

TILTH BOARD MEMBERS ATTEND SEATTLE NOC & NOSB MEETINGS

Anne Schwartz, Blue Heron Farm, Rockport, WA

The National Organic Coalition (NOC) met prior to the April National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Seattle meeting to discuss issues affecting organic agriculture in the US. Tilth Producers board members Kia Armstrong and Anne Schwartz attended this meeting. Steve Etko of NOC in Washington DC reported to the group on Farm Bill issues and strategies, appropriations process for federal WIC and ATTRA funding, aquaculture and GM salmon, and GM contamination issues.

Tilth Producers hosted a reception for the organic public at the Palace Ballroom during the NOSB meeting week. The gathering was well attended, the food was delicious, and there were many reunions of friends and colleagues. The Tilth event contributed to a good working set of meetings.

Many of the public comments for the NOSB included growers and consumer concerns about continued use of antibiotics;

streptomycin and oxytetracycline for managing Fireblight in Treefruit. There were also many comments from poultry producers and consumers about humane living conditions for poultry and other nonruminants. The NOSB ruled that the extension for antibiotics would be continued for two more years, a number that has growers very concerned and initiated an industry wide conversation about how to fund and push for research and increased partnerships across the country. The NOSB postponed the ruling on humane living conditions to their next meeting, so they could continue to study the issue.

We urge/encourage our members to be involved and read action alerts from NOC and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), and consider staying engaged the evolution of



Washington citizens support a vibrant food and farming system, and they look to public institutions like Washington State University to help address challenges now facing agriculture.

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