



## IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDSHIP

January 2010

Dear Organic Producer:

It is time to update your Organic System Plan (OSP) for 2010. However, the update procedure will be different this year. Each year for the past several years we have provided you with your previous year's OSP so that you could simply update and return it to our office. Because OSP's get cluttered and because operations change over the years, we believe it is necessary to have all producers complete the long OSP form, regardless of how long their operation has been certified with IDALS. So this is the year for you to complete an entire OSP.

This of course means that we will be asking you to provide some items that you have provided for us in the past, such as maps. We ask for your help by providing us with a good solid, well thought out and legible OSP that you will be able to use and we will be able to clearly understand and review. Over the next several years you will then only need to update those parts of the OSP that change; once again making the certification process simpler and less time consuming.

Enclosed in this mailing you will find a blank copy of a 2010 Farm Management Plan and other forms for you to complete. If you intend to add organic livestock to your operation, please call to request the Livestock and Crop Questionnaire. *If you decide not to renew this year, please notify us in writing and return your 2009 certificate immediately.*

### Completing Your Organic System Plan

Since we are starting anew, you will need to answer each question completely in detail so that you will not need to rewrite all the answers each year. To make this approach successful, **it is important that you:**

1. Carefully read each question and write complete answers.
2. Review Field History information for accuracy, fill in the missing information for the 2009 crop year and indicate your production intentions for 2010. If you received a blank Field History, it means your fields have changed significantly and you will need to rewrite them in the proper order and complete the form. Our office staff has updated some or all of your Field History information where possible.
3. Complete and return the **"Corrective Actions"** form if you received one in this packet.
4. Use the **Common Errors Checklist** and review the application instructions once again, to ensure that all necessary documents are completed and returned to the office with the application.

### Inputs List

Your packet may include a list of inputs that you have told us you are using. Review the list and make sure it is accurate. If there are products you are no longer using, please cross them off the list. If you have additional products you want reviewed, submit those labels to us. **Do not use any new products until our office has notified you that the products are acceptable to use.**

### Deadline and Late Fee

The early application deadline is March 15, 2010, which means your application must be **postmarked** by that date. This year the application fee is **\$100**. The late application fee for applications submitted between March 16<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup> is **\$200**. The **\$275** inspection fee is also due at the time of application. Our final deadline date has changed. **Applications will not be accepted if postmarked after May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

After initial review of your application, you will be notified if additional documents are needed to complete your file. The tracking down of needed documents takes staff time and delays the processing of the application. Your timely responses are appreciated. At the bottom of this letter is a list of additional resources and reminders providing beneficial information for organic producers. Finally, if you have questions regarding the completion of certification forms, use of inputs or any organic production requirements, you can contact our office at 515-281-7656.

We look forward to providing you with certification services in 2010 and hope you have a productive and profitable season.

Sincerely,

Maury Wills  
Organic Program Administrator

### Resources and Reminders

- Additional information on National Organic Program (NOP) Regulations including an NOP Policy Section & Question & Answer Section can be found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/indexIE.htm>.
- The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference will be held February 25-27, 2010 in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. For more information, call 715-772-3153 or visit [www.mosesorganic.org/conference](http://www.mosesorganic.org/conference).
- The Iowa State University Organic Agriculture web site <http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/organicag> is updated regularly by Dr. Kathleen Delate. It includes information on upcoming events related to organic farming, information on Rust Update, and other helpful resources.
- Organic production information is also available from ATTRA (Appropriate Technology Transfer For Rural Areas). ATTRA can be found at <http://attra.ncat.org/>.