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# MEMBER NEWS



CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH COMMUNITY

December 2008

## Education: Organic Education Center Update

The Organic Education Center is taking advantage of the winter weather to regroup and plan for their 2009 activities. They recently enjoyed a successful strategic planning process to direct and streamline future programming. In addition to offering new classes for backyard gardeners in 2009, they plan to enhance the Luscher Farm site with new demonstrations and educational signage. Look for their 2009 class offerings soon! For more information and to get involved, visit our [website](#).

## Research: Helping Oregon Farmers

Oregon Tilth's Research and Education Projects Manager is beginning a survey of the Oregon commercial organic producers certified by Oregon Tilth to assess interests and needs that can guide future projects. The survey will include a combination of farm visits, phone interviews, and a written survey.

## Advocacy: Oregon Tilth works for Farm Bill dollars for organics

Thanks to advocacy efforts by Oregon Tilth and many other sustainable agriculture partner organizations, the 2008 Farm Bill offers new funding opportunities and incentives for organic agriculture. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) recently developed a [fact sheet](#) summarizing programs supporting organic practices.

## Certification: Oregon Tilth continues to expand services in Latin America

In Chile, OTCO awaits the final approval of their application for accreditation from the Chilean government. This will allow our clients in and out of Chile to sell product there labeled as organic, as well as facilitating exports from Chile to the US and Europe.

OTCO's Latin American Program Coordinator and Mexican Inspector/Coordinator attended the ExpOrgánicos trade show in Mexico City during the last week of Nov. giving us an opportunity to collaborate with other certifiers and concerned growers from the region about problems in the current implementation of the Mexican organic law. When this regulation is finally approved, the rule will govern the sale of organic food sold in Mexico, as well as issues pertaining to seed importation and protection from GMO contamination. Along with other certifiers and growers, Oregon Tilth is providing input to the Mexican government, with the hope that the final regulation will not water down current international standards.

## In This Issue

- [OEC Update](#)
- [Needs Assessment](#)
- [Farm Bill Dollars](#)
- [OTCO in Latin America](#)

## Permaculture Design Course

Renowned permaculture expert Toby Hemenway will offer a [Permaculture Design Course](#) in January in Portland. Participants in this intensive certificate program will learn about permaculture principles, soil ecology, water harvesting and much more! Check out our Events page for more information.



## Don't Miss Out on Organicology!

There's still time to register for [Organicology](#), three days of education, entertainment and community! Space is limited - [register now!](#)

Oregon Tilth is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports and promotes biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture through education, research, advocacy and product certification.

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