

Growing the eOrganic Community: Annual Report 2014



Contents

- [Changes at extension.org](#)
- [Outreach to Farmers and the General Public](#)
- [eOrganic Content Views](#)
- [Webinars and Broadcasts](#)
- [Online Courses](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Research Project Websites](#)
- [Ask an Expert](#)
- [Get Involved with eOrganic](#)

eOrganic Annual Report 2014

eOrganic is the organic agriculture Community of Practice at <http://www.extension.org>. Our goals are to engage farmers, agricultural professionals and other members of the organic agriculture community with timely and relevant science-, experience-, and regulation-based information in a variety of formats, and to foster a national organic research and outreach community. 2014 marked the sixth year since the initial launch of our website in 2009.

More than 300 eOrganic members and collaborators have actively contributed to eOrganic by authoring and/or reviewing articles, producing or reviewing videos, answering Ask an Expert (AaE) questions, presenting webinars, or attending outreach and leadership events. Read on to learn about our accomplishments in 2014 and our upcoming plans for the 2015 season.

Changes at eXtension.org

In 2014, Extension Directors and Administrators nearly unanimously decided to replace the mandatory eXtension assessments from all land-grant institutions (that had been in place since 2004) with a voluntary membership system. In 2015, 58 institutions will be members of the "new" eXtension: 38 at the premium level and 20 at the basic level. The new model and vision includes a greater focus on professional development for Extension educators as they work to adopt new or emerging technologies in the development and delivery educational programs. Communities of Practice such as eOrganic will remain important components of the overall eXtension program; eOrganic will continue to offer articles, videos, online courses and webinars from its eXtension.org website at http://www.extension.org/organic_production. Find out more about the "new" eXtension business model [here](#).

Outreach to Farmers and Agricultural Information Providers

Representatives from eOrganic attended the MOSES organic farm conference in February 2014. Additional booths, workshops and presentations about eOrganic were given at the following events:

- NOFA Vermont Conference, February 14-15, 2014
- Oregon Small Farms Conference, February 22, 2014
- National eXtension meeting, Sacramento California, March 2014
- Innovations in Organic Food Systems, Long Beach, CA, Nov 1-2, 2014

Please stop by and say hello at the eOrganic tables and presentations at [EcoFarm](#), the [Organic Agriculture Research Symposium](#), [MOSES](#), [Oregon Small Farms](#), [NOFA Vermont](#) and [Organicology](#) in early 2015! Fabian Menalled will also be presenting at the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention (<http://www.ofvc.ca/>) and National Science Teachers Association Conference (<http://www.nsta.org/conferences/>).

eOrganic maintains an active presence on social media sites such as Facebook, where we have 3,535 likes, and Twitter, where we have 2,828 followers. We also publish a bi-monthly newsletter which reaches 9,000 subscribers.

eOrganic Content Views

In 2014, eOrganic pages at extension.org attracted over 381,000 page views, and our YouTube channel received more than 378,000 views. Our most popular articles in 2014 were those focused on cover crops and insect management, weed identification, potting mixes, and tomato production.

- [Radishes: A New Cover Crop for Organic Farming Systems](#), by Joel Gruver, Ray Weil, Charles White and Yvonne Lawley
- [Training Systems and Pruning in Organic Tomato Production](#), by Bonnie Cox
- [Weed Identification Tools and Techniques](#), by Mark Schonbeck
- [Weed Profile: Pigweeds](#), by Mark Schonbeck
- [Organic Potting Mix Basics](#), by Michelle Wander
- [Managing Cucumber Beetles in Organic Farming Systems](#), by William Snyder

Our most popular webinar recordings on YouTube in 2014 were: [Starting up Small-Scale Hops Production](#), by Rob Serrine, with 33,289 views, followed by [Grafting for Disease Management in Organic Tomato Production](#), by Frank Loews and Cary Rivard (12,455 views) and [Organic Quinoa Production in the Pacific Northwest](#) by Kevin Murphy (10,886 views).

eOrganic Webinars and Live Conference Broadcasts

Since December 2009, when we offered our first webinar on late blight management, many farmers, Extension educators, researchers, organic inspectors and certifiers, Master Gardeners and agriculture professionals regularly attend our winter webinar series on organic farming and research. A webinar allows people from all over the world to hear a presentation, view the presentation slides, and type in questions - without having to leave their farms or office computers. Presentations are recorded and are made available for viewing at any time from eOrganic's YouTube channel. To date, eOrganic has delivered more than 120 webinars attended by over 15,000 attendees, of which, on average, 26% were farmers. In addition, eOrganic broadcasts selected presentations from national organic conferences live online and archives the presentations on YouTube.

The 2014 season featured live presentations from the Organic Seed Growers Conference and 23 webinars on diverse topics such as insect and disease management, cover crop mixtures, permaculture, ancient grains, blackberry production and preventing dairy pasture problems. Many of the webinars were based on new research from USDA NIFA Organic Research and Extension Initiative and Organic Transitions Program projects. Find all eOrganic upcoming and archived webinars and live broadcasts at <http://www.extension.org/pages/25242>.

Highlights of the 2014 Webinar and Broadcast Season

- [Learning from Our Observations of Pastures & Livestock: Preventing Pasture Problems on the Organic Dairy](#), by Sarah Flack
- [A Certified Organic Winter Nursery for Corn Breeding](#), by Bryan Brunner, Kevin Montgomery and Paul Scott
- [Introducing Brassicas into the Organic Dairy Pasture](#), by Fay Benson
- [IPM in Crucifer Crops: Focus on the Yellowmargined Leaf Beetle](#), by Rammohan Balusu, Ronald Cave and Ayanava Majumdar
- [Considerations for Out-Wintering the Organic Dairy Herd](#), by Brad Heins
- [Dehulling Ancient Grains](#), by Brian Baker, Frank Kutka, Elizabeth Dyck and Nigel Tudor
- [Diversity by Design: Using Trap Crops to Control the Cruciferous Flea Beetle](#), by Joyce Parker
- [Using Cover Crop Mixtures to Achieve Multiple Goals on the Farm](#), by Jim LaChance, Mitch Hunter, Jermaine Hinds and Charles White
- [Birdsfoot Trefoil as a Forage on Organic Dairy Farms](#), by Jennifer MacAdam
- [Putting the Pieces Together: Lessons Learned from a Reduced-Tillage Organic Cropping Systems Project](#), by William Curran, Ron Hoover and John Wallace
- [Organic Blackberry Production](#) by Bernadine Strik, David Bryla and Luis Valenzuela
- [Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation to Control Soil Borne Pathogens: Current Research Findings and On-farm Implementation](#) by Carol Shennan and Joji Muramoto
- [2-Part Webinar on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Soil Quality in Long-Term Integrated and Transitional Reduced Tillage Organic Systems](#) by Ann-Marie Fortuna, Craig Cogger and Doug Collins
- [Biologically Based Organic Management Strategies for Spotted Wing Drosophila](#) by Vaughn Walton, Hannah Burrack and Rufus Isaacs
- [Selected live presentations from the 2014 Organic Seed Grower's Conference](#)

Webinar Evaluation

In 2014, 3222 people attended eOrganic webinars and live conference broadcasts. Across all webinars, 49% responded to post-webinar evaluation surveys. Of these, approximately 32% were farmers, 8% were Extension personnel, 11% were researchers, 3% were from nonprofits, 11% were agriculture professionals, 11% worked for government agencies, 5% were organic inspectors or certifiers, and 19% were others. Survey respondents' geographic affiliations were: 28% Northeast, 19% Central, 11% South, 24% West and 17% other named region or country. Across all webinars, 78% said the webinars significantly or moderately improved their understanding of the topic, 19% said "a little improved" and 3% said "not improved". 77% of respondents planned to apply the knowledge they gained in the webinars a lot or somewhat, 18% said "a little" and 5% said "not at all". 83% said the technical level of the webinars was "just right". 5% thought they were too technical, and 12% thought they were too basic. 78% would recommend the webinars to others, 18% might recommend them, and 4% would not. 87% of respondents thought access to the webinars was very easy, 10% said it was somewhat easy, 2 said it was somewhat difficult and less than 1% said "very difficult".

In August, 2014, the Journal of Extension featured an eOrganic webinar evaluation article that can be accessed at: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2014august/a5.php>. Evaluation results showed that eOrganic webinars reached their target audience of farmers, Extension educators, researchers and agricultural professionals. An average of 97% of respondents indicated that the webinars improved their understanding of the topics to some degree, and 96% intended to apply information to their work. Follow-up surveys on a subset of webinars revealed that they influenced changes in farming and advisory practices.

Webinar Participant Feedback in 2014

"I just wanted to say that your webinars are wonderful. They are informative, well done, and have really helped me in my farming. It is so helpful to be able to participate in a top notch lecture series without having to leave home, especially in winter."

"I participated in the Webinar for the seed conference and I look forward to the questionnaire. In case I am not able to receive it, I would like to pass on my thanks to all who helped and supported the Webinar. I was going to attend the conference but had to have surgery. I was delighted to attend via the internet! The Webinar was well done and I can't say enough to those who were so thoughtful to those of us who could not attend."

"The webinar was a great way to reach a lot of people with our results, and it has been a starting point for several conversations here at the conference. Thanks for helping us with all the outreach through eOrganic."

eOrganic Online Courses

Introduction to Organic Dairy Production Course

The eOrganic Dairy Team continues to offer its asynchronous online course, "An Introduction to Organic Dairy Production" as part of "Development of Technical Training and Support for Agricultural Service Providers and Farmers in Certified Organic Dairy Production Systems" USDA NIFA Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) project. Course developers and instructors included: Cindy Daley and Audrey Denney, California State University-Chico; Heather Darby and Deb Heleba, University of Vermont Extension; Sarah Flack, Sarah Flack Consulting; Sid Bosworth, University of Vermont; and Karen Hoffman, USDA NRCS. The course is composed of 10 modules addressing a range of topics related to certified organic dairy production, including certification, soil health, pasture and forages, herd health and nutrition, milk quality, and calf management. Each module has required readings, a narrated powerpoint presentation from an expert on the topic, and recommended additional resources. CCA CEUs are available. In 2014, 13 farmers and service providers participated in the course. A second, advanced course is in the works for 2015. Find a full description and a link to the course at <http://www.extension.org/pages/69299>.

eOrganic also continues to offer the Organic Seed Production course, in which approximately 250 people have enrolled. The course consists of a set of tutorials which cover the fundamentals of seed production for onions, beets and chard, brassicas, carrots, and wet seeded crops, as well as climatic requirements for seed crops, important diseases, and seed quality. Find this free course on the eXtension Moodle campus site at <http://campus.extension.org/enrol/index.php?id=377>.

eOrganic Articles

All eOrganic articles can be found at www.extension.org/organic_production. Before publication, every article is subject to two anonymous peer reviews and National Organic Program compliance review. In 2014, eOrganic published many new [articles on organic poultry production](#) authored by Jacque Jacob of the University of Kentucky.

eOrganic Videos

The eOrganic YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/eOrganic> houses eOrganic's 464 videos. The channel has over 3800 subscribers and over 1.7 million views.

In March 2014, eOrganic conducted a third annual online course on How to Make a Video, attended by participants from 4 funded NIFA OREI and ORG projects. The instructors taught the basics of video planning, storyboard development, filming, and creating production plans; students completing the course have the skills they need to develop videos about their research for publication on eXtension.org and eOrganic's Youtube channel. Materials from the course are publicly available on the eOrganic website at <http://eorganic.info/video>.

Members of the Organic Cucurbit Production OREI Project produced the video [Assessing Critical Pest Management Challenges in Organic Cucurbit Production](#) in 2014, and additional research project videos are in the works for 2015.

Organic Farming Research Websites

eOrganic is currently supporting 20 NIFA-funded research and outreach projects. eOrganic supports these group in diverse ways: technical support for the development of articles and videos, peer refereed and NOP compliance review, video production training and editing, webconferencing, conference broadcasting, workspaces for project management, and public websites. Learn about some of these projects by visiting their project websites hosted by eOrganic:

- [Brown Marmorated Stink Bug in Organic Farming Systems](#)
- [Carrot Improvement for Organic Agriculture](#)
- [NOVIC](#)
- [Organic Cucurbit Research: Critical Pest Management Challenges](#)
- [Organic Management of Spotted Wing Drosophila](#)
- [Organic Reduced Tillage in the Pacific Northwest](#)
- [Tools for Transition](#)

Ask An Expert

The Ask an Expert service is a way for our stakeholders to get answers from Land Grant University (LGU) and Extension professionals through eXtension.org. Ask your question at <https://ask.extension.org/groups/1668/ask> - you can even submit an image to help with a diagnosis.

eOrganic provides oversight of all questions tagged with "organic production" within the Ask-an-Expert system. Our staff finds an answer by either answering the question directly or by soliciting the best response possible from our eOrganic members. In 2014, community members answered approximately 75 questions, and more than 1200 organic agriculture questions have been answered through the service since its inception. We encourage you to use this free and underutilized service for answers to your organic farming questions. Find it at <https://ask.extension.org/groups/1668/ask>

Get Involved with eOrganic

eOrganic is a Community of Practice, which means it relies on community members like you to help it grow and better serve our farmer and agricultural professional stakeholders by developing and delivering critical and timely resources. If you are a researcher or Extension educator with expertise in organic agriculture, eOrganic wants you to write an article, shoot a video, deliver a webinar, or develop and teach an online course. All of our articles and videos undergo NOP compliance and peer review before publication. For more information on how to get involved with eOrganic, join eOrganic at <http://eorganic.info> or contact Alice Formiga at alice.formiga@hort.oregonstate.edu

Write eOrganic into Your Next Grant Proposal

For complete information on the diverse opportunities eOrganic offers project groups and how to write eOrganic into your proposal, visit <http://eOrganic.info/proposal>. During the past year, eOrganic received subawards from 20 ongoing OREI and ORG projects. We can also partner with you on regional IPM, AFRI, SARE, NRCS-CIG and proposals from other funding sources. A 2-page handout describing our services to funded projects which can be distributed at meetings can be found [here](#).

eOrganic can offer your project:

- Webconferencing with the option of online or toll-free phone audio
- Webinars and webinar series to stakeholders and the public
- eXtension publication editing, and peer and NOP compliance review
- Video training, editing, review, and posting to the web
- Online course development and support
- Outreach for your publications, videos, webinars and websites to our established network of 9,000 farmers, extension personnel, ag professionals, and researchers from around the country and the globe - at conferences and through our newsletters and social networking activities
- Ask an Expert support
- Project workspace at eOrganic.info to facilitate project communication and management
- Project websites that are easily managed by your project members from eOrganic.info (see <http://eorganic.info/novic>)
- Analytics information for reporting on your articles, videos, webinars and courses. Evaluation including impact evaluation for webinars and conference broadcasts.

Stay in touch!

