



September 1, 2010

Dear Valued Vendor Partners,

On behalf of our 114 retail members and their shoppers and owners, NCGA has been working to address the lapse in organic body care labeling with USDA for several years. We believe that addressing the regulatory angle is crucial to maintaining the integrity of the term “organic” and consumer confidence in the certified organic label and will continue our efforts on that front. On behalf of NCGA food co-ops, we are also taking the following actions:

1. We expect that all vendor partners currently making “organic” claims will submit a plan for compliance with either the USDA NOP standards (available online [here](#)) or NSF/ANSI 305 standards (available online [here](#)) to us by October 18, 2010. This should include any products that use “organic” or “organics” as part of the brand name. We will make your responses and compliance plans available to our retailers.
2. Effective with March 2011 promotions, NCGA will only include items in our promotions programs from manufacturers who have responded to our request and are making good faith efforts with their plans for compliance. Expect our category manager for personal care to request progress reports for any promotions submitted for March 2011 and beyond.
3. Effective with June 2011 promotions, NCGA will not promote brands or items in our promotions programs that are not compliant with USDA NOP or NSF/ANSI 305 standards. We will require you to provide proof of certification for the specific products and/or ingredients that were evaluated.

Additionally, in a recent survey of our retailers a majority of the respondents indicated that they are considering one or more of the following actions on a local level: discontinuing items that are not compliant with these standards from their product assortment sometime in the next year; educating their shoppers on the issue; excluding non-compliant items in store-level promotions; and/or shifting more of their product assortment focus to certified organic brands.

We ask that you provide both your response on company letterhead and that you submit your plan for compliance electronically no later than October 18, 2010 to Jesse Avery at [jesse.avery@ncga.coop](mailto:jesse.avery@ncga.coop). Please feel free to contact Jesse directly with any questions.

**NATIONAL COOPERATIVE GROCERS ASSOCIATION**  
**14 S. LINN ST., IOWA CITY, IA 52240**  
**PHONE: 319.466.9029**

We appreciate your timely response and your efforts to partner with us to strengthen the integrity of organics in personal care. We thank you for continued support of NCGA and food co-ops and look forward to your response!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Blackburn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dave Blackburn  
NCGA Director of Purchasing