



State of Organic Seed Symposium

La Crosse, Wisconsin
Radisson Hotel
February 25, 2010

DRAFT Agenda

Overview: The State of Organic Seed Symposium is an opportunity for the organic community to discuss challenges and find shared agreement on priorities and actions that further the development, usage, and protection of organic seed. This is not a traditional conference with speakers and presentations, but rather a working meeting to review our understanding of obstacles and potential in organic breeding, seed production, distribution, access, regulation, and contamination issues.

Process: After the initial introductions and overview we will break into 4 Working Groups by crop types: 1) Corn Seed; 2) Forage & Cover Crop Seed; 3) Small Grains & Soy Seed; 4) Vegetable Seed. Participants will have pre-identified their sector prior to the symposium, and are expected to remain in one track throughout the day. Each group will have a facilitator and recorder, and will follow the same process in discussions, decision making and reporting. We will meet back at the end of the day for summary and next steps.

Schedule

I. Opening 8:00-9:30

We will do a brief intro of all participants starting at 8 and ending no later than 8:30. This will be followed by a summary of the project (10 minutes); a review of the process for the symposium and report (10 minutes); an examination and initial analysis of the organic producer seed questionnaires (25 minutes); and an articulation of the pre-identified challenges that we will refine and work on throughout the day (15 minutes).

II. Working Group Breakouts

Session 1: Challenges 9:45-11:00

From grower questionnaires, input from seed industry and food companies, review of NOSB meetings, and other projects such as the National Organic Action Plan, we have pre-identified some of the general challenges we face in moving organic seed forward in a way that serves all stakeholders. In this session we are going to refine our articulation of these challenges in breeding, production, access to information, contamination, regulations, etc. We will then prioritize the most critical challenges, and report back to the group.

Reporting as a group 11:00-11:45

Where do sectors overlap 11:45-12:00

Lunch 12-1

Session 2: Solutions-Actions

1-3:00

Identify existing work that can be expanded (i.e.: variety trial networks); discuss new collaborative opportunities; identify concrete and attainable metrics; articulate actions needed; identify additional resources or information needed for success; solicit volunteers for ongoing Working Group activity.

Reporting as a group

3:00-4:00

III. Moving Forward

4:00-5:30

We will summarize what we have discovered; discuss overlap and potential synergies between sectors; articulate the values and principles that we want to apply as we move forward (the ethical element of developing a natural resource). What additional information is needed to compile an accurate snapshot of organic seed system opportunities and challenges in the State of Organic Seed Report? We will then give an overview and timeline for how the Working Groups will proceed, report back to the community, and facilitate activities that further our recognized goals in moving organic seed forward.