

WINTER 2008

Quarterly Newsletter

Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative

INSIGHTS FROM THE BOARD, TED WEYDERT

Greetings from DeKalb, IL -

I don't know about the rest of you, but I for one can't wait until spring gets here. I'm using these cold, blustery days here in January, sitting at my desk, running different scenarios of cover crops, hay, and grain crops that I will plant on the different fields I farm. I hope you all have been able to benefit from Merle's marketing prowess, and have taken advantage of some of the highest grain prices that have been available to our Co-op's producers. I know it has put a smile on my face. Demand is growing faster than ever! The brokers and buyers are being quite aggressive in their pricing. Rest assured that if you are selling through MOFC, that the prices you receive, will be from a reputable buyer that is looking for a long-term commitment, and more than likely will offer good prices in the future. Good prices over the long haul are what this and the other OFARM Co-operatives strive to achieve. High prices one year and low the next make it difficult to cash flow your business. Keep this in mind the next time a broker tries to get you to sell outside the Co-op. Call Merle Kramer and give him the information, he can either lock in the offer or get you an even better price.

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We have assembled a great staff here at MOFC, and we need to offer them the same benefits that other professionals in their fields have. Each year the Board evaluates our employee's performances just like any other company does, and each year our Co-op has increased sales and profitability due to the hard work and dedication of Bonnie, Merle, Gaines, Duane and Floyd. They are not being compensated, as they would be, if they were working for somebody else. Duane and I have been researching the availability of health insurance and potential retirement packages for MOFC employees, it might be possible to extend this offer to the entire membership of the Co-op. This issue is a top priority for me, and one I wish to resolve this year.

Are you on the Truck?

Word is getting out about the truck that is bringing fresh, organic food into the Windy City, but we need your help! Floyd Johnson has landed on the tip of an iceberg the size of Chicago. Buyers are realizing that MOFC could be the local supplier of fresh, organic vegetables, meats, and eggs for their customers. Demand far outweighs the production our Co-op members can produce at this time. One of our members is expanding his sweet corn production to 80 acres this year. Floyd already has a buyer lined up to take his 400 cases per week. Chicagoan Greg Christian's catering business continues to grow, and this year he is looking to source over 50,000 lbs of "center-of-plate" veggies like onions, greens, potatoes, peppers, and tomatoes. Now, you may be wondering, "how can I take advantage of that demand?" It's simple, and you don't have to grow all kinds of vegetables.

"I am putting this challenge out to all who will accept, I acre.....I crop"

If each one of us can concentrate our efforts on the production of one crop on one acre, we could make a serious dent in the demand for real food in the Chicago area. Pick something you would be comfortable with, something that would fit with your farming operation. If you cultivate soybeans, why not try peppers or potatoes. Raised beds lend themselves to many small leafy crops. Rows of onions can't be any harder than rows of corn, can they? The idea is to get your feet wet in vegetable production without over burdening yourself with the details of multiple crops. The one thing you will have to consider is staggered plantings, so that the whole crop doesn't mature at the same time.

Now is the time to finalize your 2008 crops. Give this idea serious consideration, and then call Floyd Johnson to

"Get on the Truck".

The CDP committee is putting together a plan for growing, harvesting, handling, and marketing all of the produce that we can grow here in the Midwest. In the near future there will be educational meetings on crop production and post harvest handling of fresh produce, for all that are interested. We need your production **and** we need to be able to assure excellent quality. We have at our disposal, many people that can share their expertise in vegetable production. You can always learn from books, but the knowledge you gain from talking face to face with someone that grows vegetables is incomparable.

Ted Weydert
MOFC President

INTRODUCING MOFC'S NEW MEMBERS

MOFC would like to congratulate Evelyn Riebe as being the 100th member to join MOFC. Evelyn is from Cullom, IL and is an avid organic producer and consumer.

Other new members who have joined in 2007 are:

Todd Williams—Marshall, MI

Tom Prout—Mt. Pleasant, MI

Lou Stephenson—Logansport, IN

Stephen McElroy—Hillsdale, MI

Paul Nold—Montrose, MO

Sheldon Bender—Oregon, MO

David Randle—Lebanon, IN

Neal & Michele Reishus—Kokomo, IN

And those who have joined for the CDP are:

Brian Severson—Dwight, IL

Maria Hahn—Foley, MO

Heritage Prairie Market—Elburn, IL

Lowell Ioeger—Minonk, IL

The first new member to join us in 2008 is Harold Wilken from Danforth, IL making us 101 members strong.

WELCOME to all of our new members!!

{ *“Welcome to all of our New Members”* }

ORGANIC POPCORN CONTRACTS



Would you like to try growing some organic popcorn this year?

Gary Reding from Langeland Farms in Indiana is looking for popcorn growers. Several of our members have grown popcorn for Gary in the past and we have some that do so on a yearly basis.

If you would be interested or would like more information give the MOFC business office a call.

You can also contact Gary direct at:

Langeland Farms

3806 S. County Rd. 550 E

Greensburg, IN 47240

Ph. (812) 663-9546

Fax (812) 662-6091

Email: greeding@hughes.net

DUANE'S DOODLES

As we approach another growing season, all of us are facing challenges. With the high demand for organics coupled with much higher prices, it has been and still is a tough call for anyone to decide what prices should be, as well as what crops to grow. I

might remind everyone that in organics, it is of utmost importance to maintain a good rotation. This is vital in the building and maintenance of your soils. Without the cover crops and rotations, your soil would soon be depleted, along with increased weed pressure.

Merle and I are both working on good sound contracts for 08. Negotiations are not complete but getting close at this writing.



Resource Manager
Duane Baker

MERLE'S MEMOS

As per Webster's Ninth New College Dictionary: Cooperative - An enterprise or organization owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services. a: marked by cooperation. b: marked by a willingness and ability to work with others (~ neighbors).

After two years with the Co-op I have realized that cooperative marketing is the best thing since sliced bread. I've also realized that when I'm in the market and have 100,000 bushel of something instead of 2,000 bushel of something, I have a lot more clout and that 100,000 bushel has a lot more unit value.

What I'm suggesting is that over the next two years we as a co-op try to get more variety exclusive with our corn and soybeans, particularly on the food grade side. With that strength we should better position ourselves with end users to bring the volumes they like to buy in, and eliminate these middle men. Organic is expanding and growing leaps and bounds and we as a co-op could have a more focused impact on the market if we become a tornado instead of the summer breeze we currently are.

My good friend Duane A. Baker and I are working hard to find those profitable varieties for you and

that path around the middle man. Give us a call as we always like to talk to you and hear what you have to say.

Thanks for your help!!



*Marketing Director
Merle J. Kramer*

BONNIE'S BULLETIN BOARD

MOFC is working hard to streamline the invoicing process so that you may receive payments for your sales in the quickest manner possible. In order to do this, we need your cooperation.

First of all, you can help us by mailing an updated proof of your organic certification to us at the Newton Office.

Secondly, when you are contacted about a sale, please let us know your pick-up site limitations so that we can inform the trucking firm of special requirements. It is your responsibility to let us know this information each time a sale is completed for you.

Finally, please take care to complete all of the shipping forms accurately and thoroughly and either **mail, fax, or e-mail a copy of the BOL/CTA & Scale Tickets to:**

MOFC
Bonnie Wagner
100-A S. Lafayette St.
Newton, IL 62448
Fax: (618) 783-4602
E-mail: mofc20@msn.com

I must receive the information from you asap.

Freight companies will wait 2-3 wks before invoicing us and that will put you 2-3 wks behind in getting payment. If MOFC didn't arrange the freight then I have no way of knowing that your product has been shipped and the buyer will not have been invoiced. No invoice = No payment.

Also, if you request, the information you send can be used by MOFC to complete the required TCA & send it to you for your signature. You will be required to forward it to your certifying agency and they will then issue a TC to both the buyer and you.



*Administrative Director
Bonnie Wagner*

ADVERTISEMENTS



For Sale:
6 row narrow Lilliston Rolling cultivator
Always shedded.
Contact MOFC at 618-783-4601



Food Grade White Corn.

Est. \$10.00 per bu., 08 crop.
Seed will be made available.
Need 500 acres total.
Contact the MOFC office
618-783-4601

Organic Soft Red Winter Wheat 08 crop.

Contact Merle at 734-429-9110 for details.



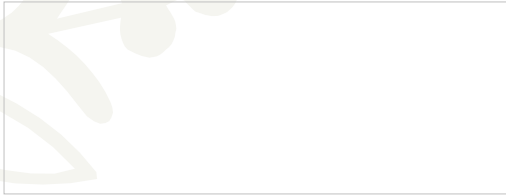
Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative

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.....direct from the farm

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