

Organic Advisory Board
of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Division of Agriculture and Resource Marketing

Minutes of Public Meeting of January 29, 2007

Meeting Location: RI DEM Division of Agriculture
Conference Room
Room 370, 235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

Members Present: Erik Eacker, Brian Simmons, Rik Kleinfeldt, Pete Susi
Members Absent: Fritz Vohr
Staff Present: Ken Ayars, Dennis Martin, Matt Green
(RIDEM/Agriculture)

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. at the Division of Agriculture.

Matt Green reviewed Organic Advisory Board (OAB) membership and duties.

Due dates for submission of applications for organic farm certification were discussed. The due date of March 1 was arrived at which would be within a favorable time frame for farmers and would facilitate timely submission and processing of applications. Brian Simmons made a motion, seconded by Erik Eacker, to recommend a due date of March 1 for submission of applications for organic farm (crops category) certification and continuation of certification. The motion was approved unanimously.

Due dates for submission of applications for organic handler certification were discussed. The rolling due date was determined to be sufficient for handler applications. Erik Eacker made a motion, seconded by Rik Kleinfeldt, to recommend the rolling due date for submission of applications for organic handler certification and continuation of certification. The motion was approved unanimously.

The 2007 Meeting Schedule was discussed, and time frames were determined with respect to seasonal demands and availability of members. Brian Simmons made a motion, seconded by Erik Eacker, to schedule the two annual board meetings to occur the first week of December and the last week of January, with any additional meetings that may be necessary to be scheduled as needed. The motion was approved unanimously.

Appointment of a Chairman of the Board was discussed. It was decided that such appointment would facilitate efficient communication and operation of the board. Erik Eacker volunteered to serve as Chairman. Brian Simmons made a motion, seconded by Rik Kleinfeldt, to elect Erik Eacker as Chairman of the Organic Advisory Board to serve for one year. The motion was approved unanimously.

Other discussion:

Division of Agriculture organic certification program will investigate requirements for NOP accreditation for organic livestock certification and will consult the Animal Health section on this topic and on the mobile processing unit of the RI pastured poultry group.

It was suggested by OAB that more guidance documents from RIDEM/Agriculture on organic certification issues would be welcome; more information on determining allowed amount of restricted sodium nitrate fertilizers would be useful.

Agenda topic requested for next meeting: Discuss fee structure for application for organic certification.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

R. Matthew Green, Supervisor of Insect Pest and Plant Disease Control
Division of Agriculture, RIDEM