



CORNUCOPIA
I N S T I T U T E

August 16, 2016

Mr. Tom Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Accompanying this letter are nearly 5,000 individually signed letters calling for a change in management at the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP). We are providing these to you as one more indication of the growing dissatisfaction with Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and his direction and oversight of the rapidly growing organic industry.

We have contacted you before about our concerns and we are now bringing to your attention the fact that thousands of others in the organic community are similarly disturbed by what is occurring under Mr. McEvoy's management of the NOP.

These concerns include:

- 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 (a matter on which the USDA is currently involved in litigation with Cornucopia and other stakeholders).
- The rejection and dismissal of well-reasoned concerns raised by the NOSB, and overwriting their recommendations or inventing entirely new issues without board input or public debate, disregarding serious deliberations and stakeholder input, on hydroponics, animal welfare, nanotechnology, and other issues.

- A serious lack of enforcement activities on major fraud and violation of organic regulations occurring with imports and livestock activities – despite contrary Department representations.
- Ignoring the questionable authenticity of the flood of imports into this country of suspect organic grains from Eastern Europe, central Asia and China that have effectively closed-off markets to U.S. farmers for organic grains to domestic buyers.

In addition, AMS Deputy Administrator Miles McAvoy has allegedly engaged in unethical personal behavior which does not appear to have ever been thoroughly investigated.

We bring all of this once more to your attention because you have the ability to make the needed changes regarding NOP oversight and management. You have an opportunity to address this situation and make the proper corrections. We encourage you to do so.

Sincerely,

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

Will Fantle, Codirector