



Organic Systems & the Value Proposition for Long Term Sustainability

September 25th, 2009 11:30 am-2 pm (lunch provided)

Room 161 Boston Convention Center, Natural Products Expo East

Undoubtedly there is a shift happening in how people see the world and “sustainability” has become one of today's buzzwords. There's also increasing demand for “sustainable” and “socially responsible” products, and an explosion of businesses touting practices and products as “green,” “low carbon,” and “fair trade.” In the policy arena we're seeing more initiatives addressing sustainability such as climate change, energy, public health, nutrition, food safety and the economy.

In this landscape, it is critical for organic leaders to have a solid foundation to understand and communicate the benefits of organic systems. What can we say about the cumulative effects of organic transition and the impacts on public health, communities and stewardship of resources? How do we effectively communicate these benefits to advance the organic marketplace and public policy, and mitigate criticism from those who question the value of organic systems?

Dr Timothy LaSalle of the Rodale Institute will share current research around the multiple sustainability benefits of organic systems. Come to this thought provoking session to strategize with other organic business leaders on how the organic trade can best take advantage of our changing landscape to advance our value proposition

11:30 am Introductions

11:45 am Sustainability Frameworks, measurement and communications

- Cradle to Cradle, Natural Step, Natural Capitalism, Triple Bottom Line: *Tom Wright, sustainablebizness.com*
- Measurement frameworks, best practices for communicating practices & benefits: *Melissa Schweisguth, FTSLA*

12:15 pm Research on Organic Systems & Multiple Sustainability Benefits: *Timothy LaSalle PhD, The Rodale Institute*

Current state of research and evidence on the value proposition of organic systems for long- term sustainability. Benefits of organics for multiple eco-system services including:

- Climate change, carbon sequestration, energy
- Improvement of water quality and soil health, drought tolerance
- Protecting public health, improved food quality and nutrition
- Economic sustainability and long term yields, impacts on farm incomes and rural development
- Enhancing biodiversity

1:00 pm Strategic Discussion ~ *Facilitated by Cecil Wright, Organic Valley and Melissa Schweisguth, FTSLA*

- Our Strengths: In what ways can we make the case for the organic trade as a strong platform for advancing social/environmental sustainability?
- Our Challenges: Where do still need to work on improving our practices and measurement? What are the strategies for strengthening organic voices in policy? What are the synergies with the National Organic Action Plan?
- What are the opportunities for making the case for organics and sustainability in the marketplace?
- What research is needed? What partnerships are needed?

This meeting is hosted by the Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Association and is open to members and others interested in FTSLA. **Pre-registration required. RSVP to Melissa Schweisguth, melissa@ftsla.org, 541-292-7542**

THANK YOU TO NEW HOPE FOR THE MEETING ROOM AND TO OUR SPONSORS



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