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Organic Crop Improvement Association

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2021 Organic Farmer of the Year

LINCOLN, NE: The OCIA Research & Education Outstanding Organic Farmer of the Year award honors talented producers who certify to the OCIA level of excellence. These farmers excel in thoughtful cropping and livestock practices that build soil and reduce pests and weeds. They maintain and enhance the environment, are innovative in farming practices, and active in their organic community.

Nancy Vogelsberg-Busch of Home, Kansas and member of the OCIA Eastern Kansas 2 Chapter, was the recipient of the 2021 Farmer of the Year award and was recognized during OCIA's Annual Membership Meeting.

Nancy rented her first farm in 1978 and continued her family's tradition of organic farming. She currently owns 360 acres that she certified organic in 1990. Nancy has also maintained organic certification on her Frankfort Locker since 1999. The Frankfort Locker is the only meat processing facility in Kansas that is USDA certified organic. "Exhausting," Nancy describes it, "but required for me to sell my certified organic cattle as organic beef."

When Nancy first started farming, she carried on her father's tradition of rotating row crops of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. She also adopted new methods of farming and marketing. Nancy credits her cattle for providing both meat and soil fertility through their manure. She uses alfalfa and red clover as year round cover crops and for grazing ground and hay for her cattle's winter feed.

"I began to value add my crops of grass and corn by feeding out my cattle with ground ear corn and then value added my cattle by direct marketing my beef," explained Nancy. "My customers drive to the Frankfort Locker to pick up their custom cut, whole, halves, or quarters of beef. I also sell labeled ground beef to retail stores. I went a step further and added more value to my ground beef by making homemade organic hot dogs, which I sell at the local farmer's market."

Nancy has served on her local, OCIA chapter board for many years. She now serves on her local, farmer's market board, supporting food that doesn't travel far from its place of origin. Nancy is grateful to have raised her children on the farm and now has six grandchildren that enjoy hunting, fishing, playing in the creek, and on trails she has built. Nancy has also established an orchard, large garden, and pollinator strips on her farm and has a beekeeper who keeps his bees on her farm and shares his honey.

According to Nancy, "I think OCIA's organic certification is the closest documentation that we have to a land ethic."

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OCIA is a not-for-profit organic certification agency that has offered a wide variety of accreditations to our members throughout the world for over 30 years. During an annual meeting, organic farmers from the United States, Canada and Latin America come together to meet and vote on the OCIA Bylaws, Standards and Board of Directors for this member-run organization.

OCIA: The Worldwide Standard for Certified Organic Excellence