



**ORGANIC
GROWER
SUMMIT™**

Presented by Western Growers & OPN

- Advertisement -

Are you ready for the upcoming organic deadline?



John Foster

With March 19, 2024, comes full implementation of the National Organic Program’s Strengthening Organic Enforcement rule, and with that, new challenges are coming into view for producers, distributors and importers. Navigating and adhering to these new requirements for organic producers and handlers will be the subject of the first announced educational session of the [Organic Grower Summit 2023](#) presented by Western Growers and OPN.

“The SOE Deadline Looms — Are You Ready?” is designed to help growers better understand the upcoming changes and will feature organic industry leaders providing operational and administrative details of the SOE rule as its deadline for compliance edges closer to reality.

Moderated by John Foster, chief operating officer at Wolf & Associates and a former member of the National Organic Standards Board, panelists for the session include Jennifer Tucker, deputy administrator at National Organic Program; April Vasquez, chief certification officer for CCOF; Meredith Kiser, compliance director at Heath & Lejeune; Theoary Crisantes, chief operating officer at Wholesum Family Farms; and Bianca Kaprielian, CEO and co-owner of Fruit World. The newly announced and timely session is part of a robust educational program designed to inform and engage organic producers, their service providers and supply chain partners.

“When OGS 2023 commences, there will be just 111 days left for the NOP’s deadline for its full steam-ahead Strengthening Organic Enforcement compliances. As the clock ticks, growers, distributors, importers, and handlers on the organic produce supply chain are challenged by this most rigorous change to USDA’s organic standards in 20 years,” said Foster. “This panel goes straight to the top for answers with the USDA’s NOP Deputy Administrator Dr. Jenny Tucker reporting key updates imperative to the organic produce

industry. If you are feeling a sense of urgency regarding SOE mandates, this panel is a priceless resource of currency and expertise on these new regulations.”

Foster said the SOE is the most significant organic regulatory change since regulations were implemented 20 years ago. “Mandatory changes are coming for the certification of brokers and traders for every imported organic product and for qualifications of inspectors and certification staff. This panel of industry leaders will provide operational and administrative details, showing attendees how to steer clear of bureaucratic potholes and ensure there are no disruptions to the supply chain,” he said.

The sixth annual Organic Grower Summit is designed to provide information vital to organic growers and producers as well as an overview of the opportunities and challenges in the production of organic fresh food. OGS exhibition and general registration is currently open. With only three trade show booths available before the OGS trade show floor sells out, exhibitors include soil amendment, ag technology, food safety, packaging, and equipment manufacturers connecting with organic field production staff, supply chain managers, pest management advisors and food-safety experts.

“In partnership with Western Growers, this year’s OGS will provide up-to-date resources and information to support the continued success of organic producers, with an emphasis on the changing organic production landscape, as well as the role of ag technology,” said Matt Seeley, CEO of Organic Produce Network. “From seed to soil to harvest, our goal is to present the most relevant and timely information on the most important subjects and issues facing organic production.”

OGS 2023 will be held Nov. 29-30 at the Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa in Monterey, CA.

[Print](#)