

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: Avila, Joan - AMS on behalf of McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2014 11:48 AM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Subject: Accepted: Performance Review

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 6:35 PM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: Accomplishments version 2
Attachments: SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy v2.docx

Based on your comments on Monday I've made some adjustments to my accomplishments report. Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

Weight:
35%

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Target

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2014 6:39 PM
To: Swann, Wanda - AMS; Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: FW: Performance Reviews

First choice – Wed., Oct. 8 at 3-4:30 pm
Second choice – Thurs., Oct. 9 at 11:30-12:30.

Miles V. McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-0268
202-720-3252
www.ams.usda.gov/nop

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

From: Morris, Erin - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2014 4:13 PM
To: Bailey, Douglas - AMS; Coale, Dana - AMS; Earnest, Darryl - AMS; Guo, Ruihong - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Morris, Craig - AMS; Neal, Arthur - AMS; Parrott, Charles - AMS; Brownlee, Jim - AMS; Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; Sarcone, Chris - AMS; Tuckwiller, David - AMS
Cc: Swann, Wanda - AMS; Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: Performance Reviews

Deputies and Staff Directors,

Over the next few weeks, we'll be scheduling your performance reviews. The available time slots are listed below— please send your first and second choice selections to Natosha and Wanda. Our goal is to have all reviews completed no later than October 23rd. If none of the times listed below work for your schedule, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
202-690-4024
Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov

Tues. Oct. 7th

3-4 pm

Weds. Oct. 8th

10-11 am
3-4:30 pm

Thurs. Oct. 9th

11:30 – 12:30 pm
2-3 pm

Weds. Oct. 15th

3:30 – 4:30 pm

Tues. Oct. 21st

10-11 am
11 am – 12 pm
3-4 pm

Weds. Oct. 22nd

2:30 – 3:30 pm
3:30 -- 4:30 pm

Thurs. Oct. 23rd

11:30 – 12:30 pm
2 – 3 pm

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 12:18 PM
To: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Cc: Morris, Erin - AMS
Subject: mid-year accomplishments
Attachments: Miles-MidYr-2015.docx

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Miles McEvoy – Mid-Year Accomplishments

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 12:56 PM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; JonesKing, Stacy - AMS; Michael, Matthew - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Nelson, Kristen - AMS
Subject: mid-year accomplishments

I need to submit my mid-year accomplishments by March 16. Please send me the top 3-5 accomplishments for your division/area by COB Thursday, March 12.

Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Miles - FY2015 Mid-Year Review
Location: 3069-S

Start: Wed 4/8/2015 10:00 AM
End: Wed 4/8/2015 10:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Required Attendees: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Miles McEvoy - Performance Review
Location: 3069-S

Start: Wed 10/14/2015 1:30 PM
End: Wed 10/14/2015 2:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Required Attendees: Barnes, Rex - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: Walker, Natosha - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=WALKER, NATOS00978325-C7CC-4172-8E4C-6C21351956C6A26>
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2015 10:48 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Performance Plan (McEvoy)
Attachments: Scanned from a Xerox multifunction device.pdf

Good morning,

Please see attached performance plan. Have a great day!

Natosha Walker

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Room 3069-S

Phone: 202-720-4276

Fax: 202-260-9191

NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

From: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:35 AM
To: Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: FW: performance plan

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:05 AM
To: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: performance plan

Hi Rex,

It appears that I never received a copy of my performance plan. Please send a copy to me. Thanks.

Miles McEvoy

Deputy Administrator

National Organic Program

**SES Performance Management System
Executive Performance Agreement**



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles
 Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Title: Deputy Administrator
 Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): Barnes, Rex
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*

Appraisal Pd. 10/1/13 -9/30/14
 Date: 12/19/2013
 Organization:
 CA NC LT/LE
 Date: 12/19/13

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional):
 Date: 4/15/14
 Date: 4/15/14
 Date:

Part 3. Summary Rating

Initial Summary Rating
 Level 5 Outstanding
 Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful
 Level 3 Fully Successful
 Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory
 Level 1 Unsatisfactory

Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): BARNES, REX A.
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):
 Date: 12-24-14
 Date: 10-24-2014
 Date: 10-27-14

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials: _____ Date: _____
 Higher Level Review Completed Date: _____
 Higher Level Reviewer Signature: _____

Performance Review Board Recommendation

Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1
 PRB Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____
Annual Summary Rating Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1
 Appointing Authority Signature: _____ Date: _____

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			(b) (6)			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People						
3. Business Acumen						
4. Building Coalitions						
5. Results Driven						
Total			100%	470		

FY 2014 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report

Miles McEvoy

Deputy Administrator, USDA-AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements Brief Explanation

Weight:
40%

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3: Implement Sound and Sensible Certification Practices

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Performance Requirement 5: Support Public Involvement

(b) (6)

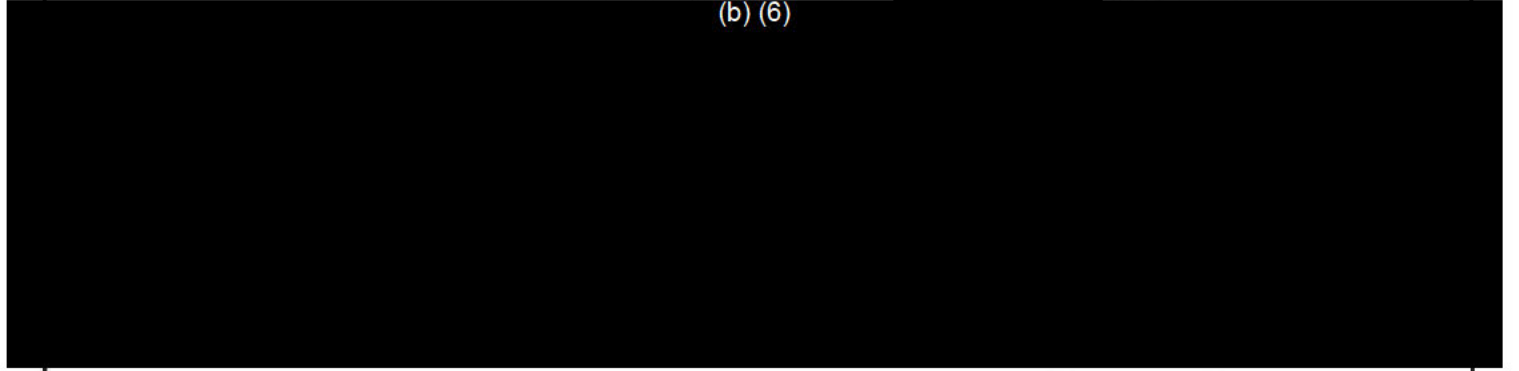
(b) (6)



Performance Requirement 6: Information Technology Improvements.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Faint, illegible text visible at the bottom of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Performance Review (Miles McEvoy)
Location: 3069-S

Start: Thu 10/9/2014 2:00 PM
End: Thu 10/9/2014 3:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Required Attendees: McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Deputies and Staff Directors,

Over the next few weeks, we'll be scheduling your performance reviews. The available time slots are listed below— please send your first and second choice selections to Natosha and Wanda. Our goal is to have all reviews completed no later than October 23rd. If none of the times listed below work for your schedule, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
202-690-4024
Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 2 2015

Dr. Carol Goland
Executive Director
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
41 Croswell Road
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Dear Carol:

Thank you for your May 20, 2015, letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community. The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) is doing important work to support sound and sensible certification through your current project to encourage organic certification for Plain Farmers. The Agricultural Marketing Service will continue to integrate sound and sensible principles into our work.

I appreciate OEFFA's clear commitment to organic integrity. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 9 2015

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Westlund:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and can take actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture.

I appreciate your leadership and clear commitment to increasing business opportunities and organic trade. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 01 2015

Ms. Mary Yurlina
Director of Certification Services
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
P.O. Box 170
294 Crosby Brook Road
Unity, Maine 04988

Dear Ms. Yurlina:

Thank you for your letter of May 22, 2015, cosigned by Ted Quaday, indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program (NOP). I strongly support his continued management of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and I support building a program that can take the necessary actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and the work of your organization.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association is doing important work to support organic farmers and organic agriculture.

Thank you again for writing in support of Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity. A similar letter will be sent to Mr. Ted Quaday.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 01 2015

Mr. Ted Quaday
Executive Director
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
P.O. Box 170
294 Crosby Brook Road
Unity, Maine 04988

Dear Mr. Quaday:

Thank you for your letter of May 22, 2015, cosigned by Mary Yurlina, indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program (NOP). I strongly support his continued management of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and I support building a program that can take the necessary actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and the work of your organization.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association is doing important work to support organic farmers and organic agriculture.

Thank you again for writing in support of Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity. A similar letter will be sent to Ms. Mary Yurlina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Ms. Henderson:

In your correspondence dated May 18, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

I am proud of the National Organic Program (Program) and its leadership. Working hand-in-hand with the National Organic Standards Board (Board), the Program engages the public to facilitate transparent dialogue both during public meetings and during the rulemaking process. The Program has increased its speed of response to Board recommendations over the past five years, while it also adhered to the Organic Foods Production Act and the USDA organic regulations. The Program has mechanisms in place that ensure that technical report writers have no conflicts of interest and writers are well qualified to complete analyses responsibly. The Program responds to enforcement-related requests, while it also protects due process rights of farms and businesses. The Program's leaders work tirelessly to protect organic integrity, and they have my full support.

The National Organic Program offers many opportunities for public comment. We encourage you to use those forums to voice both your support and your concerns about proposed Program changes in the future.

Similar letters will be sent to Mr. Charles Henderson, Mr. Wolf Linkman and Mr. Walter Faria. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Charles Henderson
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Henderson:

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Sincerely,

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Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Walter Faria
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Faria:

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The National Organic Program offers many opportunities for public comment. We encourage you to use those forums to voice both your support and your concerns about proposed Program changes in the future.

Similar letters will be sent to Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson, Charles Henderson and Mr. Wolf Linkman. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Wolf Linkman
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Linkman:

In your correspondence dated May 18, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

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Similar letters will be sent to Mr. Walter Faria, Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson and Mr. Charles Henderson. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator

tmp7E01

From: Will Fantle <wfantle@cornucopia.org>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 9:54 AM
To: AGSEC - OES
Cc: president@whitehouse.gov
Subject: Change in the management of the National Organic Program
Attachments: Sec Vilsack letter-2015-FINAL.pdf

Importance: High

Dear Secretary Vilsack -

Please find the attached letter calling for change at the National Organic Program.

You may contact us at your convenience should you have comments, questions or a desire to discuss any of the issues raised within.

Sincerely,

Will Fantle
The Cornucopia Institute
715-839-7731



CORNUCOPIA
INSTITUTE

April 24, 2015

The Hon. Thomas J. Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

It is with extreme reluctance that The Cornucopia Institute calls upon you to replace the current management and oversight at the National Organic Program (NOP) with a qualified professional dedicated to carrying out the intent and spirit of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) — an individual who is highly respected by the organic industry. We were among the many in the organic community who sincerely welcomed the changes, and new personnel, you brought to the organic program in 2009.

But that bright promise has dimmed, and many important organic industry participants have grown severely disappointed by the direction taken by NOP management over the past several years. It is the opinion of many, including The Cornucopia Institute, that the deep fissures that have developed are now undermining the public/private partnership with the organic sector that Congress envisioned upon passage of OFPA 25 years ago.

This growing divide is threatening the credibility and reputation of the organic label, which has already been downgraded by the largest consumer public interest group, Consumers Reports.

Among the troubling developments are:

- The usurpation of National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) governance and authority by NOP staff;
- The unilateral imposition of dramatic changes to the Sunset review process for synthetic and non-organic materials intended for temporary use in organics;
- The rejection and dismissal of well-reasoned concerns raised by the NOSB, after serious deliberations and stakeholder input, on nanotechnology, hydroponics, aquaculture and other issues;
- A long track record of unacceptable delays in implementing enforcement actions, failure to share names of operations, fines and penalties with the public, and delegating investigative functions to certifiers (some of whom may have contributed to the violations by either incompetence or as co-conspirators); and
- The newly invoked cloaking in anonymity of authors of scientific technical reviews for the NOSB (a public body), so as to mask public scrutiny of credentials and possible conflicts of interest.

Board of Directors
Helen Kees
Organic Livestock Producer
Durand, Wisconsin

Kevin Engelbert
Nation's First Certified Organic Dairy
Former NOSB Member
Nichols, New York

Barry Flamm, PhD
Conservation Consultant
Former NOSB Member
Polson, MT

Roger Featherstone
Director - Arizona
Mining Reform Coalition
Tucson, Arizona

William Heart
Wildlife Conservationist
Ashland, Wisconsin

Dave Minar
Organic Dairy Producer
Cedar Summit Farm
New Prague, Minnesota

Goldie Caughlan
Organic Food Retailer
PCC Natural Markets (retired)
Former NOSB Member
Seattle, Washington

Mitch Blumenthal
Global Organic Specialty Source, Inc.
Organic Produce Distributor
Sarasota, Florida

Policy Advisory Panel
Francis Thicke, PhD
Organic Dairy Producer
Radiance Dairy
NOSB Member
Fairfield, Iowa

Michael James
Restaurateur/Urban Activist
The Heartland Cafe
Chicago, Illinois

Tony Azavedo
Organic Dairymen/Agritourism
San Joaquin Valley, California

Tom Willey
T & D Willey Farms
Organic Vegetable Grower/CSA
Madera, California

Jim Gerritsen
Organic Vegetable Grower
President, OSGATA
Bridgewater, Maine

Amanda Love
Natural Foods Chef/Educator
The Barefoot Cook
Austin, Texas

Cameron Molberg
Organic Livestock Producer/Feed Mill
Austin, Texas

Cofounders
Will Fantle
Research Director

Mark A. Kastel
Senior Farm Policy Analyst

Other Staff
Linley Dixon, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jérôme Rigot, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jason Cole
Research Associate

Gayle Nielsen
Membership Coordinator

Melody Marrell
Data Analyst and
Research Specialist

Therese Laurdan
Membership Assistant

Elizabeth Wolf
Communications and
Development Director

Zuri Allen
Social Media Specialist

Jeremy Vossman
Webmaster / IT support

Celeste Gibson
Accountant

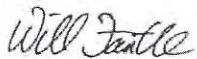
Organizations listed are for identification purposes only

Organic agriculture has proven to be one of the true bright spots in agriculture over the past 25 years. It has created new opportunities for family-scale farmers to make a decent living, and has literally connected millions of consumers in a more conscious, environmentally sound and health-affirming approach to procuring food. Consumer hunger for this type of food and agriculture is demonstrated by the dramatic growth in the marketplace for organics, now close to a \$40 billion a year industry.

However, the great future potential for organic agriculture is endangered by both arbitrary actions and cases of inaction by NOP management. Furthermore, the disrespectful behavior towards the power vested by Congress in the NOSB, and organic stakeholders involved in the collaborative process, threatens to alienate consumers and farmers from the well-deserved cache that organics has earned in the market.

We are bringing these concerns to your attention because you have the ability to make the needed changes regarding NOP oversight and management. We know that not all organic stakeholders share the concerns we are bringing forward for your review (many of these issues have actually been applauded by the agribusiness sector). But we also know that many in the organic community do share our concerns, and that the fissures occurring in organics are growing wider by the day. You have an opportunity to address this situation and make the proper corrections. We encourage you to do so.

Sincerely,



Will Fantle
Codirector

cc: President Barack Obama



Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

May 22, 2015

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As representatives of organic farmers in Maine we write today to voice our support for the strong body of work Miles McEvoy has produced as National Organic Program Deputy Administrator.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) functions as an organic advocacy and farmer training organization with 11,000 members. Its wholly-owned subsidiary, MOFGA Certification Services, LLC, certifies more than 450 organic farms and processors. Both entities routinely interact with the National Organic Program leadership, staff and regulatory programs. It is through this history of interaction that we feel confident in our support for Miles McEvoy's contributions to the NOP and organic agriculture.

Mr. McEvoy has proven to be an able program administrator, hiring talented staff members, navigating complex bureaucracies, articulating clear goals and moving to achieve completion of challenging programmatic objectives. Under Mr. McEvoy's direction, the NOP has produced rules on pasture and origin of livestock as well as guidance on compost production and the use of chlorine. Thanks to Mr. McEvoy and his staff, certifiers are now doing regular analytical screens for prohibited pesticides on certified products, meeting target numbers for unannounced inspections, and doing a better job of material input review.

Mr. McEvoy has led his team in opening the door to on-going communication with MOFGA and other organizations advocating on behalf of organic farmers and processors while ensuring that those same entities adhere to the National Organic Program standards. We have hosted Mr. McEvoy twice in Maine and have conducted several telephone conversations with him regarding National Organic Program improvements. We applaud this additional degree of interaction with certifiers and other organic farming advocates.

*P.O. Box 170 • 294 Crosby Brook Road • Unity, Maine 04988-0170
Phone: (207) 568-4142 • Fax: (207) 568-4141
mofga@mofga.org • www.mofga.org*

While we may not agree with Mr. McEvoy on every regulatory decision, we do appreciate much of what he has been able to accomplish as well as his commitment to *engaging certifiers and advocates in robust discussion regarding the future of the organic program.*

For all of the reasons cited above, we urge you to disregard those harsh critics who have issued disparaging commentary regarding Mr. McEvoy's performance at the head of the National Organic Program. We do not agree with their assessment and believe the National Organic Program should remain in Mr. McEvoy's competent hands. We hope you will agree.

Sincerely,



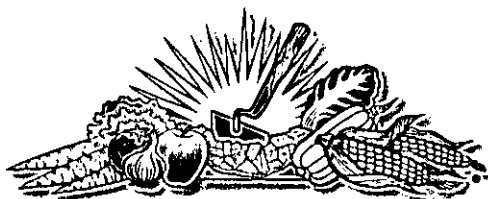
Ted Quaday
Executive Director, MOFGA



Mary Yurlina
Director, MOFGA Certification Services

cc:

Edward Avalos, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Anne Alonzo, AMS Administrator
Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program



Organically Grown Company

Employee and Grower Owned • Promoting Health through Organic Agriculture as a Leading Sustainable Organization

Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Organically Grown Company (OGC), an employee and grower-owned business, is the largest organic produce distributor in the Pacific Northwest. We work with more than 300 growers and vendors, serving over 500 retail, wholesale and restaurant customers located throughout Oregon and Washington, as well as other western states and Canada from our facilities in Portland and Eugene, Oregon, and Kent, Washington. We have been an actively engaged leader in the organic movement and trade since 1978, dedicating both staff and financial resources to support organic trade organizations, education and research. Our mission is *"Promoting health through organic agriculture as a leading sustainable organization."*

We are writing to express our disagreement with a recent call for removal of Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. While we understand the concerns raised about the manner in which recent changes were made to the National Organic Program's Sunset process for periodic review of materials on the National List, we do not agree that this merits a call for new leadership at the National Organic Program. Instead, we support a reconsideration of the Sunset Policy using a process that allows for a public comment period on this important topic.

In our experience, Miles McEvoy has a solid track record of leading the National Organic Program, instituting many policies and programs that have been helpful to the organic trade, strengthening the infrastructure of the NOP, and increasing enforcement.

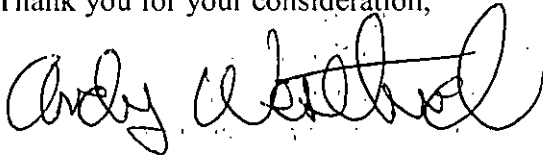
A few examples:

- Prioritized work on a database of certified operations that will facilitate real-time verification of certification status which is critically important to the fresh produce sector;

- Enacted the Sound and Sensible Initiative, which has improved the organic regulatory system, by streamlining the certification process and making it accessible to more growers, thereby helping to address the need to increase the supply of organic product;
- Increased staffing within the NOP, including many workers who have direct experience with certification and other aspects of organic production;
- Increased the emphasis on oversight of the NOP's own accreditation system through internal audits and a proposal to the National Organic Standards Board for establishing the Peer Review Panel;
- Has worked to clarify the process for filing a complaint and implementing systems for taking enforcement actions;
- Increased communications with organic stakeholders through the *Organic Insider* and the *NOP Handbook*;
- Has Promoted the USDA's Organic Cost Share program in order to ensure that certification costs don't discourage those who want to pursue organic certification.

As a business that monitors the activities and successes of the National Organic Program, the National Organic Standards Board and the organic trade in general, we admire Miles McEvoy for what he has accomplished and feel that there is currently no one in the trade who is better suited for this role.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Westlund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "W".

Andy Westlund

CEO, Organically Grown Company



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Westlund:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and can take actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture.

I appreciate your leadership and clear commitment to increasing business opportunities and organic trade. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rex Barnes".

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 9 2015

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Westlund:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rex Barnes".

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

May 25, 2015

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our disagreement with a recent call for removal of Mr. Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. While we understand many of the concerns raised about the manner in which recent changes were made to the National Organic Program's Sunset process for periodic review of materials on the National List, we do not agree that this merits a call for new Leadership at the National Organic Program. Instead, we support a reconsideration of the Sunset Policy using a process that allows for a public comment period on this important topic.

Our company strongly supports a vibrant organic produce industry. As an organic produce distributor with over 40 years of experience, Veritable Vegetable purchases, transports, and supplies the highest quality organic fruits and vegetables. We deliver throughout California, and parts of Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado; we ship to Hawaii. We contribute to an equitable food system by supporting over 220 small to mid-size organic growers, increasing access to fresh, organic produce through relationships with over 500 independent stores, co-ops, restaurants, corporate campuses, schools and wholesalers. We strengthen communities, and advocate for sound policy.

We are unique in our commitment to make every business decision based on our values. We support our community by donating approximately 10% of our annual revenue each year through produce and service donations, memberships and event sponsorships. Veritable Vegetable is a certified B Corporation, using the power of business to solve social and environmental challenges. VV envisions a sustainable food system that values the true costs associated with growing and moving food from farm to table; farmers have access to land and receive fair payment for their labor, all workers are treated equitably, food is grown and moved with minimal impact to the environment, and all people have equal access to fresh, healthy foods.

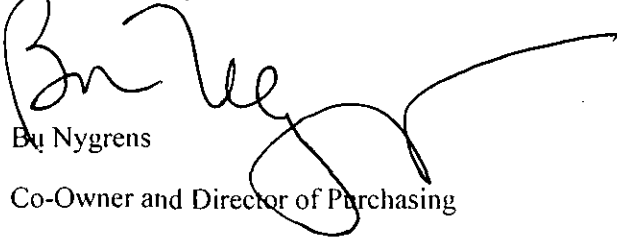
I personally worked with Mr. McEvoy on the Organic Certifiers Council, going back to the early 1990s. As manager of the Washington State Organic Program we found him to be a tireless advocate for strict and reasonable organic standards while also sensitive to the issues facing small to mid-size farmers and larger producers alike. Mr. McEvoy has a solid track record of leading the National Organic Program, instituting many policies and programs that have helped the organic trade, strengthening the infrastructure of the NOP, and increasing enforcement.



We believe his work has led to many accomplishments, including: support of The Sound and Sensible Initiative which improved the organic regulatory system by streamlining the certification process and making it accessible to more growers; increase of staffing within the NOP, including many workers who have direct experience with certification and other aspects of organic production; and improvement of communications with organic stakeholders through the *Organic Insider* and the *NOP Handbook*. He's also increased the emphasis on oversight of the NOP's own accreditation system through internal audits and a proposal to the National Organic Standards Board for establishing the Peer Review Panel. He has prioritized work on a database of certified operations to facilitate real-time verification of certification status, which is critically important to the fresh produce sector. Finally, his work to promote the USDA's Organic Cost Share program has helped ensure that certification costs don't discourage those wanting to pursue organic certification.

As a business that is directly impacted by the activities and successes of the National Organic Program, the National Organic Standards Board and the organic trade in general we would like you to reconsider your recent call to remove Mr. McEvoy from his current role. We value all that Mr. McEvoy has accomplished and feel there is currently no one in the industry more suited for this role.

Thank you for your consideration,



Bj Nygrens

Co-Owner and Director of Purchasing



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 09 2015

Mr. Bu Nygrens
Co-Owner and Director of Purchasing
Veritable Vegetable
1100 Cesar Chaves Street
San Francisco, California 94124

Dear Mr. Nygrens:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program. Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support his continued management of the National Organic Program (NOP).

We share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and your business activities.

We appreciate your clear commitment to making business decisions based on your values. The community service and donations of agricultural produce by Veritable Vegetable is commendable. The U.S. Department of Agriculture shares your interests in providing families, schools, food banks, and communities with access to nutritious, domestically produced foods.

Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator