



CORNUCOPIA
I N S T I T U T E

Mischa Popoff: Backgrounder

Dear Organic community stakeholders:

Please resist the temptation to surf through Mr. Popoff's two websites (one promoting his book and the other promoting his conservative political views).

Visiting his sites will only elevate them on Google and other search engines. We hesitated "outing" his ideologically driven attack on organics because this will undoubtedly raise his profile somewhat. But his broad distribution of the unfounded allegations he's made (of widespread fraud and 80-90% organic products being imported) warranted a response.

Right now, when searching the word "Popoff," he makes his first appearance in the Google search report on page 6 (a commentary carried on a politically conservative Canadian website) and his own political site does not appear until page 9 (his organic site falls in somewhere after that).

There is a common Latin axiom, used in the law, that goes, "*Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.*" False in one, false in all. Attorneys know that if you can prove a witness lied on the stand, in even a minor way, that his or her credibility will be tainted in the eyes of the jury.

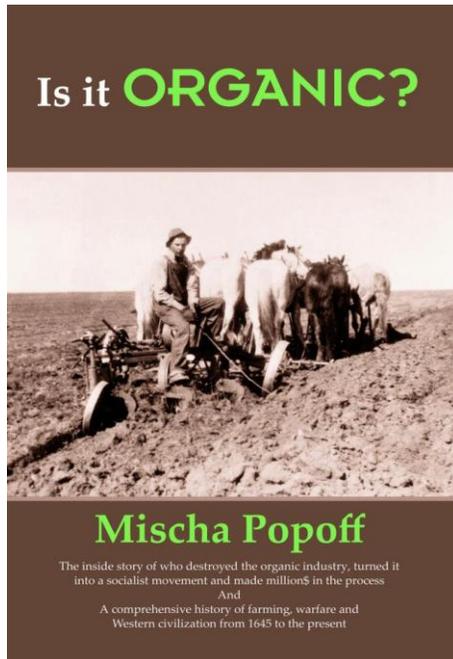
We have collected a few snippets of Mr. Popoff's writings (please see below) so hopefully you, the jury, can come to some conclusions about his approach to accuracy, and his willingness to risk injuring the reputation of the organic label in an attempt to advance his own agenda, without helping him by purchasing his self-published book or elevating his presence on the web.

We have taken the liberty of highlighting in yellow some of the key points in his writing, and our observations have been included in red text.

Will Fantle
Research Director
The Cornucopia Institute

In Conclusion...

Being organic is no longer about farming fields. It's about filling forms. Your taxes underwrite this marketing subterfuge and help drive a stake into the heart of the most efficient food system ever known [defending conventional/industrial agriculture]. Who's behind this? You'll be surprised.



Organic farming began in England as a Christian movement. Organic farmers in the United States and Canada overwhelmingly identify as conservatives, and until 1997 their industry actually had a sound scientific basis, subject to free-market rules with no government interference. But you'll never hear about that from the pro-organic media, or about the key role Presidents H.W. and G.W. Bush played in vaulting organics from hippie movement to multi-billion-dollar industry. [The organic movement has always transcended political labels and certainly religious orientation.]

Is it Organic? is a tell-all history by an industry insider who saw too much to keep quiet. Organics can get back to basics by producing food using age-old methods like natural composting, or it can be ruled by banality, fraud and eco-politics.

KC Active (US):

Hook, line and sticker

by Beck Ireland

The higher prices levied on food and drink carrying an organic label can cause sticker shock in many consumers. However, an increasing appetite for fruits and vegetables free of toxic pesticides and synthetic fertilizer has recently transformed organic farming into a \$30-billion-dollar-a-year industry. Yet, for the last 14 years, no organic farm in the United States or Canada has been subjected to systematic and unannounced field testing.

"You're flipping a coin every time you pay a premium for organic food at a store," says Mischa Popoff, an advanced organic inspector with the International Organic Inspectors Association and author of *Is It Organic?: The Inside Story of Who Destroyed the Organic Industry, Turned It into a Socialist Movement and Made Millions in the Process*.

According to Popoff, many of the foods labeled organic could contain substances prohibited by the Organic Materials Review Institute, such as toxic pesticides and fungicides.

"Even the most educated consumer has no idea what's really going on with any of their food," he says.

Although spot testing for pesticides has been required by law since 1990, it hasn't been systematically carried out. In 1997, according to Popoff, President Bill Clinton and the America Consumers Union considered adding a more stringent field test requirement to the **U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program**. However, lobbying interests "watered down" the wording.

"They turned it into a glorified marketing system," Popoff says. "It's based on the honor of all the people involved—all the people on the farm all the way up to the retail. If they're all honorable, it works, but then why do you even need a certification system if it's just going to be honor-based?"

...This should come as good news to organic proponents such as Popoff. However, only domestic organic farmers, who make up just 15 percent of the domestic market for organic food in the US and Canada, will be subjected to tests on their crops. Foreign organic operations, which provide 85 percent of the organic produce to the market in the US and Canada, will remain untested.

..."The certified farms are paying for bureaucracy, and it's subsidized by your taxes," Popoff says.... None of the money stays with the farmer. It all goes into the hands of the certifiers, and they use it to build their bureaucracy and lobbying."

More information about *Is it Organic?: The Inside Story of Who Destroyed the Organic Industry, Turned It into a Socialist Movement and Made Millions in the Process* can be found at www.isitorganic.ca.

***National Post* (Canada)**

Mischa Popoff: Beware of Organic Crusaders

From field to fork, organic food isn't just trendy – it's big business. The combined market in Canada and the United States is estimated at \$30-billion a year. Touted as healthier, tastier, and more "authentic" than conventional agricultural products, organic fare has become a must-stock in vegetable aisles, meat counters and menus across the nation.

Yet most consumers likely have no idea that the organic heirloom tomato salad they ingest at their local bistro cannot be guaranteed "pesticide-free." Nor are they aware that organic farming has morphed into a political crusade, attacking farmers' use of everything from fossil fuels to synthetic fertilizer, and even modern, disease-resistant seed varieties [once again defending conventional agriculture, synthetic inputs and genetic engineering] all the while resisting routine testing of organic produce.

I am an ardent proponent of organic farming [this juxtaposition is why we call Mr. Popoff a wolf in organic sheep's clothing]. I grew up on an organic farm, and worked for five years as an

advanced organic farm and process inspector in the United States and Canada. Based on this experience, I firmly believe that farming is still 100 percent organic even when it adapts to changing times. The main goal of organics is to avoid toxins that end up in our food and the environment.

But unless every organic operation is tested at least once a year, these regulations are meaningless. For those who raise the issue of cost, they should know that a test for more than 200 commonly used toxic herbicides can be purchased for only \$150. Farmers pay on average 10 times that sum just to have their paperwork examined. **[It's preposterous to think that samples can be taken by independent inspectors, addressing the broad array of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and synthetic fertilizers and drugs, and diversified crops and livestock, for \$150. Furthermore, the average farm inspection is nowhere near \$1500.]**

In addition to their resistance to testing, organic activists have also become resistant to the use of modern seed varieties, thus imperiling the very sustainability of our food supply. **They are not merely rejecting genetically modified seed,** but seeds that have simply been bred to protect a crop against common threats like rust, fungus and mildew, which can wipe out a field as thoroughly as any hail storm. **[We know of no prohibitions in organics against any hybrid or open pollinated seed varieties other than those that are produced through genetic engineering.]**

The gross assumption on the part of urban organic activists -many of whom have never worked a day on a farm -is that old varieties are superior because they were bred in an era when pesticides and synthetic fertilizers did not exist, and they therefore must possess natural pest resistance and the ability to seek nutrients deeper in the soil.

This fanciful thinking has never been researched. Such seed varieties were abandoned long ago precisely because they were not as resistant as modern varieties. But the activists cling to their mantra: If it's old seed, it's good seed. They browbeat organic farmers into use old seed varieties that no one knows much about, all in the name of rejecting everything modern. **[Baseless hyperbole] ...**

American Thinker

April 09, 2011

Warmists and the Organic Farming Activists

By Mischa Popoff

Organic farming creates more CO₂ (which is a good thing, of course). So why do urban organic activists pretend it's the other way 'round?

Urban organic activists begin every argument by pining for the good ol' days. They point out that in 1940 one calorie of fossil-fuel energy produced two calories of food. But now, due to the dreaded effects of industrialization, 20 calories of fossil-fuel energy are required per calorie of food. And this, for them, illustrates why an immediate transformation of the food biz is required to "save the planet." How? By converting from a fossil-fuel-based food economy to one based instead on sunshine. **Case closed!** After all, it's a 20-fold increase, right?[i]

Well... turns out it's not.

A wise man once said an ordinary mind is incapable of making distinctions. The distinction not being made in this case is that while we're using 20 times the **fossil-fuel** energy, we're certainly not using 20-times the **total** energy. Not even close...

If only they had ever worked a day on a farm, these "slow," urban activists would appreciate the massive amounts of human and animal labor that used to be required before machines driven by fossil fuels came along. The reason only a single calorie of **fossil-fuel energy** was required to produce two calories of food was that, prior to the mass industrialization during the Second World War, farmers did the rest of the work by hand and by back! Far more calories were consumed emitting far more CO₂. Otherwise, industrialization would not have made economic sense.

Slow food activists will try to tell you that a great deal of today's fossil-fuel consumption results from the transportation of food, and that all food should therefore be procured locally. But transportation turns out to only account for a tiny fraction of energy use. (Were this not the case, greedy capitalists wouldn't ship food over long distances; it's that simple.)

It's energy-intensive activities like the plowing of land, harvesting, and the handling and processing of food that account for the lion's share of energy consumption and hence CO₂ emissions.[ii] And when our ancestors relied on horses to do this work -- which of course meant fully one-half of their arable land was dedicated to growing crops for feed (something which clearly had both an economic and environmental impact) -- they still expended enormous amounts of human energy. And all that work, human **and** animal, had a measurable carbon footprint which **greatly exceeds** the 20-fold increase in fossil-fuel energy-use that occurred over the last 70 years. How much more exactly? Hold onto your hat.

...They seek to replace evil ol' fossil-fuels with biofuels like ethanol. Instead of burning 20 calories of **fossil-fuel** energy to yield two calories of food as we currently do, in a biofuel food-economy farmers would burn 20 calories of **biofuel**, and would once again find themselves setting aside half of all their land to grow that fuel... just like their ancestors did to grow feed for their horses. See a pattern here?

All you achieve with biofuels is a shift in **where** the fuel comes from, not in how much is consumed. So much for the sunshine economy! Besides, fossil fuels are sunshine-based as surely as crops are. The sunshine was captured in forests millions of years ago and remains stored in underground reserves in the form of crude oil. Why is today's sunshine any better than yesterday's?

Most members of the urban-environmentalist crowd don't have the slightest conception of what they're promoting in taking us back to what they perceive to be the good ol' days. But the really scary part is that many do.

CropLife (US)

Organics Industry: Led Astray

The corporate approach to organics has undermined locally produced food and put the full force of its marketing message on tearing down biotechnology.

By Mischa Popoff

March 2011

Editor's Note: Mischa Popoff is an advanced organic inspector based in Canada [this is a false claim Popoff frequently makes], and has been outraged over the hijacking of the organic industry by big corporations. In his new book, Is It Organic?, Popoff provides insight into how the organics movement became an industry that lost its focus and is in danger of losing its identity.

Fifteen percent.

That's a generous estimate of the sum total of the organic industry that could be considered "legitimate."

No, I'm not someone with an interest in the chemical or biotech industries. I'm someone with a vested interest in the organic industry. Fifteen percent is the paltry market share left over for American and Canadian organic farmers after cheap imports fill the shelves.

Did you think, like so many Americans, that the organic industry supported local family farms? Silly ... that's what's referred to as propaganda, or rather, public relations.

Way back when this industry was still a movement, almost all organic food was domestic. But then something interesting happened on the way to Washington. Ambitious corner health-food store owners realized they could make more money if they imported "organic" food from China, Mexico and Indonesia. Is that stuff really organic? Well, the paperwork says it is. But what do the field tests say? Ahh ... now you're asking the right question.

Failing The Test

Asking if organic farms and processing facilities are tested should be akin to asking if Olympic athletes are tested. "Well of course they are!" Or so you'd assume. Well, it turns out they're not.

Back in 1998, President Bill Clinton listened to the [American Consumers Union](#) and required that organic farms and processing facilities be tested at least once a year. Honest organic farmers rejoiced, firm in the belief that the main role of government is to keep things fair for

everyone. But the corner health-food store owners lobbied to eliminate field testing from [USDA](#) organic standards. Can you say free-for-all?

Activists love to blame this on Bush, but it all happened under Clinton. Anything can now be sold as organic as long as the paperwork is completed and exorbitant fees are paid to private certifying companies that only make money when they give their approval. Conveniently, these certifiers all have branch offices over in China. Corner health-food stores quickly grew into huge box stores and ceased doing business domestically 85% of the time. **[Random testing is part of the law passed by Congress governing organics. After overt criticism by Cornucopia and many others in the organic community, the Obama USDA is now implementing the program.]**

Without testing for the very things the organic industry claimed to exclude from food, the industry leaders realized they desperately needed some credibility. They weren't quite sure where to turn until they made the collective decision in 1999 to 'go hard' against a new enemy, an enemy which Clinton had thought might actually be an ally: biotechnology.

This is why you never see the words chemical-free or synthetic-fertilizer-free on organic foods. Sure, organic crops aren't supposed to be grown with the aid of chemicals or synthetic fertilizer. But it turns out the best you can do is hope there are no residues in your organic food. There's no guarantee; not even the suggestion that chemical residues are reduced to some sort of an acceptable level.

But you do see bold statements like "100% GMO free" proudly displayed on organic labels because genetic engineering has replaced crop protection chemicals and synthetic fertilizer as the arch-nemesis of organics.

All About Biotech

Now when you read in the news that the CEO's of "organic" corporations like [Whole Foods Market](#), [Organic Valley](#), and [Stonyfield Farm](#) are "fuming" over the Obama administration's decision to approve the use of genetically engineered alfalfa, you'll know **it has absolutely nothing to do with bringing purer, more nutritious food to market. It's all just PR.**

These CEOs claim to be concerned about the environment, but they're really just worried because of their own self-imposed, zero tolerance for biotechnology. They made the "100% GMO free" labeling claim their sole *raison d'être*, and now have to stick with it no matter what.

There's no proof that biotechnology leads to more chemical use on farms (quite the opposite actually) or that it will "threaten the rights of farmers and consumers," or "damage the environment." **[There is substantial documentary evidence indicating that the use of herbicides has exploded since the introduction of Monsanto's genetically engineered crops that resist their proprietary Roundup herbicide.]** But from a marketing perspective, the prospect of minute quantities of biotech alfalfa cross-pollinating with organic alfalfa undermines the bold claim — the only bold claim — that premium-priced organic foods are always "100% GMO free."

The only way organic farmers will suffer is if an organic certifier makes their lives hell when their organic alfalfa fields are within a five-mile radius of a crop of biotech alfalfa. This is why

hardly anyone grows organic canola anymore in North America: the for-profit organic certifiers forced organic farmers to stop growing canola so the leaders of the organic industry could then launch legal action against the makers of Roundup Ready, biotech canola; legal action that, ironically enough, organic farmers were then forced to fund through their exorbitant certification fees. **Feeling all warm and fuzzy yet?**

In the meantime, if an organic farmer's crop becomes contaminated by a sprayed chemical, whether through negligence or fraud, or if an "organic" crop over in the People's Republic of China is fraudulently treated every step of the way with synthetic fertilizer, prohibited herbicides, pesticides and fungicides, well ... everything's just fine as long as the paperwork's all in order, the fees are paid, and no one blows the whistle. **[This is false and highly objectionable.]** But for gosh-sake, don't let genes from a genetically engineered crop get anywhere near an organic crop! It'd wreak havoc with the industry's image.

The organic industry claims to provide purer, more nutritious food — for a price — but it doesn't do anything to ensure that's what consumers get. Nothing that is, except for a stupid, self-imposed zero-tolerance on GMO.

Painted In A Corner

I worked the land with my family back when the organic industry was still just a movement. I then had the honor of working across the U.S. and Canada as an Advanced Organic Farm and Process Inspector and met with hundreds of honest organic farmers who want nothing to do with any of the political activism we're seeing. **Never once did I ever see proof that organic food was harmed in any way by biotechnology. On the contrary I met many people who believe, as Bill Clinton did, that organic farming could very well benefit from biotechnology.**

But millionaire organic activists have painted themselves into a tight corner and have no choice but to continue scaring the crap out of the public when it comes to biotechnology. Now that they're firmly committed to cheap overseas supply, being anti-GMO is all they've got left to hang their hats on.

Australia News (Australia)

Is it Organic? How would you know?

Mischa Popoff

So... remind me again... why aren't organic farms ever tested? If you still think the term "certified organic" means that an organic farmer, broker or exporter receives a surprise visit from an organic inspector, or that the food you're paying double or more for was ever field-tested to ensure prohibited substances weren't used, you are mistaken.

My new book, *Is it Organic?* provides the comprehensive history of organics and includes the full story of my decade-plus experience working in the organic industry. We can get back to basics by producing food using age-old, scientifically-proven methods like natural, intensive composting, or we can continue to be dominated by **banality, fraud and eco-politics**. What do you think we should do?

As far as government and urban activists are concerned, farmers, **the environment and consumers are mere afterthoughts**. ...Here's an excerpt from Is it Organic?...

The Clinton Administration caved in to the desires of millionaire organic activists by mentioning the need for organic testing, then passing the final organic rule only after undermining testing by saying it would "not be routine practice conducted on every operation." Sadly, when the Clinton Administration said that organic field testing "is seen as a useful tool," it turned out to really hang on what the definition of "is" is. Clinton then placed the whole watered-down mess on the back burner and left it for George W. Bush to pass into law. Feel better now? (p. 161)

Yes, it's true dear readers, organic farms are never tested anywhere in the world **[this is incorrect]**. And all of the "organic" food available at your supermarket is certified solely on the basis of paperwork. Try to imagine the Olympics without athletes being tested. Would paperwork ever be accepted as proof that an athlete was clean?

Here's more from the book...

Those turning tidy profits in the organic biz will try to argue that the true value of organics cannot be proven by science. **[This is false. There is a growing body of peer-reviewed scientific literature illustrating the nutritional and safety benefits of eating organically.]** How convenient to discover something so vital to human and planetary wellbeing but to also discover that its veracity is essentially and inherently unprovable. As Francis Bacon puts it, "whatever any art fails to attain, they ever set it down upon the authority of that art itself as impossible of attainment." Convenient indeed; too convenient by far in fact. (p. 556)

...The history of organics traces all the way back to 1645 in England and was **based on solid science right up until the late 1990s when mysticism, magic and bureaucracy took over**. The industry has now **become little more than glorified food pornography**, promising everything but delivering nothing.

Being organic is no longer about farming fields. It's about filling forms, which explains why it continues to grow at the astounding rate of 20 percent-per-annum in spite of the recession. And who's behind all of this? You'll be surprised.

Mischa Popoff holds a bachelor's degree in history and is an IOIA Advanced Organic Inspector.

From: Mischa Popoff [mailto:mischa@isitorganic.ca]
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2011 9:57 AM
To: kastel@cornucopia.org
Subject: **George Soros undermines the organic movement**

No one epitomizes the huge difference between rural organic-farming and urban organic-activism better than George Soros.

With the openly stated goal of undermining the American economy, Soros supports organizations that are devoted to undermining the North-American food economy, the most efficient food delivery system ever known.

Sure, the North-American food economy is far from perfect. But as I travelled across North America inspecting family-run organic farms I learned pretty quickly what honest organic farmers all know intuitively: there's no way we're going to ever replace conventional farming. Improve upon it? You betcha'! But replace it? Never.

A few weeks ago I called out Mark Kastel, his *Cornucopia Institute*, along with George Siemon and his *Organic Valley Family of Farms Brand*, for pretending to stand up for family organic farmers. They, along with people like Soros, make it their business to attack anyone they don't like in the organic biz. But what do they do to actually help organic farmers? All they really care about is that their political message sells. And that hurts domestic farmers. And anyone who doesn't believe this can try to explain why 80% of the certified-organic food sold in the United States every year is imported! How does that help our farmers?

Please go to the new page on my website to read more about how some urban activists hurt domestic organic farmers. And, if you're in the mood for a 45-minute, in-depth radio interview on the subject, please go straight to Carol & Chris's Homegrown Podcast.

Mischa Popoff, IOIA Advanced Organic Farm and Process Inspector
Author of *Is it Organic? The inside story of the organic industry*
Some people won't like this book, but you will
Osoyoos BC Canada

From: Mischa Popoff [mailto:mischa@isitorganic.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2011 11:54 AM
To: kastel@cornucopia.org
Subject: Popoff - Organic farming more efficient than conventional, and pigs fly!

Okay... now I've heard everything.

A new study co-authored by a member of the *Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University* claims organic farms can be more energy efficient than conventional operations. That's like saying "Hey! I can be a faster runner than Usain Bolt!"

In case you don't know, Usain is the fastest man in the world (he's also referred to as *Lightning Bolt*). So, how the heck can I claim to run faster than him? Well, you see, the key words in my dubious claim are "can be." I mean, sure, if Usain is fast asleep I can be way faster than he is. It all depends on the circumstances. And, until Usain and I have a race, well... my statement stands! So there.

This study is a total sham. Really. I mean, how much of my taxes were wasted on this? But, alas this is what happens when people who've never worked a day on a farm and who work at a

university located in the downtown core of a large city decide to attack modern farming in a fight against the phantom menace of climate change.

As I show in my book, organic farming is *less* efficient than conventional farming. In most cases, *far* less so. But that's perfectly fine! **There's nothing wrong with burning fossil fuels**, especially on a farm! And since when is organic farming supposed to fall into line with every single "green" desire environmentalists have? **[Please note, Mr. Popoff is on the record as a climate change skeptic.]**

We're supposed to produce food that's purer and more nutritious in the organic sector. We rely on time-proven methods that have sustained humankind for thousands of years; so **who cares if we burn a bit more diesel?** Every organic farmer I know will tell you straight up that he burns more fuel for every bushel he produces compared to his conventional neighbors. And you know what? It doesn't bother him in the least. What bothers organic farmers, young and old, is when they're used as pawns to fight someone else's environmental battle, in this case, the crazy battle against climate change. **[Local and organic food might very well have a lower carbon footprint due in part to increased grazing and not using a myriad of petrochemicals in its production.]**

***Attention**, anyone working in the environmental department of a university! North-American farmers don't care about climate change! Never did, never will.*

In case you haven't heard about this study, [click here](#). And if you have, and thought perhaps it might be true, ask yourself why Al Gore never mentions organic farming. It's because he knows organic farming requires **more** fossil fuel than conventional farming, and it releases **more** CO₂. Too bad the authors of this study don't know what Gore knows.

If you haven't heard about my book that debunks this type of malarkey while promoting *true, honest, domestic* organic farming, please go to my website. For my specific comments on the issue of organics and CO₂, just click here.

Mischa Popoff, B.A. (Hons.), IOIA Organic Inspector
Author of *Is it Organic? The inside story of the organic industry*
Some people hate this book, but if you've ever worked on a farm, you'll love it
Osoyoos BC Canada
www.isitorganic.ca

Mischa Popoff website 3-18-11

A Cornucopia of nonsense

It's hardly a stretch to assume the public is extremely concerned with things like toxic residues and un-composted fecal matter in their food, especially if they're paying hefty premiums for organic food. But, for some reason, corporations seem to make better targets for organic activists.

A relatively new organic lobby group called the **Cornucopia Institute** [established 2004] bills itself as the promoter of “Economic Justice for Family Scale Farming.” It’s headed by **Mark Kastel**, a guy who used to work for multi-million dollar “agribusiness giants” before making the “paradigm shift to sustainable farming.” It wasn’t a huge shift mind you because he now works for a multi-million dollar organo-activist company called *Organic Valley Family of Farms Brand*, referred to as *Organic Valley* for short. Confused? Well, you see, it’s perfectly simple really; *Organic Valley* isn’t an evil agribusiness giant because it has the words “organic” and “family” in its name. That means it’s friendly and sustainable, not evil and profit-driven. Okay? **[Organic Valley contributes no funding to Cornucopia and Mr. Kastel has no professional relationship with the organization. He started his career with International Harvester and, like many conventional farmers, switched to organic production after a pesticide-related illness presented his "wake-up" moment almost 30 years ago.]**

Seriously though, **Kastel** rails against large corporations doing business in the organic sector for no other reason except that they’re large. **[Cornucopia's philosophy is that it's corporate watchdogging is, "all about corporate ethics, not corporate scale."]** And he pretends to no longer be on *Organic Valley*’s payroll even though they’re the single largest contributor to his **Cornucopia Institute**. Never hurts to have a rich benefactor nowadays, does it? [Again, **Organic Valley contributes no funding to Cornucopia and Mr. Kastel has no professional relationship with the organization.**] He also fails to explain that the CEO of *Organic Valley*, a groovy millionaire by the name of **George Siemon**, “was instrumental in creating the USDA rules, and is working to see that they remain intact.” That’s right **Siemon** is one of the many people I expose in my book who has a vested interest in the **multi-billion-dollar** organic industry, who literally wrote his own federal code, and who now assumes control of that code while big brother watches over pretending to look out for the little people.

Such conflict of interest would never be tolerated in the conventional food sector. But, shameless to a fault, **Kastel** recently came out swinging against *Golden Temple* granola and *Peace Cereal*. Why? Because they used to be organic and now they’re not. Both processors removed the word “Organic” from their labels and sent letters to all their wholesale and retail customers informing them they were no longer organic, but **Kastel** wants more. He wants them to do an advertising campaign to inform consumers they’re no longer organic. Is he serious? Yup, he is. **[Golden Temple/Peace Cereal changed from organic to conventional ingredients, without lowering the price, and without adequately notifying stores, or changing the UPC codes of the products. Many retailers continued to use signage to identify these products as "made with organic ingredients," misinforming consumers. The Cornucopia Institute has proposed to the USDA a regulation that would require full notification and changing the scanning codes when product formulation is changed from organic to conventional.]**

There are serious problems in the organic industry. Most notably, the fact that organic crops and livestock are **not tested**. This has led to a situation where over 80 percent of the certified organic food sold is imported from places like China, Indonesia and Mexico, all based on paperwork and the payment of hefty fees. But **Kastel** doesn’t care. Who knows? Maybe his boss likes the current laxity of the organic certification system.

Under **Siemon**’s watchful eye, **Kastel** has been obsessed with one certifying company in particular, *Quality Assurance International (QAI)*, which is a good certifier working consistently

within federal standards. [QAI has been involved in some of the largest documented scandals in the organic industry. Cornucopia watchdogs all certifiers but calls QAI, "the corporate certifier of convenience." Their practices, on a number of occasions, had been sanctioned by the USDA but, under the Bush administration, were not penalized.] I should know; I worked for QAI back when I was an *IOIA Advanced Organic Farm and Process Inspector*. But **Siemon** and **Kastel** think QAI is "too corporate." **Cornucopia** has never shown where QAI has done anything illegal or even untoward. QAI's only crime according to **Siemon** and **Kastel** is that they are successful and their clients are large. [Although **Cornucopia** has publicly criticized QAI, to our knowledge neither **Organic Valley** nor **Mr. Siemon** have done so.]

Siemon and **Kastel** also used **Cornucopia** to attack President Barack Obama's pick of Iowa Democratic Governor Tom Vilsack for Secretary of Agriculture. **Siemon** and **Kastel** didn't like the fact that Vilsack had supported genetic engineering and that he had a "close relationship" with agribusiness corporations. [Cornucopia had not criticized Sec. Vilsack until after his decision to legalize the sale of genetically engineered alfalfa, a grave threat to organic production. In fact, we were pleased and surprised at the changes he made to staff at the USDA and the commitment to organics.] Sounds just like any Secretary of Agriculture you care to mention from the last 50 years (and any Minister of Agriculture in Canada). It also sounds a lot like Bill Clinton and Al Gore who both have the exact same views as Vilsack on the need for advanced science in agriculture. But **Siemon** and **Kastel** won't dare go after Clinton or Gore; so, instead, **Kastel** decided to remind Obama of his promise for "change," citing the need to "Clean up Bush's Organic Mess." [Our call to Obama was made prior to Sec. Vilsack's appointment.] This in spite of the fact that the final rules for the USDA's **NOP** which **Siemon** and **Kastel** enthusiastically support were passed during George W. Bush's administration after being written by Clinton's administration. (This is all explained in Chapter 5 of my book.) [Cornucopia's criticism of the Bush administration was for their refusal to enforce the regulations. Although Cornucopia was not in existence during the Clinton administration, it has since criticized the Clinton USDA for "monkeywrenching" the adoption of regulations resulting in a 12-year delay in implementation.]

I tried communicating with **Kastel** about the need to reduce bureaucracy in the organic industry and introduce field testing. His position is that he and his boss defend "the hoops organic farmers have had to jump through," and he stresses that testing cannot substitute for record-keeping and form-filling because, in his mind, "Most alarm systems are never tested by burglars." *Can someone tell me just what the hell that's supposed to mean?* Organic farmers want field testing, less paperwork and a reduction in the fees they're forced to pay year after year. Why not do something to help them? [Cornucopia supports random testing in addition to farm inspections and audits of record-keeping.]

Big Organic players like **Siemon** are directing minions like **Kastel** all across the land to lobby Obama for "change" in the food industry, a change which, let's face it, they hope will continue to be completely unscientific. Perhaps **Siemon** and **Kastel** never did well in science and math when they were in school and they honestly just don't understand how things like food safety and quality control work. Or... it could be **Siemon** and **Kastel** actually did very well in science and math and just don't want food safety and quality control to work, at least not in their racket... I mean sector. *So how 'bout it guys? Can we see your college transcripts?*

There is currently little proof of actual cleanliness, nutrition and fair play in the global organic industry. **[There is a growing body of scientific literature, from the USDA, Consumers Union and peer-reviewed publications, illustrating the nutritional and safety advantages of consuming organic food.]**[It's fast approaching a complete free-for all, and domestic organic farmers suffer as a result. Professional organic lobbyists like **Kastel** either honestly don't get that, or they don't want to. And that's a total shame.

NOTE: After Popoff distributed this manifesto, which is an excerpt from his book, Cornucopia Codirector Will Fantle contacted him requesting a retraction/correction and the removal of this material from his website based on its factual inaccuracy. The material is still posted.