



## Quote of the Week

"We believe that the 'organic' claim used on personal care products should have very similar meaning to the 'organic' claim used on food products, which is currently regulated by the USDA's National Organic Program. Our shoppers do not expect the definition of 'organic' to change substantially between the food and the non-food aisles of our stores."

-Whole Foods Market's policy on the use of the word "organic" on personal care products, updated 6/8/10  
[www.is.gd/cO3Tu](http://www.is.gd/cO3Tu)

## Whole Foods Acts on OCA Demands

The USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) protects consumers from false organic claims on food. Only foods that are third-party certified to the USDA's organic standards can be advertised as organic. Not so with non-food products. The USDA allows health and beauty products to be certified to USDA organic standards, but it doesn't require all products that are marketed as organic to be certified.

The result: organic integrity varies from aisle to aisle in the grocery store. Health and beauty product shoppers are bombarded with organic claims on products that aren't actually certified organic. Unless the product is certified organic, it's almost impossible to tell what percentage of the ingredients are organic and which ingredients are synthetic, petroleum-derived or dangerous. And, as our tests for 1,4 dioxane have shown, certain formulations can even produce hidden toxins that don't appear on the label.

On a recent visit to Whole Foods, we found scores of brand's products that are advertised as organic but not certified. By June 1, 2011, these products will either have to be third-party certified to USDA organic standards or stop making front-label organic claims. That's the result of Whole Foods' new policy announced June 8, "Whole Foods Market's policy on the use of the word "organic" on personal care products."

This is great news that will surely have ripple effects through the industry and even impact the course the USDA will take. To date, the NOP has refused to act on a USDA National Organic Standards Board recommendation, "Solving the Problem of Mislabeled Organic Personal Care Products," that said all organic claims should be certified.

The industry has used a variety of delay tactics that have allowed non-certified organic products to capture market share by misleading consumers. The Organic Trade Association (OTA), which allows these bogus labeling claims by many non-certified "organic" brands among its members, is now saying that it supports USDA certification for organic personal care products, but that certification shouldn't be required until there are special standards. OTA admits this is a "long-term policy option that will take significant time and resources." In other words OTA appears willing to allow organic labeling fraud to continue for an extended period of time, economically benefiting some of its unscrupulous members, but ripping off organic consumers and undermining organic integrity in the meantime.

Much will depend on whether other retailers, distributors and trade associations follow the good example Whole Foods has set. Will OTA, United Natural Foods, Inc., and the National Cooperative Grocers Association take Whole Foods' lead? [www.is.gd/cO3WT](http://www.is.gd/cO3WT)



## Call on Office Depot, Office Max & Staples to Reject GE Paper

Despite emails and calls from over ten thousand OCA members, the USDA has approved a "field trial" of 200,000 genetically modified eucalyptus in Florida. The field trials are being conducted by ArborGen, a notorious biotechnology entity owned by the "Big Three" paper multinationals: International Paper, MeadWestvaco, and Rubicon. Act now!

Send an email to the nation's top retail office supply stores and insist that they reject paper products from GE trees! [www.is.gd/cO4os](http://www.is.gd/cO4os)

## Alert: California Proposes Use of Methyl Iodide

In February 2010, a Scientific Review Committee commissioned by the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) concluded that the use of methyl iodide in agriculture would endanger public health:

"Based on the data available, we know that methyl iodide is a highly toxic chemical and we expect that any anticipated scenario for the agricultural or structural fumigation use of this agent would result in exposures to a large number of the public and thus would have a significant adverse impact on the public health. Due to the potent toxicity of methyl iodide, its transport in and ultimate fate in the environment, adequate control of human exposure would be difficult, if not impossible. This is clearly shown in the DPR risk calculations and the evidence of the toxicity of methyl iodide upon which these conclusions are based is compelling. In addition to the evidence for significant toxicity there is a lack of information that adds further uncertainty to the evaluation of the toxicity. We have concluded there is little doubt that the compound possesses significant toxicity."

Susan Kegley, a consulting scientist for Pesticide Action Network, summed it up for the *San Francisco Chronicle*: "This stuff just kills everything," said Kegley, a chemist, who pointed out that even low doses have caused neurological damage and fetal death in laboratory animals. "It is a known carcinogen."

Methyl iodide has been linked to thyroid disease, including cancerous tumors that can also affect the lungs and brain, she said. If tarps typically used to cover the treated soil were to blow off, she said, the substance could waft into the air.

"We are likely to see a greater incidence of thyroid disease with use of this chemical," said Kegley, who wears double gloves and uses syringes, a fume hood and ventilation devices whenever she handles the chemical in the lab.

Despite scientist concerns, on April 30, 2010, California proposed using methyl iodide in agriculture. Methyl iodide is so reliably carcinogenic that it's used in the lab to cause cancer. Scientists say it "cannot be used safely," yet DPR has proposed approval. We have until the end of June to register public concern. Call the Governor & demand that methyl iodide not be approved: 916-445-2841. [www.is.gd/cO438](http://www.is.gd/cO438)

## Join OCA at the COP 16 Climate Conference

In 1999 and 2003, the OCA helped organize protests and teach-ins against the World Trade Organization in Seattle and Cancun. The "Battle of Seattle", as it came to be known, and subsequent mobilizations were the coming of age of the global grassroots. Now you have the opportunity to join OCA staff on an escorted delegation to the historic teach-ins and rallies for climate justice and organic agriculture at COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico.

Over 100,000 concerned citizens from North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia are expected to converge on Cancun, including leading farm, food, Fair Trade, climate justice, and anti-GE activists. They'll attend a wide range of workshops, forums, and cultural events. Following up on the theme of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, "Another World is Possible," the emphasis in Cancun will be on presenting solutions and alternatives to the climate crisis.

The OCA delegation, limited to 100 people, will include international experts on organic agriculture and climate justice. During the week of teach-ins and protests, Nov. 29 - Dec 10, the OCA delegation will be housed in Cancun. Costs for a shared double room, meals, seminars, and transport will be \$1000 (airfare not included). Private rooms are available for an additional \$200. Call OCA at 218-226-4164 or reserve your place on the delegation online: (select "Campaign Manager"). [www.is.gd/cO49x](http://www.is.gd/cO49x)