

**Oregon Organic Coalition Policy Task Force**  
**Final Version Oct 10, 2013**

The Oregon Organic Coalition (OOC) was founded to advance the development and growth of the organic industry and community in Oregon. The organization group formed to address the lack of unified support needed to advocate for Oregon's the organic industry in the marketplace as well as the policy arena. The OOC now brings together representatives of Oregon-based constituencies, both from the organic trade and from the other stakeholders active in the organic community, to provide direction and endorsements of activities that promote Oregon's organic industry.

**OOC Policy Organizing Strategy:**

- OOC has formed a Policy Task Force authorized to monitor emerging trends, analyze issues, and to take timely action on behalf of the OOC (e.g. sign-on, letters, phone calls, lobbying) on issues that fall within the criteria that define the OOC Policy Platform. When it sees the opportunity, the Task Force turns issues back to the Leadership Committee (LC), so that they may when possible (given adequate time) consult with their trade sectors.
- The Policy Platform will be established by the LC at the annual meeting. Trade sector representatives are encouraged to consult with their constituents in advance of the meeting about issues that affect their work environments and/or other approaching efforts that might inform LC deliberations.
- Policy issues that are outside of the scope of the OOC Policy Platform will be forwarded on to the OOC Leadership Council for consideration. The LC will use its regular decision making procedures to either:
  - Reach consensus on the OOC taking action on the issue as an organization as a one-time event and make a plan for proceeding via the Leadership Council;
  - Reach consensus on the OOC taking action on the issue as an organization and authorize the Policy Task Force to proceed by adding a Criterion to the Policy Platform, which will allow the Policy Task Force to act in this instance as well as on related instances in the future;
  - Discuss the issue further, in an effort to reach consensus, by distributing information about the issue from the Leadership Council to the members of each Advisory Committee—this will inform the members of Oregon's organic community and provide information for individuals and organizations to take action as they wish; or
  - After initial discussion, decide not to take further action on the issue.
- If there is an issue that will take significant resources to analyze (e.g. technical review such as SB 603) and act upon (e.g. hiring a lobbyist), the Policy Task Force Chair will be in charge of organizing resources to support this work (e.g. approach individual OOC members if they could chip in).
- The initial goal of OOC's work on policy issues will be to implement organizational systems for addressing policy issues as they arise, and over time, to move towards adding proactive activities such

as proposing pro-organic legislation (2015 and beyond) and meeting regularly with elected officials to educate/advocate regarding organic industry.

- The OOC Policy Task Force will partner with aligned NGOs on the state (e.g. FoFF, OEC, OBA) and national (e.g. NOC, OTA, NSAC) to monitor, analyze and take action on issues as much as possible to increase efficiency & effectiveness. When strategic, the Task Force will engage the LC to encourage their sectors to take action on issues (e.g. calls to reps).

#### **Oregon Organic Coalition's Policy Priorities:**

- OOC will prioritize issues that have a direct impact on the organic industry in Oregon. OOC will focus on Oregon legislative & ODA issues at its first priority, and on Congressional and USDA issues secondarily (where we can adopt actions spearheaded by prominent national orgs). OOC will assist on local issues, as requested, and as resources allow.

#### **Oregon Organic Coalition Policy Platform Criteria:**

The OOC support policies that:

##### **Core issues for OOC—where we are “go to” organization**

1. Support the growth of Oregon's organic industry (e.g. declaration of Organically Grown in Oregon Week)
2. Invest in organic research (i.e. farming methods, public benefits) & public education
3. Collect data on Oregon's organic marketplace including crops, acreage, annual sales, etc.
4. Pave the way for more organic & local food in Oregon institutions (e.g. farm to school, hospitals, gov't purchasing contracts) and for all of Oregon's residents (e.g. low income access)
5. Support the integrity of the USDA's National Organic Standards, as implemented in Oregon

##### **Issues that we will support (follow others' lead)**

6. Protect Oregon farms from impacts of pesticide/herbicide drift
7. Protect Oregon farms from impacts of Genetic Engineering such as pollen drift and contaminated seed
8. Enable citizens to make choices related to Genetic Engineering ranging from the purchases they make for their family to purchases (e.g. labeling, moratoriums) the presence of GMO plantings in their communities and