

**Minutes from the Canadian Organic Growers  
Annual General Meeting  
February 25<sup>th</sup> 2005, 4-6 p.m.  
Mary Spearwater Centre, Sidney, British Columbia**

**Attending**

Anne Macey (Past President, Organic Inspector)  
Janine Gibson (President, Chair Organic Food Council of Manitoba)  
Laura Telford (Executive Director)  
Achim Mohessen-Beyk (ON representative COG Board)  
Samuel Godfrey (administrator IOPA, Secretary COG)  
Ray Pearmain (Treasurer)  
Elizabeth White (Past President)  
Lester Wyatt (Prairie representative to COG Board, cow-calf operation)  
Tina Baynes (Chair SIOPA)  
Micheal Mockler (Director of Marketing, Thrifty Foods)  
Heidi Hermony (founder of Society for Organic Urban Land Care)  
Barbara Schellenberg (marketing for family organic meat farm, CO for 1 year)  
Kate Phillips (PhD student at York, interested in seed saving)  
Jasmine Schellenberg (biodynamic farmer)  
Erin Harper (Chair of ING, farmer SSI, coordinates SOIL- apprenticeship program)  
Stewart Wells (Chair NFU)  
Catherine Kleinsteuber  
D. Reinhardt  
Sue Bonnyman (SIOPA)  
Paddy Doherty (COABC)  
Robert Prins (SIOPA)  
Regrets- Av Singh, Jean Duval (Members at Large)

**Introductions:** Everyone introduced themselves. Micheal Mockler from Thrifty's pointed out that COG needs a commercial business-like focus. Growers need boxes, a traceability system, and commercial quantities. There are hardly any new growers with appropriate volumes lately. COG could help by helping its farmer members understand business. Thrifty Foods aims to have 50% of their produce CO in 2010. This means we would need 6x the amount of CO food within five years.

Janine Gibson, COG President welcomed everyone and promised gifts if people took out new memberships. She introduced the BOD for 2005 (List attached).

**Treasurer's Report**

Ray Pearmain- Treasurer's Report (see attached document). Ray reminded chapters to provide national with their financial statements. Elizabeth White wanted to know why so many things were lumped under admin. She suggested we call them what they are (advocacy etc.) Ray told the members that we would have improved efficiency when Raiser's Edge, the new membership management software, is up and running. It will allow COG to handle memberships better and protect the privacy of members.

**Motion:** To accept Treasurer’s Report (Lester Wyatt, seconded by Samuel Godfrey). None opposed, motion carried.

**COG Timeline**

Janine led the members in an exercise to recreate COG’s timeline:

1975	COG was founded by Peter McQueen, who was 16 at the time and had help from a high school teacher to establish the Organic Gardeners and Farmers Association in Toronto.
1975	COG joined IFOAM in 1975 or so.
1977	The first COGnition newsletter was published as a quarterly with 2 pages.
1978	The name was changed to Canadian Organic Growers. COG had 300 members.
1980	Seeds of Yesterday and Tomorrow was founded in 1980 in Toronto.
1980	Stewards Of Irreplaceable Land (SOIL) was founded in early 1980’s.
1980	The first COGnition in its current magazine format.
1980	There were 30 members in the Ottawa chapter in early 1980’s. The chapter had farmer days at Kemptville College, an annual farming day and an annual gardening day.
1981	One of first seed swaps led to the Heritage Seed Program.
1982	COG had 600 members.
1984	COG Conference in Toronto: Seeds of Yesterday and Tomorrow
1986	COG received its charitable status.
1986	The Perth-Waterloo-Wellington chapter was formed.
1987	COG presented to House of Commons Standing Committee.
1988	COG commented on the Plant Breeder’s Rights Act, along with the NFU and Raffi.
1988	Heritage Seed program becomes independent.
1988	Kemptville Conference “Organic Food Systems for Canada”
1988	The first definition of organics for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.
1988	The first organic directory was printed – for Ontario only.
1988	The Guelph Organic Conference came into being, started by a student.
1989	Canadian Agriculture Council deliberated organics.
1989	First national directory, bilingual.
1990	Canadian Organic Unity project
1990	Inception of Islands Organic Producers Association (IOPA).
1990	Kathy Lamarche was the membership coordinator, bookkeeper and ‘COG glue’ during the 90’s
1990	The gardening poster was published in the 1990’s.
1991	COG conducted a national market study for Agriculture Canada.
1991	COG presented to the Standing Committee on Sustainable Ag, Science Council of Canada’s council on sustainable agriculture.
1992	COG started collecting stats from 1992 (numbers started, but not published until 1994).

1992	COG had 2010 members.
1992	First edition of the Organic Field Crop Handbook.
1992	The first Mary Perlmutter scholarship was awarded.
1993	Organic videos funded by OMAF.
1994	COAB was formed and COG facilitated getting a McConnell grant to develop a regulation.
1995	COG had 1546 members.
1995	First attempt at national organic regulation.
1995	McConnell also funded a directory.
1997	AAFC released its strategy for sustainable agriculture.
1998	COG committed to being IFOAM host for 2002.
1995	South Island Organic Producers Association (SIOPA) was founded.
1996	Presentation on Biotechnology to Standing Committee on Environment & Sustainable Development.
1996	Presentation on organic food labeling to CODEX.
1997	COG sends rep to Philippine Development Assistance program
1997	COG had 1464 members
1999	CGSB's voluntary national organic standard.
1999	Organic Food Council of Manitoba became a chapter of COG.
2000	The Organic Livestock Handbook was published.
2000	Prince Edward County chapter formed.
2000	COG website launched.
2000	COG presented "A Policy on Needs of the Organic Sector in Canada" to the federal and provincial ministries of Agriculture.
2001	French edition Organic Field Crop Handbook.
2002	COG donated to Organic Agriculture Protection Fund
2002	Sector Strategic Plan.
2003	Adrienne Clarkson agreed to be COG's patron.
2003	COG hired staff.
2004	Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN) became COG affiliate
2004	COG appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.
2005	Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia became affiliate.
2005	Updating CGSB national organic standard.

Presidents:

1975-1983	Peter McQueen
1984-1986	Ken McMullen
1987-1988	Alex Caron
1989-1991	Mary Perlmutter
1992-1993	Elizabeth White
1994-1996	Anne Macey
1997	Jeff Johnson
1998	Mary Alice Johnson
2000	Eleanor Heise
2001-2002	Theresa Shumilas
2003-	Janine Gibson

Editors:

Dee Kramer  
Elizabeth Irving  
Jennifer Pittet  
Janet Wallace

Librarians:

1996-2004 Leanne McCormick  
2005- Kristine Swaren

### **Vote for COG Membership Fee Increase**

Meeting: 7 yes, 1 abstention

Mail-ins: 195 yes, 38 no, 2 abstentions

Total= 202 yes, 38 no, 3 abstentions

Carried

### **Chapter Reports**

SOD (Lester) - made commitments to relationship with COG, identified people who would be willing to sit on COG committee to move it forward. SOD/COG membership category - SOD has 650 members- perhaps could become COG members.

OFCM (Janine)- Down to Earth Guide to Organics

ING (Erin) – Seedy Saturday recently, Islands Agrifood Initiative to increase amount of local food consumed on Salt Spring Island \$8,000

SIOPA – COG/something else. Membership fluctuates up and down. Dynamic board, meetings every month, pay guest speakers, farm tours in summer (30-50 people), seed workshop (John Navazio- international expert on seed saving)

BC Chapter- COABC resources to BC chapter (Paddy Doherty)

Anne- Plant Breeder's Rights Committee- looked at what COG said in 1988 and 1989 and compared it with Minister's response. Everything they said wouldn't happen did happen. Will present to COG board on Monday.

SOLE- ornamental horticulture- how to work with COG on engaging public (affiliate with COG)

McGill University- edible cities- green and edible

Board of Directors 2005

## Treasurer's Report 2004