

Minutes
Montana Organic Commodity Advisory Council Meeting
Mansfield Center- Great Falls, Montana
December 7, 2023, 5-6 pm

➤ Welcome & Introductions

In attendance: Georgana Webster, Ed Tyanich, Ed Evanson, Kelly Hill (MTDA Staff) Sam Schmidt, Brian Goldhahn, Nate Brown, Randy Hinebauch; Patrick Mangan, Nate Powell-Palm, Lindsey Aull (MOCAC Board members.

➤ Minutes 2022

Minutes read by Ed Tyanich. Motion to approve minutes by:
Randy Hinebauch; Motion to Second by: Brian Goldhahn
Vote to approve unanimous

➤ MDA Updates by Ed Evanson

Taiwan trade mission

New lab in Bozeman

USDA awarded 3 grants to MTDA for local food into communities

10 different organizations around the state

Partnering with OSU & CSU to develop business support

Resilient local food production

USDA/ NOP Updates-ACA

- TOPP continuing- MTDA was paid \$3,337.50 for Quarter 2 participation-Technical assistance. Quarterly invoice 3 was just submitted for \$200.00. Quarterly invoice 4 to be filed by 12/31/23.
- TOPP Review and read below as needed only: Mentors & MOA & Field Days
- 1. TOPP-Transitioning to Organic Partnership Program-\$300 million Organic Transition Initiative-comprehensive support for farmers transitioning to organic production. To deliver wrap-around technical assistance, including farmer to farmer mentoring, direct support through conservation financial assistance, additional crop insurance assistance, and support market development projects in targeted markets. AMS, RMA, and NRCS primary agencies with focus on 3 areas- Transition to Organic partnership program-Partnership networks in 6 regions with trusted organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities. \$100 million
- MTDA and WSDA are partnered with the lead in our region, OTCO
- Direct Farmer Assistance-NRCS will develop a new Organic Management conservation practice standard and offer financial and technical assistance to producers who implement the practice. \$75 million. Application period just announced December 1-31, 2023.
- RMA \$25 million for the new Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance Program (TOGA) which will support transitioning and certain certified organic producers' participation in crop insurance, including coverage of a portion of their insurance premium.
- Organic Pinpointed Market Development Support-Focus on key organic market where the need for domestic supply is high, or where additional processing and distribution capacity is needed for more robust organic supply chains. \$100 million to improve organic supply chains in pinpointed markets.
Randy pointed out the growth is mainly market based.

Nate talked about the probability of a universal OSP that will be implemented by the NOP beginning with a universal Transitional OSP.

- 2. SOE-Strengthening Organic Enforcement rule change March 2024. 1 new seed dealer, 1 new broker. OSP review for further updates. Market ripple effects.
- 3. Fee update completed for producers from cap of \$5,000 reduced to \$3,000
- 4. USDA NOP Audit-Overview August 28-September 1.
- 5. Out of state cessation of services notification to producers and handlers sent. ND, SD, WY, South ID
- 6. Electronic application renewal docs only unless religious exemption affect 5+ clients
- 7. Files and NONC Suspension AKM and Anderson Beef
- 8. Program Summary-
- 9. Staff update- Introduce new hire for West side, (loss of SM experience) .5 MM inspected 25 ops. Final Reviewers updated with ET, KH and AL. Final Approvers updated with ET and MD. Malta area inspector, utilizing contractor.
- 10. Budget Summary - GW
- Open Discussion

Motion to adjourn by: Nate Powell-Palm

Motion to Second by: Sam Schmidt

Vote to approve unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM