

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Diane Dempster, Tilth Producers Board President

What an amazing conference! I clearly saw an abundance of young farmers at this year's conference. It is exciting to have so many young people who want to farm participate in our annual event. Completed evaluations included praise of the value of workshops and the quality of food. Keynote presenter Allan Savory's talks offered participants new perspectives and plenty to ruminate over as we think about the future of farming. As is always the case for me, the best part of the weekend was seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and witnessing great connections. The annual conference's success is due in part to our dedicated Committee and Staff, but also because of our incredible members. Thank you for being the most important part of Tilth Producers! The Conference Committee hasn't missed a beat and is already hard at work planning the 2013 event. If you have comments to share with us about the 2012 conference or recommendations for workshops, speakers, and social networking for the 2013 event, please contact me.



## ANNUAL MEETING

At the annual meeting held in conjunction with the conference, board and staff report to members work we have been engaged in throughout the year. Additionally, and maybe most importantly, we hear from you – the members – what direction you would like to see the organization take as we move forward. Unfortunately, we ran out of time this year before hearing feedback from all of the folks that were present (thank you for those who stayed late to offer input). The Conference Committee will make sure we allow more time for this process at next year's meeting. We also elected new members to our Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting. Each member serves a two-year term. This year Mary Robinson, Kellie Henwood, and Taya Brown were up for re-election but chose not to run again. Doug Collins, Maurice Robinette, Anne Schwartz, and Becky Warner were also up for re-election, chose to run again, and were re-elected. Members also elected four new board members. A warm welcome goes out to Addie Candib, a grower from Olympia; Mike Hackett, a grower from Skagit Valley; Laurie Landeros, a banker from Tacoma; and Cornelius Adewale, a student from Washington State University. We are entering 2013 with a Board of Directors consisting of folks with terrific skills and energy to share. Welcome!

## OFFICER ELECTIONS

Officer elections were held days after the Annual Meeting. I was re-elected as President, Carey Hunter and Mike Hackett as Vice Presidents, Sally Lovell as Treasurer, and Halli Winstead as Secretary. The Executive Committee includes one at-large position that is held this year by Anne Schwartz. This is a strong group and I thank everyone for their service.

## STAFF CHANGES

We have had some big changes of staff in the last few months. Jacqueline Cramer was brought on as our new Education Coordinator. She has worked in many aspects of agriculture and we're excited to have found just the right person to lead our education programming. Amy Besunder was hired to fill the new Executive Director position this past April and has, unfortunately, resigned from Tilth Producers. We wish her the best. The Staffing Committee has hired Michele Catalano as the Interim Managing Director and we are very pleased to have her aboard. Michele's experience and versatile skills are a great fit for Tilth Producers. Nancy Allen has retired from her long service with the organization as the Managing Director and Program Director. We deeply thank Nancy for the years of dedication she has given to Tilth Producers and wish her well in the future.

## PROGRAMS AND PLANNING

Each winter program committees evaluate the program's progress and plan for the upcoming year's agenda, direction, and budget. Any Member can participate in a committee, and I encourage you to contact me if you are interested in helping plan the annual conference, develop 2013 Farm Walks, or help with research, policy, internship placement, or outreach. We would love to have your help and input for our 2013 programs.

Board Members will convene our annual board retreat this January. This is an opportunity for us to strategize ongoing success of our organization's work, 2013 program goals, and ways to ensure sustainable workloads for board and staff members. Keep an eye out for 2013 Farm Walks, One-Day Universities, and other educational programs. We will also continue to publish our terrific Tilth Producers Quarterly, produce the annual Directory, and keep the freshness of our new website, the member listserve, and our Facebook page.

Winter is a time for reflection and planning. As you page through seed catalogues and decide which ground to work next year, the board and staff are looking at organizational charts, planning programs, work plans, and budgets that will ensure the future success of Tilth Producers. We appreciate all the good work done and look forward to doing more in the New Year. Happy Solstice and Happy Holidays!

## WELCOME, JACQUELINE CRAMER



Tilth Producers welcomes Jacqueline Cramer as our new Education Coordinator. Jacqueline has worked the land for over twenty years as farmer, landscaper, educator, planner, designer, and community organizer. She is a founder of Friends of Beacon Food Forest, a Seattle Fruit Tree Steward, and has served on the Board of Directors of P-Patch Trust. She teaches classes in growing food and designing healthy systems to serve all living things. She engages a collaborative, inclusive, and creative approach for effective communication and learning.