

THE COMMUNICATOR

ORGANIC CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL | WINTER 2025



OCIA CERTIFIED ORGANIC | DECEMBER 2025 |

Organic Eye recognizes OCIA as Certifier Upholding the Highest Ethical Standards

Take Back the Organic Farming Movement Switch to Certifiers That Protect Family Farms and Share Our Values



Certifiers Upholding the Highest Ethical Standards

Baystate Organic Certifiers
Global Organic Alliance, Inc. (GOA)
MOFGA Certification Services
NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC
OEFFA Certification
OneCert, Inc.

Oklahoma Department of Agriculture,
Food and Forestry
Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA)
Vermont Organic Farmers, LLC
Yolo County Organic

Ethically-Challenged Certifiers

Partnering with corporate lobbyists and the USDA: hydroponics, livestock factories, imports, conflicts of interest, etc.

Americert International
California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)*
Clemson University
Colorado Department of Agriculture
Control Union Certifications*
EcoCert*
Georgia Crop Improvement Association
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Indiana Certified Organic — EcoCert (ICO)*
Midwest Organic Services Association, Inc. (MOSA)
Nature's International Certification Services — EcoCert*
OnMark Certification Services

Oregon Department of Agriculture
Oregon Tilth Certified Organic*
Organic Certifiers, Inc.*
Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO)*
Pro-Cert Organic Systems, Ltd.*
Quality Assurance International (QAI)*
Quality Certification Services*
Texas Department of Agriculture
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food
Washington State Department of Agriculture*
Where Food Comes from Organic*

Unranked

Agricultural Services Certified Organic
Iowa Department of Agriculture
and Land Stewardship
Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Marin Organic Certified Agriculture
Maryland Department of Agriculture
Minnesota Crop Improvement Association*
Montana Department of Agriculture
Monterey County Certified Organics

Natural Food Certifiers*
Perry Johnson Registrar Food Safety, Inc.
Primus Auditing Operations*
SCS Global Services, Inc.*

*  OTA Certifier-Member

OrganicEye 

This guide will be continually updated as more information becomes available at OrganicEye.org.
If you are a farmer or business certified by one of the unranked organizations,
please encourage them to contact [OrganicEye](https://OrganicEye.org) to transparently share their policies.





President's Message

We believe this option may help attract new members who might otherwise certify elsewhere. This proposal will be brought up for consideration at the 2026 AGMM (Annual General Membership Meeting).

In other news, our old office building located on 1340 Cotner Avenue in Lincoln, Nebraska was sold on November 21st for \$540,000. Originally purchased in 2007 for \$435,000 the sale allows us to move forward without the ongoing carrying costs associated with the property. The proceeds will considerably strengthen our financial position. Staff feedback on our new office located at 5910 S. 58th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska has been very positive, and we anticipate lower maintenance and operating costs moving forward.

While our membership has slightly declined again this year, this appears to be an industry-wide trend rather than an OCIA-specific issue. Despite the dip, our financial outlook remains strong. After making some adjustments, payroll expenses have decreased, and TOPP funding continues to support a significant part of our marketing efforts and growth in the number of direct associates is helping offset chapter membership losses, often generating higher renewal revenue. Additionally, the sale of our old office building will decrease long term maintenance costs. I'd like to extend a special thank you to our OCIA Director of Finance, Deana McKinstry for her dedicated work.

In closing, I want to express my sincere appreciation to all of you for certifying with OCIA. This time of year, reminds us how fortunate we are to have members who are committed to producing healthy food for communities everywhere.

As a reminder our AGMM will be held in Lincoln, Nebraska on Thursday, February 12th, 2026. Members may attend in person or virtually via Zoom. As a membership led organization, your voice truly matters so please make time to participate.

CHRIS JAWORSKI
OCIA INTERNATIONAL
PRESIDENT

Greetings everyone,

As the year comes to a close, it's the perfect time to reflect on all that has been accomplished. Your Board of Directors, together with the OCIA staff, has been working diligently to keep our organization relevant, financially stable, and aligned with the needs of our members. Enclosed is a brief summary of key developments and activities since my last report in May.

First, I'd like to commend our staff on the tremendous number of trade shows OCIA has participated in throughout 2025. By all accounts OCIA was present at more than 20 organic exhibitions this past year. If you attended any event related to organic agriculture, you likely saw OCIA represented. I'd also like to recognize board member, Jack Geiger who hosted a Farm Start event in August. Approximately 35 farmers attended his informative session in Robinson, Kansas. Best of all, the cost of participating in all of these trade shows – as well as Jack's Farm Start – was fully covered through TOPP (Transition to Organic Partnership Program) funds, thus preserving OCIA's own financial resources.

During the past few years our Executive Director and the Board have observed a generational shift among new farmers transitioning to organic production. Many newer producers prefer limited interaction and are comfortable conducting their own research. They seek basic fees and are less inclined to pay for additional services. Participating in local chapters is often not of interest to them. As times change, we must adapt as an organization.

To address this, the Board is now exploring the creation of an International Chapter that would provide an option for individuals seeking streamlined certification services, or those in geographic areas not currently served by a local chapter. This proposed chapter would not have voting rights, allowing our existing chapters to maintain leadership and decision-making authority.

Staff Scavenger Hunt



Treasurer's Message

Hello to all,

I had a dry fall for perfect harvest weather in Northeast Nebraska. Grain prices have finally turned in a positive direction in my area. Soybean yields were up this year.

The following report is a look at the finances for OCIA International.

Accounts receivables are up about 11% over last year. Membership and certification fees collected are down 4.2% and 3.4% from last year. Other operator fees and income are both up significantly. These two accounts added over \$100,000 to the bottom line.

On the expense side of the ledger, business insurance and financial expense were both up. The first one up 27% and the second one up 29%. These two expenses total almost \$30,000 this year.

Total income is up over both budget and last year.

The Internal Committee met November 12th via zoom. The master fee schedule and budget were both presented and approved. On the agenda also, were two bylaw changes. They were discussed and approved. The fee schedule and budget will be presented at the AGMM, along with the bylaw proposals.

Blessings to everyone this holiday season.

RANDY MOSEL
OCIA INTERNATIONAL
TREASURER





Executive Director Message

Be sure to visit our website at www.ocia.org for information about upcoming events, including trade shows and local farm tours. If you're hosting a farm tour, please let us know so we can help spread the word by listing it on our site.

Greetings OCIA International Members,

OCIA International wishes you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

We sincerely thank you for your continued support of OCIA International. We remain committed to moving forward and implementing positive improvements each year.

During 2025, as we took a deeper look into our internal processes for Pre-Inspection Reviews, Final Reviews, and inspection reporting, I am pleased to report a significant improvement in our turnaround times. On average, we are completing our final reviews 10 days faster than in 2024.

Our goal has been to improve clarity and consistency in communicating regulatory requirements to operations, and we hope you are finding our communications to be clear consistent, and helpful.

As a reminder, noncompliances are a normal part of the organic certification process. They are not intended to be punitive or overly critical, but rather are required by Organic Regulations. Operators are expected to respond to noncompliance notices promptly and thoroughly, so that OCIA can fulfill its responsibilities to our accrediting bodies.

We also encourage you to seek support and insights from fellow chapter members and certified organic farmers. As your certifier, OCIA is prohibited from offering consulting services or providing technical advice on how to correct specific noncompliances. If issues are not addressed adequately, OCIA is required to proceed with the next steps in the compliance process, which may include proposed suspension or other adverse actions. Timely and complete responses help avoid these outcomes. I encourage you to contact our team for any assistance we are permitted to provide.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge our outstanding team at OCIA International. The commitment, integrity, inspiration, and friendships within our organization are truly remarkable. I am especially grateful for the dedication to procedural improvements and for embracing opportunities to grow together.

The Latin American team, in particular, was tasked with meeting challenging EU regulation deadlines, to maintain certification for our operations. They not only met these deadlines but worked collaboratively to exceed expectations.

I am deeply grateful for every member of the OCIA team. Each staff member demonstrates relentless effort, and it is a source of immense pride to lead this team. Their dedication and hard work continue to inspire me as we navigate the journey ahead – truly, they help me sail this ship.

OCIA International is committed to supporting our certified operators with high-quality service and clear communication. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2026,

AMANDA BREWSTER
OCIA INTERNATIONAL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2026 OCIA

Annual General Membership Meeting

Join OCIA International February 12th, in Lincoln, Nebraska

OCIA International's 2026 Annual General Membership meeting will be held at the Residence Inn Lincoln South February 12th in Lincoln Nebraska. The one day event will provide OCIA operators opportunities to connect with peers, board members and OCIA International Staff. Attendees will also have the opportunity to learn about microgrant and scholarship opportunities.

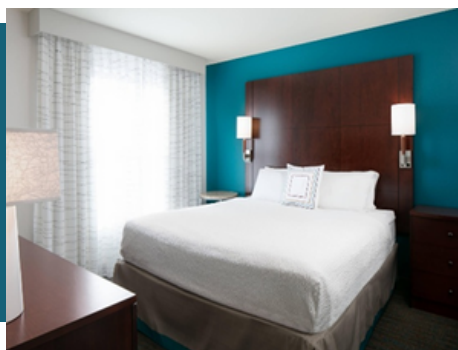
Attendees with voting rights will have the opportunity to vote on proposed 2026 Budget and elect the 2026 Board of Directors.

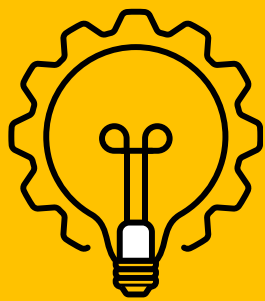
Comprehensive informational packets are available on the OCIA website under "events". The packets, available in both English and Spanish, include information about:

- AGMM Agenda
- Hotel Reservations
- Registration
- and more!

Members who plan to attend the AGMM should be sure to register no later than February 3, 2026.

Room Reservations are available at a block rate until January 13, 2026. To make reservations, call 402-423-1555 and mention OCIA International, for the group rate.



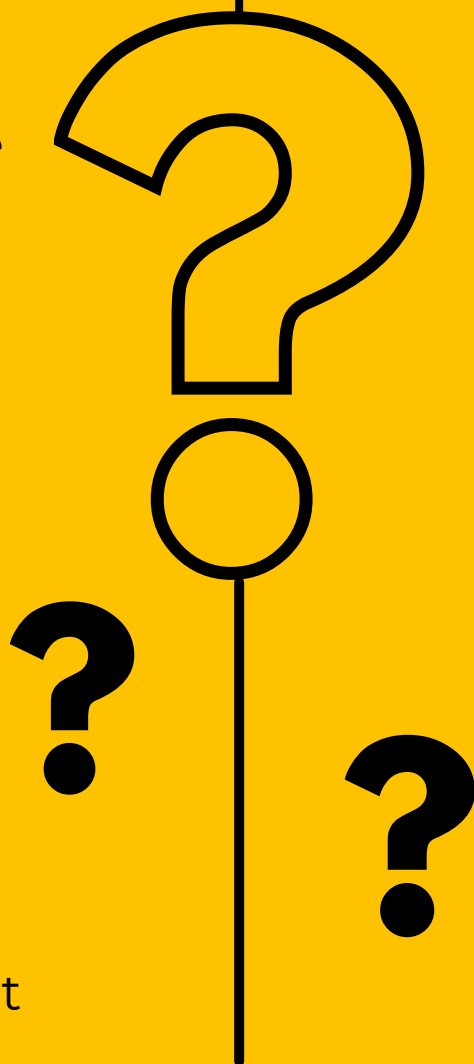


DID YOU KNOW?



OCIA provides Technical Assistance to farmers undergoing the transition process? If you are a transitioning farmer located in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, or Colorado, we are here to support you.

- Work 1:1 with a provider to develop your organic system plan
- Learn how to create and maintain a successful recordkeeping system
- Help with preparing for your first inspection
- Understand how your operation can meet the organic regulations



OCIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

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Carolyn Lane, Secretary, USA
Randy Mosel, Treasurer, USA
Jack Geiger, Chair, USA
Kelsey Sheehan, Canada
Nate Powell - Palm, USA
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Lorri Ann Hartel
Walter Horodyski
Amy Krasne
Marg Laberge
Rebecca Talmadge, Advisor
Emily Fowell
Rick Schuchardt



OCIA Field Signs for Sale

Aluminum "No Spray Zone" signs are currently for sale at \$10 each plus shipping/handling.

- Call us at 402-477-2323
- Email: info@ocia.org

OCIA INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

5910 S 58th Ste. B
Lincoln, NE 68516
Phone: (402) 477-2323
Fax: (402) 477-4325

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Amanda Brewster, Ext. 325
abrewster@ocia.org

ACCOUNTING

Deana McKinstry, Ext. 314
dmckinstry@ocia.org

ACCREDITATION & INSPECTOR SERVICES

Cindy Elder, Ext. 327
celder@ocia.org

TC ADMINISTRATOR

Sallie Gonzalez, Ext. 331
sgonzalez@ocia.org

US REGIONAL OFFICE

Jessie Gregath, Ext. 377
jgregath@ocia.org

Shelby Workman, Ext. 310
sworkman@ocia.org

CANADA OFFICE

Julie Bernier
11423 15 Ave. SW
Edmonton, AB T6W 0Z8
Phone: (780) 851-9482
Fax: (888) 823-3372
jbernier@ocia.org

MEXICO OFFICE

Julia Perez
5 de Mayo #108-9
Oaxaca de Juarez
Oaxca 68000
Phone: (+52 951) 5012099
Cell: (+521) 951 1981220
jperez@ocia.org

Karla Zarate Brito, Ext. 378
kbrito@ocia.org

PERU OFFICE

Ignacia Paredes Trejos
Calle Monte Rosa 255 piso 4
Chacarilla del Estanque
Santiago de Surco - Lima
Phone: (511) 625-9725
Cell: 51-955-854-924
iparedes@ocia.org

JAPAN OFFICE

Yutaka Maruyama
Tokyo, Japan
ocia-jp@io.ocn.ne.jp

TOPP PROGRAM

Brandon Hill, Ext. 100
bhill@ocia.org

OCIA RESEARCH & EDUCATION

ocia04.re@gmail.com



OCIA CHAPTER ADMINISTRATORS

COLORADO

OCIA San Luis Valley Chapter Inc.

Kay Harmon
AgCheck Compliance Service,
Inc.
PO Box 850
Monte Vista, CO 81144
Phone: 719-852-5638
Cell: 719-850-3237
Fax: 719-470-2250
slvagchec@gmail.com

ST ORGANICS

(Nebraska, Wyoming)
Rebecca Talmadge
PO Box 28
Hereford, CO 80732
Phone: 970-895-2296
storganics@gmail.com

ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS OCIA CHAPTER 1

Ron Ackerman
29087 N 2850 E Road
Chenoa, IL 61726-5722
Phone: 815-945-5722
ronnga@frontier.com

IOWA

OCIA of Iowa Chapter 1, Inc

Amy Krasne
14751 260th St.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
Phone: 402-639-6041
Fax: 402-939-0369
iaociach1@gmail.com

Southeast Iowa Organic Association Chapter 3

Pam Streeter
4284 215th Ave
Ottumwa, IA 52501
Phone: 641-799-5900
dpstreeter@gmail.com

KANSAS

Eastern Kansas 2

Jackie Keller
2222 SW Glick Rd.
Topeka, KS 66614
Phone: 785-633-4621
kellerjackie99@gmail.com

Midwest Organic Producers, Kansas 3

Demetria Hill
PO Box 175
Jennings, KS 67643
Phone: 785-678-7006
deme.hill@outlook.com

MINNESOTA

OCIA Minnesota Chapter 1

Lorri Ann Hartel
2609 Wheat Dr.
Red Lake Falls, MN 56750
Phone: 218-253-4907
Cell: 218-686-6144
lhartel@prairieagcomm.com

NEBRASKA

OCIA of Nebraska

Kim Mosel
86536 State Spur 45A
Page, NE 68766
Phone: 402-620-2701
ociane1@yahoo.com
nebraskaocia.org

NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota Organic Growers

Allan Miller
8335 93rd St. SE
Ellendale, ND 58436
Phone: 701-349-4587
akmiller@drtel.net

North Central OCIA 2

Twyla Stroh
4275 39th Ave. SE
Tappen, ND 58487
Phone: 701-226-0632

OHIO

Ohio Chapter 2 of OCIA

Walter Horodyski
7780 State Rte. 88
Kinsman, OH 44428
wjrhodyski@gmail.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

OCIA South Dakota 1

Wilford Secker
12933 301st Ave.
Selby, SD 57472
Phone 605-649-6327
wsecker@venturecomm.net

OCIA South Dakota 2

Sarah Kluge
9620 173rd Ave SE
Fairmount, ND 58030
Phone: 320-267-6417
svanderbeek@live.com

WISCONSIN

North East Wisconsin Chapter 2

Chris Jaworski
7899 Regal Lane
Pulaski, WI 54162
Phone: 920-660-0236
jaws8753radtk@gmail.com

CANADA

OCIA Chapter Members Association Canada

Marg Laberge
4829 47 Ave.
St Paul, AB TOA 3A3
Phone: 780-614-4168
Fax: 888-823-3372
ociachaptermembers@gmail.com

GUATEMALA

Guatemala Chapter 1

Dariusz Echeverria
Phone: 502-233-7877
dariusz_echeverria@hotmail.com

A man with a beard and tattoos, wearing a white t-shirt and khaki pants, is working in a field. He is wearing green and white gloves and is looking at a red smartphone held by a woman. The woman has blonde hair in a ponytail and is wearing a blue shirt and jeans. They are both looking down at the phone. The background shows a field of green plants under a bright sky.

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OCIA INTERNATIONAL

5910 S. 58th St Ste. B Lincoln NE 68516