

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Diane Dempster, Tilth Producers Board President

We have a summer full of great activities and projects. Have a great season and we look forward to seeing you at the conference in Yakima this fall.



YOUR VOICE COUNTS

You have recently received our 2013 Survey. We want to know what you value most about Tilth Producers and how we can serve you better. Your opinion is very important to us, and the survey data will guide our program development and outreach efforts in the coming years. If you haven't already done so, please complete the survey and return it soon! Past and non-Tilth members will also receive the survey, so feel free to share the link with others and encourage your friends to complete it.

WOW!

The fourth annual Washington Organic Week (WOW!) will be held September 7th – 14th. This year we're excited to offer a farm party in Skagit County plus a consumer pledge campaign to encourage people to eat organic during the week. Look for more details on "Ripe for WOW!" soon! Theo Chocolate in Seattle will again host the wildly successful Beer and Chocolate tasting, and there will be lots of great promotions throughout the week. The intent of WOW! is to encourage consumers to buy organic products grown here in Washington. People are hungry to know where their food comes from and Tilth can help consumers feel connected. Through WOW! we will tell the story of organic and sustainable growers in Washington, and with targeted advertising, promote organics to consumers. Growers are key to WOW!'s success, and we are seeking more involvement in this effort so please respond to our appeal being mailed soon.

FUNDRAISING

Sponsorships provide crucial funding for our annual conference. Please consider sponsoring this year's conference or encourage your suppliers to sponsor. We have updated our sponsorship benefits for 2013. See our website for more information.

We hope we can count on our members and friends this year for generous individual donations. The Board passed a balanced budget for 2013 that includes the goal to raise over \$20,000 in donations. To show their commitment to this goal, the Board is pledging a healthy donation and we will be calling on members to match their generosity. We will also be seeking donors to participate in a matching event. Let us know if you would like to be a match donor!

Thank you to all who donated during the Seattle Foundation's recent Give Big day. Donations from individual donors plus our match from the Seattle Foundation raised over \$1,100. The Seattle Foundation's match program provides a portion of the total donated that day to all participating non-profits.

ELECTION OF THE BOARD

This year we created a Board Development Committee to review the election and nomination processes and develop future leadership. An important agenda item for this committee was to review the election process, which we agree should be changed. Currently, the Tilth Producers By-laws require that the election of the Board happen at the annual meeting and that members must be present to vote. Meaning if members don't attend the annual meeting held at the conference, they don't get to vote. The Board wants to create an opportunity for more members to participate in the election process, so the committee will propose a change in the By-laws. We are not sure if it will be done this year, but stay tuned.

RUN FOR THE BOARD

We will be holding a Board election again this fall and encourage members to consider running. The By-laws state "[b]oard members shall be comprised of at least two-thirds growers representing a geographic and crop diversity of the state". We will be seeking candidates from the eastside and have a need for tree fruit growers, dairy farmers, and people representing the grape and wine industry, among others. If you are interested in joining this dedicated and positive Board, let us know!

NATIONAL ISSUES

Several Board members and staff testified at the National Organic Standards Board April meeting in support of permitting the limited use of tetracycline for fire blight control. The vote did not go our way and we saw a big divide in the perception of consumers versus the researchers who work with growers. I found this discouraging, but it identified a larger need to tell the story of organic and sustainable agriculture. Even with increased sales of organic products and more media attention, consumers don't fully understand who we are. We are working with partners on these and other national issues.

STAFF

The office is hopping! We now have 3 1/2 office employees plus several contractors, marking the most staff ever employed by Tilth. Sofia Gidlund was hired April 24th as our part-time Program Coordinator. She is responsible for overseeing our outreach programs and the conference. Sofia comes to us with experience from her years at Greenpeace and now divides her time between Tilth and as a Farm Management Apprentice.

WELCOME, SOFIA!



After six years with an environmental non-profit, Sofia spent the last two years breaking into sustainable agriculture working for two farms in Oregon: Moomaw livestock farm and Greenville vegetable farm. She has a masters' degree in political policy and has received training in permaculture from OSU and organic certification from IOIA.