organic and Rural Infrastructure Specialist Dr. Singh will work closely with

organic farmers and associations to further the sector and address production issues one-on-one and through workshops and publications. He will also be available to farmers operating smaller farms who may want to enter larger markets, expand or diversify. This could mean wanting to begin a co-operative, where a number of small farms work together to exchange equipment, resources, and/or knowledge.

“I’m very excited about this new opportunity to work with farmers on a personal level,” said Dr. Singh. “In particular, I’m looking forward to connecting smaller farms with each other, as well as with other AgraPoint specialists, government marketing, tourism and economic resources, and community development agencies available to help them.”

“The majority of farms in Nova Scotia are smaller operations that have a huge impact on our rural communities and economies, and can have an increased impact on our food systems. I’m looking forward to ensuring their place in the rural infrastructure through new approaches to business and new opportunities.”

The organic industry in Atlantic Canada has rapidly expanded in the past few years. Since 2000, the number of certified organic producers has increased nearly 20 per cent,

with 112 currently in Atlantic Canada. There are 28 certified organic processors, demonstrating a 33 per cent increase in the same period. In 2002, certified organic products produced in Atlantic Canada approached \$4 million in sales.

“The majority of farms in Nova Scotia are smaller operations that have a huge impact on our rural communities and economies, and can have an increased impact on our food systems. I’m looking forward to ensuring their place in the rural infrastructure through new approaches to business and new opportunities.”

Dr. Av Singh

“We’re pleased that AgraPoint has filled the information and knowledge gap for organic and transitional producers and processors in Nova Scotia by hiring such a qualified individual and creating this new position,” said ACORN Executive Director Jennifer Melanson. “With this sector’s growth rate, there are many new and potential entrants into this thriving industry looking for advice and information.”

Dr. Singh will work out of AgraPoint’s Truro office and can be reached at (902) 896-0277, cell (902) 890-5899 and by e-mail at a.singh@agrapoint.ca

In addition to this position, AgraPoint will be actively seeking an additional field crops/livestock professional, as well as general horticulturist, to assist the team in servicing farmers.

ORGANIC APPLE PRODUCTION FOR PROCESSING PILOT PROJECT



By Allie Craswell (Avon Foods Inc.) and
Charlie Embree (AAFC)
Presented at the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers'
Association 139th Annual Meeting

Introduction

A collaborative effort by local growers, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) scientists and Avon Foods Inc. has resulted in the production of transition applesauce in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. Conceived in the spring of 2002, this pilot project has had both rewards and challenges and will hopefully serve as a guide to a future larger scale organic project. Current markets exist for a transition product from orchards moving from conventional to organic production. The catalyst for this project was the 'Idared' market. The market demanded between 2500 and 3000 tonnes of apples; however, local acreage was capable of producing 5000 tonnes. Thus providing an ample supply for development of a new product and another potential market. How did this project get started? Avon Foods Inc. was looking for a product to take into the future. Mr. Allie Craswell attended the 2002 ACORN conference in Moncton hoping to develop a scenario addressing organics and a processed product. In Moncton, Mr. Craswell and associate Mr. Paul Gervason visited the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) booth and talked with Dr. Ralph Martin and Charlie Embree (AAFC). They proceeded to develop a project that addressed a potential organic niche market which would utilize Avon Foods Inc. technology in specialized short run production. The product goal would be organic apple slices and organic applesauce. Upon returning from the ACORN conference, Mr. Embree and Mr. Craswell

met with the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association Board of Directors (April 2002). They contacted the OACC, which is located in Truro, and met with Dr. Av Singh and Dr. Derek Lynch. With the cooperation of OACC, a summer student, Margaret Chase, was hired to assist with numerous aspects required to develop the project. They talked to many researchers and invited local growers to participate in the initial study beginning in April 2002. Following this meeting, monthly meetings and regular orchard tours were organized throughout the summer for the growers and researchers. The tours were organized by Bill Craig of AgraPoint International.

Avon Foods Inc. - Berwick, Nova Scotia The plant has been in operation and processing now for more than 60 years. In 1993, the plant was taken over by the Carriere family from Montreal. There are 94 permanent and 60 seasonal employees at the Avon Foods Inc. Berwick location. The plant produces a variety of products, including: applesauce, apple slices, baked beans, string beans, cubed potatoes and cubed carrots. Mr. Craswell has 35 years experience in the food processing business and 17 years in Berwick. Avon Foods Inc. has a well trained staff at the Berwick plant and over the last few years they have received several awards for a number of innovations regarding workplace education. A great portion of the Avon Foods Inc. production goes to private store agencies. There were two main factors which facilitated the addition of an organic product to Avon Foods Inc. product line:

- (1) Avon Foods Inc. is certified as Kosher and can clean the line several times during the year in order to provide a Kosher product.
- (2) Avon Foods Inc. employes people with skills and knowledge to

prepare and deliver specialty products.

Another requirement for an organic product is identification and tracking. Avon Foods Inc. already has a highly developed tracking system. In fact, if you go to a store and look at a can of peas that was produced in April 2002 you can see a number that represents which field the peas in that can were grow.

Finally, the plant had to be certified as an organic processor. The Organic Crop Processors of Ontario, better known in industry as OCPRO was chosen to certify the Avon Foods Inc. plant as they are qualified to certify products for national and international sale and seemed to be the most experienced to accept this situation

Challenges in the Orchard

For Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Kentville researchers, organic apple production is not a new concept. Dr. Gordon Braun who is one of the research cooperators published an Organic Apple Production Guide for Nova Scotia in 1991. Dr. Rob Smith has years of experience in Integrated Pest Management and developed standards for Integrated Fruit Production in PEI and provided major contributions to the local and National IFP guidelines. We have also been interested in mulching and alternative methods of controlling weeds and replant disease so this has given our research group an environmentally sustainable focus. With this total orchard perspective it has made the transitional step to organic fruit production a little easier. Even with all this we fully understand the magnitude of, and constant potential of, a pest outbreak. With one major pest outbreak, the crop is either immediately lost, or, if the outbreak is identified as over the economic threshold, and a clean-

(Con't on page 7)

BUNNETT FAMILY FARMS

by Barb Somerville April 23, 2003

“If you want to sell beef, you’ve got to have chickens.” That was the advice offered to Murray Bunnett of Steeves Settlement, NB, when he and his brother David went into the organic beef business. The idea is that a chicken is less of an investment than half a side of beef, so a new customer will take a chance. If satisfied, they’ll be back with confidence for the bigger purchase.

Whether that’s true or not, Bunnett Family Farms does have broilers for sale each fall, complementing the more substantial sales from their thirty-seven cow herd. They raised three hundred birds last season in moveable pens, and there’s a larger flock planned for this summer. It’s typical of the Bunnett family to listen to advice and be open to new ideas. Both habits have reaped good results for their two-property organic farm, which involves Murray, his father Peter, and siblings David and Linda. When they started their cow/calf operation ten years ago, there weren’t many organic farmers in New Brunswick. Murray says it took time to find alternatives to conventional methods.

“There’s a learning curve,” he admits. The key to maintaining the health of their hundred or so mixed breed cattle has been to focus on the big picture, he explains. The herd is bedded in clean deep straw during the winter months, with outdoor access in good weather. The Bunnetts keep the feeding area tidied up and try to minimize stress. Probiotic and other homeopathic remedies have been remarkably effective when an animal does get sick, he reports.

The grass fed herd spends the summer months on carefully managed pasture, utilizing a strip grazing technique that has proved very successful. The forward fence is rolled ahead every day, providing fresh forage, while the fence behind is caught up about once a week. This encourages the cattle to utilize the whole plant while not being pushed to graze too tight to the ground, where parasites can be picked up. Fresh well water is piped to the cattle wherever they graze and all ditches and

water ways are fenced out.

Now that more beef farmers are choosing an organic approach, there is talk of organized marketing, says Murray. But for now the Bunnetts will continue selling beef to one customer at a time, by halves, quarters, and even eighths. Twenty-two animals were sold in 2002. Smaller packages can be purchased at the farm store at 4663 Route 880 near Havelock, along with other Bunnett farm products, such as eggs and pork.

The Bunnetts’ 110 sow farrow-to-finish operation produces natural pork raised with no antibiotics in the water or feed. Health care and handling methods also reflect organic standards, but the pork operation is not certified.

Most of the pigs go to Larsen’s processing plant in Berwick, NS, at 150-155 days of age. Pork can also be purchased directly from the Bunnetts, who deliver to Moncton customers for a small fee.

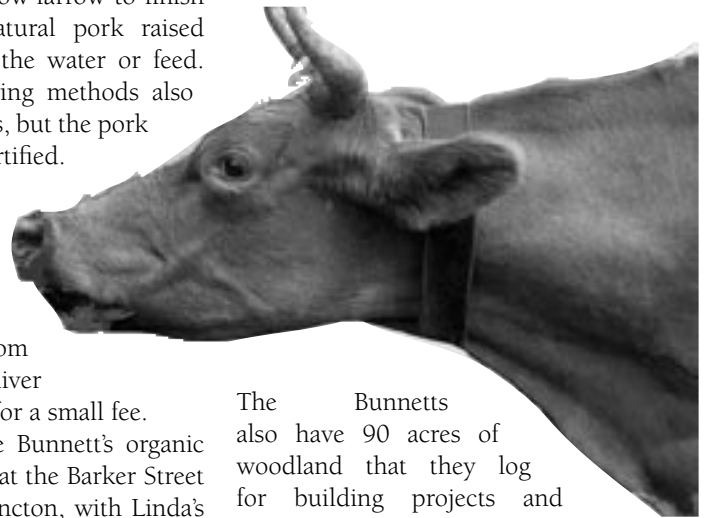
Since January the Bunnett’s organic beef has been available at the Barker Street Farmers’ Market in Moncton, with Linda’s organically grown vegetables scheduled to make an appearance this summer. Speerville products are available there and at the family store, reflecting a connection that Murray established selling grain to the Speerville mill.

The Bunnetts grow less grain now, using spelt and hull-less oats as a rotation for their hay and pasture land. Both are purchased by Speerville and winter wheat is grown to feed the pigs, for a total of

about 110 acres this year.

Murray explains that neither brother was comfortable with sprays or chemical fertilizers. Both tried to minimize their use, while spreading manure and using a proper rotation to build healthy soils. Becoming organic has been a natural progression, he says, adding they now grow more hay and do less ploughing than ever, stay off wet ground, and keep fields covered year round to prevent erosion and minimize freezing and compacting.

Their certification with Maritime Certified Organic Growers began in 1996 and now all four hundred acres are certified organic. “It helps with marketing,” Murray says, adding that educated customers and a few restaurants will pay a premium for certified organic products. For the Bunnetts, lots of small sales mean a more predictable income. “It’s important to us to be diversified in what we grow and how we sell it,” he sums up.



The Bunnetts also have 90 acres of woodland that they log for building projects and firewood. They are always looking for more markets for their hardwood lumber and ways to diversify there as well.

Reliable markets, diversification, and managed growth are themes for this successful family enterprise. Visit them in person during their annual fall open house or take a virtual tour at their website, bunnettfamilyfarm.com.

BEETLES, MULCH, FORAGES, SOYBEAN AND MORE!

By Andrew M. Hammermeister

Suddenly we are in the midst of summer and the heat is on after a cool, wet spring. The damp spring weather made planting a challenge for most farmers as well as the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) researchers at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) in Truro. Never the less, our graduate students press on...

Kui Liu is studying different farming systems that include various combinations of forages and livestock in different crop rotations. Kui is trying to determine which systems are sustainable, from the perspectives of soil quality, \$ return, and productivity. This year some of our rotations included soybean. To provide the soybean with an advantage over the weeds, we tilled just prior to planting and seeded late, at a heavy rate and with a narrow row spacing. However, cool conditions slowed the growth of the soybean and favoured the cool-season weeds, so it was time to bring out the hoes.

Roxanne Beavers is working on a cross-country seeding rate project. Seventeen farmers from across the country have planted spring wheat at four different rates to test the advantages of heavier seeding on organic farms. Roxanne also has a more detailed study of seeding rates in Truro. She is studying the effects of seeding rate and soil fertility on weed competition, yield, and \$ return.

Stuart McMillan is a studying the potential of using forage as mulch on cereal crops. The idea here is to find a use for forages on farms without livestock. He is trying different mulch rates applied at different times. He is also studying the effect

of mulch on ground beetle populations. Many ground beetles are beneficial since they help control insect pests.

For more information contact the
OACC: Office: (902) 893-7256,
Email: oacc@nsac.ns.ca,
Website: www.nsac.ns.ca

(Con't from page 5 Organic Apple...)

up spray is applied, the block must be removed from the organic process for a three-year period.

Dealing with the question of which products are acceptable is still a challenge as the 'acceptable' list is quite limited. In the United States, there is a new Organic Materials Review Institute so this would indicate research is underway on new products. In Canada the question of materials is under review by the National Standards Board. They met in November so we are at the early stages of this standardization process.

Local growers, including; Brian Boates, Craig Nichols, Doug Nichols, Andrew Bishop, Blair Embree and J.W. Mason and Sons, accepted the challenge of moving one or part of an orchard block from conventional to transition organic year one. The next step was to find a certifying agency. OCPRO was also selected as the certifying body by the growers who had orchard blocks in the transition year one phase. Their specifications for acceptable production methods had to be learned and procedures documented. It was the grower's responsibility to approach a certifying body concerning the inspection process. A number of blocks at the research station were also converted. Mark Rogers supervised the spraying process following pre-spray inspection of each block for levels of disease and insects. This enabled timely application of allowed products. Some of these blocks included experiments with conventional treatments as controls so will not be eligible, but others are and have qualified for transition year one of the certification process.

Disease and insect control questions for the project were addressed by Dr. Gordon Braun and Dr. Rob Smith respectively. They also conducted disease and insect damage

assessments for each of the orchards involved. Their combined experience and willingness to participate in all aspects of the project were invaluable. Although it is not easy, it is clear to all those involved that constant vigilance and flexibility are necessary for success in the transition to an organic system.

To control weeds various mulches like hay, wood chips or straw were applied or the orchards were kept close mown. This approach to weed control is a very labour intensive operation. The group looked to Dale Hebb for mechanization advice on this question and other questions.

Soil nutrition, is another important aspect in the organic process. For advice and counsel on this topic the group turned to Keith Fuller. In most cases it was possible to locate suitable sources of compost. The poultry compost which had 4 % nitrogen was dry and had just the right particle size to allow bulk spreading. A trial was set up to evaluate four sources of nutrients on 13 year old Novamac at the AAFC Kentville Research Centre. There were three different sources of compost compared with Ammonium Nitrate as the control. The dry flowable poultry manure was from the same source as that used on other blocks of the AAFC orchards, Kentville. A compost made of fish-plant waste, pulp mill waste and sawdust was made by Dr. John MacLeod and Mr. Roger Henry at AAFC Charlottetown. In Kings County, the municipality requires house holders to separate all biodegradable waste products which are composted into an easy to handle product. The field work and data collection for this separate trial was contracted to AgriLogic Research Services in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Tree Fruit Research Foundation.

Crop load is another major issue because oversetting needs to be controlled or the trees will become biennial. Current research on thinning materials is being supervised by Mr. Doug Nichols who is employed on an MII project to study crop load management and fruit quality. He is addressing the organic question as well by searching for and evaluating products that are environmentally friendly or are already acceptable as organic thinners in other countries.

WANTED

Wanted: college graduate seeks greenhouse employment. Will work any hours and in any location. Available to start immediately.
Please contact Charmaine at charmspringle841@hotmail.com

Wanted: I am looking for someone in Atlantic Canada who raises, and is willing to ship, organic meat to Newfoundland. Thanks

Beverly A. Carter
DAMASCUSROAD POMERANIANS
88 Conception Bay Highway
Holyrood, Newfoundland
Canada, A0A 2R0
Telephone: 709-229-1783
Email bevcarter@damascusroad.ca
Web site www.damascusroad.ca

Wanted: Farm to purchase
I am part of a group of 15 people who are looking for a farm of 100+ acres in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia to purchase for the beginning of a community land trust. We are looking for half forest, half fields and within 4 km of a town. If anyone has any ideas please contact me Yuill at vhrbt@yahoo.com

ACORN Seeks Volunteers

- freelance photography of farms, processing facilities, produce and products
- staffing for a variety of duties at annual conference (coming up in March-April 2004 in PEI), in return for passes to conference sessions
- freelance newsletter articles on the organic industry in the Atlantic region and beyond
- promotion of ACORN at various events and meetings
- assistance on various ACORN committees

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to find out more, please contact info@acornorganic.org or Laura at (902) 425.1797.

Web- Based Courses

Check out **Web-Based Organic Agriculture Courses** through the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) and the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC). For more info, visit the website at www.nsac.ns.ca/cde/courses/oacc/oaccourses.html You can also contact The Centre for Continuing and Distance Education at (902) 893-6666.

Membership

For an annual fee of \$30, all stakeholders in organics are encouraged to become full members and receive these benefits:

- A copy of ACORN's Organic Resource Directory, published annually
- Enhanced entry in the Directory for industry stakeholders
- Quarterly newsletters (print)
- 50% discount on newsletter and web advertising
- Notification by email of urgent industry news
- Voting privileges at our AGM

Join ACORN today by downloading our membership form at www.acornorganic.org Thanks in advance for your support Membership Update

ACORN is always looking for new members. Membership is open to everyone with an interest in organics.

We are interested in welcoming close to 200 new members from across the region in the next year. We are pursuing new membership in a variety of ways:

- 2005 Atlantic Organic Calender as a promotional tool for membership and the organization. We hope to reach many organic consumers through the calender.
- Promotional Postcards to members of commodity groups across the region. The eye-catching postcard will promote the organization and benefits of membership, as well as specific initiatives, such as the conference and the input project. We hope to reach many conventional producers and processors through the postcard.
- We are mailing out an extra copy of the 2003 Resource Directory to our membership, asking you to pass it on to someone who might be interested in joining the organization. Tell a friend!

Need to contact us?

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Fax: 902-632-2837

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info@acornorganic.org
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www.acornorganic.org