



Sustainable Times

May/June 2007

SB&B

SINNER BROS. & BRESNAHAN
PARTNERS IN FARMING

SB&B Foods Inc. has recently been honored as Exporter of the Year at the Global Business Connections conference. Based in Casselton, ND, SB&B currently contracts with over 80 producers of specialty commodities and has recently expanded their export sales to include six new countries.

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SB&B: From a Modest Farm to Exporter of the Year

Albert Sinner had a simple farm in the early 1900's, the land teaching him many important fundamentals of life. As with any farm, there were always challenges and one learned quickly to either face those challenges head on, or run from them. Albert wasn't one to run. Instead, he formed a partnership with his two sons and his son-in-law. The farm became known as SB&B – Sinner Bros and Bresnahan. No matter how

much it has grown, it was Albert's dream that the farm remain in the family – a dream that the sons, grandsons and even great grandsons, have recognized and continued.

SB&B was in the seed business along with growing specialty crops such as sugar beets into the mid to late 70's when four new partners took over – two Sinners and two Bresnahans. In the mid 80's, the partners realized they needed to do something to push the farm forward. They began to look for ways to diversify their operation. Having pride in the high-quality commodities they were producing, they

knew they needed a way to improve financially and with less risk to keep the farm going and make it more profitable.

In the mid 80's Bob Sinner, one of the four partners, was appointed to the United Soybean Board and later elected Chairman of the International Market Committee. His committee was responsible for over 400 projects in 86 differ-

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New Certifications

ICS welcomes the following organizations to our family of certified clients. We're proud to have you with us.

FVO Certifications:

Ag Commodities Inc. aka Life Force Organics, FVO, Handler
Ecotech LLC, FVO, Input
Newly Weds Foods, Inc. USA, FVO, Processor/Mfg.

NOP Certifications:

Alljuice Food & Beverage, NOP, Contract Processor



Calendar

- ◆ July 4th: Independence Day;
ICS Office Closed
- ◆ July 14, 2007: Farm Rescue Golf
Tournament; Jamestown, ND
- ◆ July 28-31, 2007: IFT
Chicago, IL
- ◆ September 3, 2007: Labor Day;
ICS Office Closed
- ◆ October 27-29: Expo East;
Baltimore, MD
- ◆ November 11-13: PLMA;
Chicago, IL

June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

July 2007

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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29	30	31				

August 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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September 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Classifieds

FOR RENT: Organic pasture in north-east Nebraska. For 2007 carrying capacity is app. 150 pairs-would consider dairy animals also from May to Oct 15. Experienced custom grazers.

Call Larry or Monty at 402-584-2337 or e-mail at tarboxbuffalo@nntc.net for details.

PICKWICK POULTRY PROCESSING EQUIPMENT FOR SALE:

Kill tunnel track, dunker, plucker. Also: stainless steel cooling tanks and tables; vacuum sealers, Sharp freezers and much more; heaters, feeders and waterers also available. Profitable business.

Please call Gary or Carol at 507-964-5815.

Submissions & Feedback

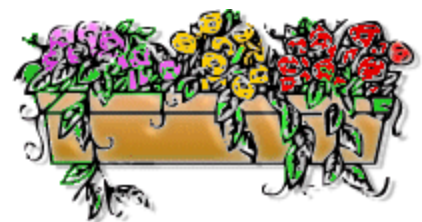
Letters to the editor are welcome. Please include complete contact information including your daytime phone number and signature. All letters are subject to printing in our newsletter, however submission does not guarantee printing. Letters may be edited and cannot be returned.

For information on submitting an article, or if you have any ideas on articles that you'd like to see in our newsletter, please contact Brandi Eissinger at 701-486-3578 or via email at brandi@ics-intl.com. Letters to the editor may be sent to this same address.

ICS welcomes and encourages feedback on our FVO Requirements as well as the other programs we offer. We also encourage comments and

suggestions on our newsletter and website. If there is anything else you'd like to see, please let us know and we'll do our best to get you what you need.

To submit an ad for print in the ICS Sustainable Times, please send your classified ad to the editor, Brandi Eissinger, at brandi@ics-intl.com. Final approval is at the option of the editor. Any questions you have on this opportunity, please contact Brandi via the afore mentioned email address, or call 701-486-3578.



SB&B (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

ent countries promoting the benefits of US soybeans. Because of this exposure, Sinner became aware of tremendous worldwide market opportunities for individual operators. In 1988, SB&B made the decision and commitment as a company to pursue direct relationships with food Companies. They realized that not only were food manufacturers interested, but wanted their products as long as purity could be protected as an identity preserved (IP) grain. At the time, there were very few grains in which the integrity, purity and uniqueness of a specific variety was preserved and diverted directly into food channels.

But that's what SB&B had been about from the beginning, and what they wanted to continue to offer. They knew they had the foundation for it – they had proven for many years that they had the strength, courage, and know-how. They also had personal integrity, dedication, honesty and open communication – all of which they had come to realize were the backbone of any great company. Fortunately, they also had the insight that international business doesn't

just happen quickly. It involves not only superior product quality, but the development of sincere and honest business relationships.

They had what it takes, and the company expanded, offering identity preserved soybeans and wheat. When the tragedy of September 11th, 2001 struck our Country, food safety and traceability became more important to Buyers globally. SB&B continued to expand their production, processing, packaging and shipping of IP grains to meet this demand. In addition, they found there was a strong demand for IP organic grains. Consequently, they moved into the organic market as well, working closely with both producers and end users.

Today, SB&B is a reputable supplier of both organic wheat and soybeans. They have continued to diversify their Company into 3 separate divisions – SB&B handles production, SB&B Foods, Inc. is the marketing portion, and Identity Ag Processing is the processing entity. All three companies are managed from the farm office and add value to the eventual customer. The partners have found a way to grow, to keep the original

dream alive, to seek out and live their own dreams, and to help the earth and communities protect our valuable resources.

Bob Sinner accredits this success, not to himself but to the dedicated employees at SB&B who come to work everyday with a commitment to work hard and to do what is right. Their focus remains to the customers overseas whom SB&B has developed great relationships with; to the producers and the wonderful relationships they have developed; and to the partnership as a whole and everyone who is seeking and working towards a common goal. Bob's equation to success: "We take pride in what we're doing, pride in excellence, and listening to our customer." He strongly believes that it's the relationships one develops with people, and doing what is necessary to protect and strengthen those relationships, that makes a company successful. And like Albert Sinner, and the family partners who are now managing and operating SB&B, it takes a commitment to understand our world demands constant change and challenge. SB&B thrives on both.

Possible FVO Changes

ICS is notifying all operations of a possible change to the FVO manuals and will take into account views submitted before deciding on the final wording and effective date if a change is warranted in our requirements or policies.

If you have any feedback on the following issues, please provide it to ICS by July 1st, 2007. All comments should be sent to the attention of

Janine Hofmann (janine@ics-intl.com).

ICS will be discussing IFOAM standard 7.2.2 which states:

"Only substances allowed by the certification body based upon the criteria for textile processing in Appendix 1 shall be used to process fiber products labeled as "organic."

If you would like a copy of Appendix 1,

or have any comments on the above IFOAM standard, please contact Janine.

Over the next few months, the ICS CC will be having discussions regarding aquaculture and aquatic species. If you are interested in the topics that we will be discussing, please contact Janine (janine@ics-intl.com) by July 1st, 2007 and she will release the agenda of items to you.

CC Corner: Verifying Your Seed—What You Need to Do

We are always looking for ways to both simplify and improve the credibility of our certification. Some relatively easy changes about the seed you are using will accomplish both of these goals.

Organic standards require you to use organic seed whenever possible, and in all cases seed that has not been treated with prohibited materials. Often when we see a gap in the necessary information to verify you meet this part of the standards, certification gets delayed. We want to eliminate this inconvenience for both your sake and ours.

Recent discussions among our inspection and certification staff have lead us to request the following from you as part of your inspection this cycle. Having these things **ready at inspection** to show to the inspector will greatly help facilitate this aspect of our certification decision:

- If the seed is organic:
Your file should have some form of verification that the seed is indeed certified organic. Most **seed bags' labeling** shows the organic status, the certifier, and a lot number. However, bulk loads might not always have such indications. In these cases a copy of the **supplier's organic certificate and/or a transaction certificate** for the organic lot in question is necessary. *Note: If you can't easily get this type of information one way or the other, that is a red flag!* Also, have copies of **purchase receipts**; these should state that the seed is organic.



service they are providing.

- If the seed is not organic: Keep the **seed bag tag** and/or **bag**, and a **sample of the seed** to show the inspector, so that you can prove the seed was not treated.

- If any varieties of seed or inoculants are potentially a GMO, your file needs to have a **non-GMO statement** for each variety in question. If the seed is organic, proof as described above that the goods were certified organic fulfills this; nothing further is needed in such cases.

ICS intends to make the request for this information more explicit in our next revisions to **Module 7** of the Production Plan.

About the Author: David Gould

David Gould, one of ICS's Certification Committee members, has been providing his expertise in organic certification to the company since 1998. He lives in Portland, Oregon with his family.



We always like to hear from our clients. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know. We greatly appreciate your efforts and ongoing participation with us. It is rewarding to be associated with such a fine pool of farmers. Best wishes for a very productive season!

Information for ICS Clients:

OMRI Product Approval Required

Any product that is in the OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) book must be approved by ICS before you use it. Please contact your Customer Care Specialist before using any input.

OMRI Products List Book

The 2007 OMRI Products List book is available at the OMRI website and hard copies can be requested through ICS. Please contact ICS or visit the OMRI Website: www.omri.org/OMRI_products_list.html.



ISRs and ICCs

Please note: Clients do not need to issue Individual Sales Records (ISR) or Individual Certificates of Compliance (ICC) for retail ready product. ISRs and ICCs need only be issued for bulk product. If you have any questions, please contact your Customer Care Specialist.

Searching for Organic Seeds

By Jim Riddle, Organic Outreach Coordinator, University of Minnesota (November 7, 2006)

Whether you are an organic farmer or organic gardener, now is a good time to order organic seeds for next year's crops.

The National Organic Program regulation, at 7 CFR Section 205.204(a), requires organic producers to use organically grown seeds, unless there is no 'equivalent' organic variety that is 'commercially available' in the form, quality, and quantity that you need for your operation.

In approving a grower's organic system plan for certification, the Accredited Certifying Agent must decide whether the producer has made a sufficient effort to source organic seeds for all crops grown on the farm, including cover crops. Generally, producers need to check with at least three suppliers of organic seeds to see if they have organic seeds in the varieties that the producer needs.

(Records should be kept of all attempts to source organic seeds.)

Fortunately, more and more varieties of organic seeds are becoming available. There are several helpful web sites where suppliers of organic seeds, and the varieties they sell, are listed.

The Organic Materials Review Institute has established an excellent database so that growers can find organic seed varieties that are 'equivalent' and 'commercially available.' The database can be accessed at: <http://seeds.omri.org/>

An organic seed search service is now provided by the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association's [Save Our Seed Project](#). The SOS Project provides certified organic growers access to organically grown seeds, tubers, and rootstocks. You can even receive customized information by submitting a list of the cultivars/varieties sought, along with the quantities needed, by FAX (540-894-8060), e-mail

(cricket@savingourseed.org), or mail (Carolina Farm Stewardship Ass'n, 286 Dixie Hollow, Louisa, VA 23093). If no certified organic sources exist, the project will send full documentation for you to provide to your certification agent. The web site is: <http://www.savingourseed.org/>

The Appropriate Technology Transfer to Rural Areas (ATTRA) project has a publication entitled "Suppliers of Seed for Certified Organic Production." The purpose of the publication is to help U.S. farmers find quality organic seeds of regionally suitable varieties. The list includes suppliers of organic seeds for horticultural and agronomic crops. For more information, visit: http://ww2.attra.ncat.org/where.php/altseed_search.php.

Other sources of organic seeds may be found at the Washington State University organic program seed database (<http://csanr.wsu.edu/Organic/OrganicSeed.htm>).

There is Still Time to Plant a Garden

**By Tom Tomas
ICS Certification Committee Member**

There is still time to plant many vegetables. Some actually do better when planted in early July and allowed to mature into late fall.

Carrots planted in early to mid-July will mature in late September and can be harvested until the ground freezes solid. They will actually be sweeter when they mature in cool weather and keep better into winter. It takes a little extra care to get them started as the hot, dry winds of summer are hard on the tender seedlings. If you plant them where they will get wind protection from earlier planted crops, they will do just fine.

Plant them as you normally would in well-prepared soil and water them in. To give them protection during germination, cover the row with boards laid flat over the row. Lift the boards every day to see if they have started to come up. *As soon as they start to come up*, remove the boards and care for them as you usually do. Once they are up, they can take the heat and sun as long as they have some protection from strong winds.

Potatoes can also be planted as late as the middle of July in most of Nebraska and make a good crop. Potatoes that mature late will actually keep better in storage.

Snap beans should mature in 50-60 days from planting, as will cucumbers. Even tomato plants planted the middle

of July will mature a crop by late September. When we lived in Douglas County, I pulled suckers from my early tomato plants in early July, stuck them in the ground, kept them wet, and had a good crop in September.

Some vegetables such as turnips do much better when planted late. The old-timers used to say, "Plant turnips the 25th of July, wet or dry." That is true. Turnips that mature after a few light frosts are much sweeter with no hot taste. You can eat them raw like an apple.

It has been an unusual spring, but we still have plenty of time to plant a garden. One thing about gardening, if you plant enough different vegetables, it is bound to be a good year for something. That's bio-diversity in action!

Foods with the Highest and Lowest Pesticide Residue

So, what fruits and veggies are best and worst when it comes to pesticide residues? We present a summary of pesticides-in-food data below. The main source is research conducted by the Environmental Working Group (EWG), but we have augmented those results with additional information from analyses performed by Charles M. Benbrook, PhD, an agricultural specialist, and by Consumers Union. There are four categories, ordered left to right from worst to best.

THE RED ZONE AVOID UNLESS ORGANIC!	ORANGE: SO-SO LEVELS SO USE CAUTION!	YELLOW: BETTER BUT NOT PERFECT!	THE GREEN ZONE AHH...BEST OF THE BUNCH !
Peaches	Spinach	Apple Sauce	Broccoli
Apples	Grapes	Raspberries	Orange Juice
Sweet Bell Peppers	Lettuce	Plums	Blueberries
Celery	Potatoes	Grapefruit	Papaya
Nectarines	Green Beans	Tangerine	Cabbage
Strawberries	Hot Peppers	Apple Juice	Bananas
Cherries	Cucumbers	Honeydew Melon	Kiwi
Carrots	Mushrooms	Tomatoes	Canned Tomatoes
Pears	Cantaloupe	Sweet Potatoes	Sweet peas
Frozen Winter Squash	Oranges	Watermelon	Asparagus
	Fresh Winter Squash	Cauliflower	Mango
			Canned Pears
			Pineapple
			Sweet Corn
			Avocado
			Onions

The closer to the left a food item is on the chart, the harder you should try to buy only organic for that item. In particular, avoid non-organic purchases from the red and orange columns, especially the red. Even the foods listed in the green column were not always found to be pesticide-free, but they were consistently low in pesticide residues and are your best bets for non-organic food. An EWG simulation showed that people can lower their pesticide exposure 90% by avoiding the most contaminated fruits and vegetables.

This is an excerpt of the article "Bad Residuals from Daily Reruns of 'Eating Your Food': Reduce Your Exposure to Pesticides in Food Through Smart Food Choices." To read the full article, go online to: <http://www.grinningplanet.com/2006/update-2005-05-24/pesticides-in-food.htm>.

Staff Spotlight: Tina Irlmeier



Tina Irlmeier is one of the Customer Care Specialists at International Certification Services, Inc. She began working at ICS in February of

2005, and is responsible for helping her clients through every step of the certification process.

Tina grew up in Medina, North Dakota, and graduated from Medina High School. She then moved on to

attend Bismarck College before moving back to her home town, where she currently lives with her two children.

With a natural ability for communication, Tina gets along well with everyone, and thoroughly enjoys working with her clients and co-workers. It is no surprise then that when asked what she likes best about her job her reply was "Working with the people and learning how they operate their organic business or farm."

When away from the ICS office, Tina is usually engaged in activities with her children and with helping them out with homework. When not busy with family or work, she prefers to spend her time outdoors. She enjoys riding horse and her 4-wheeler, and also spends a lot of time working with the elk on the family farm.

When weather requires indoor activities, Tina usually spends her time scrap-booking. Whether indoors or out, she loves spending quality time with her family and friends.

New Organic Farming Educational Opportunity

Are you certified organic, but struggling to manage weeds without chemicals? Do you have questions about how to manage soil fertility? Would you like to add a new organic enterprise to your farm, but don't know where to start?

The Foundation for Agricultural and Rural Resources Management and Sustainability (FARRMS) is creating a new educational course on the sustainable principles of organic farming. Whether you are already certified organic, transitioning or just considering organic production, this 10-session course will provide a good foundation for organic farm management.

Farm Beginnings® Organic Farming 101 participants will learn goal setting, organic farm management techniques, certification requirements, marketing options, financial planning and business plan development. In addition to classroom instruction, on-



farm field days and mentoring opportunities will give participants the opportunity to see innovative organic farmers demonstrate successful management techniques. Established farmers and other professionals such as lenders and agricultural business instructors will be seminar presenters, providing a strong foundation of community resources, networks and contacts for participants.

FARRMS has received a three year Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant to develop and conduct the course. The course will be adapted from the Farm Beginnings® program developed by the Minnesota-based Land Stewardship Project. The class will be held in the FARRMS' state-of-the-art class-

room in Medina, ND.

Registration for Organic Farming 101 will begin May 15, 2007, with classes starting October 20, 2007 and running through March 2008. A

limited number of need-based scholarships are available. Applications can be downloaded from the FARRMS' website www.farrms.org/farming101.html or requested by calling 701.486.3569.

Founded in 2000, FARRMS is a non-profit organization based in Medina, ND. The organization's mission is discovering, exploring and implementing practices and methods which further the sustainability of farms and rural communities.

For more information about Farm Beginnings® Organic Farming 101 or FARRMS, visit www.farrms.org or contact Britt Jacobson, Project Coordinator at info@farrms.org or 701.486.3569.

Help From the CCS: Tips to Help Speed Up the Certification Process

Organic certification is extensive and due to the review and inspection process, can take awhile to complete. To alleviate some of the wait and to help speed up the process, your Customer Care Specialist has provided the following tips:

1. Get your paperwork back to ICS as soon as possible, and before the given deadline. After your first year, most of this paperwork only involves updating anything that has changed.
2. Make sure to include everything requested – maps, input labels, etc. If in doubt, contact your CCS to find out
3. Don't forget your inspection minimum! In trying to get all the paperwork completed in time, sometimes this fee gets forgotten. In general, it should be sent in with the production plan, and it has to be in our office before your operation can be inspected.
4. Try to keep responses as quick as possible. If you have email or fax access, make use of them. It really speeds the process along.
5. If you know you're not the easiest

person to get a hold of (such as most growers during the growing season), let ICS and/or the inspector know the best times to reach you. If you have a mobile phone, this too will speed up the process and hopefully limit the amount of "phone-tag".

6. Try to be patient. If a lengthy amount of time has passed and you haven't heard anything from ICS – please call and ask. Otherwise, understand that we are doing everything in our power to make this as fast, efficient and painless as possible.



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"Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil, and you're a thousand miles from the corn field." — Dwight D. Eisenhower

Starting Plants for the Garden

By David Podoll
ICS Certification Committee Member

Many who garden try to get a jump on the season by starting some plants indoors. It might be just to plant a few tomato seeds at a sunny windowsill, or a whole gamut of flowers and vegetables in a greenhouse. In any case, there are a few things to which we must pay attention to in order to successfully produce healthy plants for transplanting into the garden: planting date, planting medium, water, light, temperature, and hardening off. The first warm days of late winter may give us the urge to plant some seeds. Hold your horses! The most common mistake we make is sowing too early. Setting large plants into the garden may look impressive at first, but large transplants will be less hardy and fail to grow as well as smaller plants. Earlier sowing may actually result in a later harvest. So when should we sow? My rule of thumb is no earlier than six weeks before the latest expected transplanting date. For some seeds, you may wish to consider germination time. Most common vegetable seeds will germinate in five to seven days. But peppers, for example, take 14 to 21 days, so I give them almost that much extra time. Your planting medium should be porous and hold water well. I like to use

ten parts of pure compost (no manure), completely turned to soil, to two or three parts of vermiculite. The compost supplies sufficient nutrients, while the vermiculite adds water-holding capacity and pore space. Perlite is another good adjunct.

I sow into flats not more than an inch and a half deep. I use more than enough seed to allow for variable germination and so I can thin out weaker plants. I place my flats in the center of a warm room and keep an even temperature for germination, then move them into the light or greenhouse as the seedlings poke through the soil. After the seedlings have begun to grow their first true leaves, I transplant them to larger containers. I use half-gallon waded milk cartons cut down to a little less than quart size with a divider so I have space for four individual plants in each container. Handle little plants by their leaves, not their roots. Always water in, don't pack the soil. You can plant in right up to the seed leaves.

Plant roots need air, but not too much. Their surroundings must always be moist, but not too wet. Because these seedlings are in confined quarters, care with watering is critical. Sorry, no real rules of thumb here. You just have to develop a feel for watering. Listen to your baby plants.

Give plants as much light as possible. Plants need light to grow strong. If you don't have a greenhouse, a south windowsill is necessary – and right up to the glass please! You can supplement with growlights. Again, place the lights as close to the seedlings as possible.

Keep the plants warm in the day (a little hot is OK if you watch the water to prevent wilting) and cool at night (cold is okay for things like lettuce and cabbage). Variance in temperature is also necessary to produce strong plants.

Wind is the other thing necessary to grow strong seedlings. When you can, open the greenhouse to let the wind blow through. If you are starting indoors on a windowsill or under grow lights, take the plants outside for periods to "harden them off." Wait until they are two inches tall or more and gradually expose them to stronger sun and wind. Cuddle them, but not too much. Be tough, but not too tough. That's right! You need to listen to your baby plants.

If you are tired of buying and growing the same old varieties of tomatoes from the greenhouse, plant some seeds. The possibilities for taste, beauty, and excitement are infinite.