

For Immediate Release

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California Certified Organic Farmers Names New President

Santa Cruz, CA – California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) announced the appointment of Peggy Miars as president of the nonprofit organization. Miars joined CCOF as communications director in January 2004 and served as acting president since the departure of Brian Leahy in June.

“Peggy brings a high level of professionalism and management expertise to CCOF. She has been successful in managing our operations and improving communication to focus on our mission of providing premier certification services,” said Vanessa Bogenholm, Chair of CCOF’s Board of Directors.

“CCOF has a hard-working staff, a committed Board of Directors and a wide variety of passionate clients who are dedicated to the organic marketplace. Our job at CCOF is to help their businesses succeed while helping consumers across the country find the information and organic products they seek,” said Miars. “Contrary to our company name, our services extend beyond California and beyond farmers.”

CCOF, one of North America’s oldest and largest organic certification agencies, certifies more than 1,300 organic farmers, processors, handlers, retailers, and private labelers in 14 states and 8 countries including about 75% of the organic acreage in California. More than 200 supporting members are comprised of consumers, suppliers and other individuals and businesses interested in furthering CCOF’s work.

“CCOF has a long, proud tradition founded on the actions of a grassroots group of organic farmers. We continue to serve as a strong advocate for organic producers,” said Miars. The current USDA National Organic Standards were based on the California Organic Foods Act of 1990, which was based on CCOF’s own organic standards developed soon after the organization was formed in 1973.

Miars was previously consumer marketing manager for Earthbound Farm, North America’s largest organic produce brand. She also worked in marketing and management positions at Whole Foods Market, Granary Market, The SPCA of Monterey County, and Girl Scouts-Wagon Wheel Council. Miars and her husband also owned a marketing consulting firm specializing in services for nonprofits and small businesses. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Western Michigan University and completed post-graduate classes in nonprofit financial management.

Miars resides in Boulder Creek, California, with her husband Tom, two dogs and four cats.

About CCOF

CCOF, a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1973 and is one of the nation’s largest and oldest third-party organic certifying agencies. CCOF’s purpose is to promote and support organic agriculture in California and elsewhere through:

- *A premier organic certification program for growers, processors, handlers, and retailers.*
- *Programs to increase awareness of and demand for certified organic product and to expand public support for organic agriculture.*
- *Advocacy for governmental policies that protect and encourage organic agriculture.*

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