

ASTA 2009

Annual Meeting and Trade Show

April 26-29, 2009

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort

Tucson, Arizona



Issues in the Organic Spice Trade

Cole Daily, Frontier Natural
Products Co-op

Current Issues - Organic

1. Increase in Detection Levels on Pesticide Testing
 - What once was non-detectable is now, with enhanced testing, detectable
2. Reliability of Supply
 - Despite economic downturn organics still growing
 - Finding acceptable farmers/farmer groups to increase supply paramount to continued growth

Pesticides

NOP – Definition of Organic

Organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony. “Organic” is a labeling term that denotes products produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act. The principal guidelines for organic production are to use materials and practices that enhance the ecological balance of natural systems and that integrate the parts of the farming system into an ecological whole. **Organic agricultural practices cannot ensure that products are completely free of residues;** however, methods are used to minimize pollution from air, soil, and water. Organic food handlers, processors and retailers adhere to standards that maintain the integrity of organic agricultural products. The primary goal of organic agriculture is to optimize the health and productivity of interdependent communities of soil life, plants, animals and people.

Pesticide Testing

- Increased detection levels causing problems with organic certification
 - New levels measure to PPB
 - Finding residual/breakdown components of pesticides/herbicides in soils banned over 20 years ago
- Media/Mainstream confused on topic
- NOP – 5% rule for EPA registered pesticide tolerances; Zero tolerance for non-registered
- As testing gets more precise, problems will increase

Reliability of Supply – Farmer Start-up

Reliability of Supply

1. Status in the Community
 - Leader in the Area – gain success and acceptance
2. Field Characteristics
 - Limit problem areas of chemical drift, run-off
3. Ease of Communication
 - Must be able to communicate with farmers easily
4. Farmer's Philosophy
 - A lifestyle more so than in it for the extra cabbage
5. Willingness to Volunteer
 - Farmers must show the initiative
6. Distance
 - Must be able to visit farmers frequently