

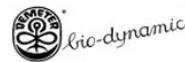
# NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK **NOW** AUSTRALIA

2-11 October 2015

## MEDIA RELEASE

### 6 REASONS YOU SHOULD GIVE ORGANIC A GO THIS ORGANIC WEEK

Australia is working towards a new logo, or seal, for all organic products certified in Australia. Unlike many other countries such as the USA and Canada, Australia does not have a national organic logo. Instead there are six individual certification companies to certify organic food and products. Each company has its own logo. They are all accredited by the Australian Government and base their certification standards on the National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce. The logos of the six certifying companies are:



Most people recognise one or more logo, but do you recognise them all? Here is the challenge. Some people do not recognise or trust these authentic logos because there are many other suspect and misleading organic logos present in the marketplace. This causes confusion.

Products claiming to be certified organic Australian products can be imports that are misleadingly labelled. This creates negative perceptions among potential consumers and threatens the integrity and the future of the entire organic sector in Australia. This negatively impacts on consumer choices to buy organic products.

The Organic Federation of Australia or OFA is the peak body for the organic industry in Australia and has a solution to the problem. Adam Wilson, who is the Chair of the OFA has been working for one national seal which can sit alongside each of the six individual logos.

Mr Willson says "The introduction of a National Organic Seal is the fastest way for consumers to identify themselves with Australian certified organic food. It simplifies the process of buying organic food and will provide instant consumer confidence in organic products".

The Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE) supports the OFA's efforts in lobbying the Government for a national organic seal. CORE will be advocating adoption of the seal as part of their annual awareness campaign: National Organic Week. Eric Love, the Chairman of CORE, says "all Australians should know that they can trust and buy organic products certified by any of these 6 organic certifiers. The seal will supply overarching organic brand recognition, while recognising the individual certifiers".

An initiative of



Centre for Organic Research & Education Inc.  
Level 7  
107 Walker Street  
North Sydney NSW 2060  
ABN: 22 166 587 364

[www.core.asn.au](http://www.core.asn.au)

e: [info@core.asn.au](mailto:info@core.asn.au)

t: 1300 88 55 66



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National Organic Week is designed for the whole of the organic industry to increase awareness of the benefits of organic products and sustainable agriculture and accelerate the uptake of these in the wider Australian community.

## **6 reasons to give organic a go:**

### **1 - Know what's in your food**

Organic food is food you can trust. It does not contain Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), hormones or synthetic additives. All organic farms and food companies are independently inspected at least once a year and comply with relevant organic standards.

### **2 - Reduce your exposure to potentially harmful chemicals**

More than 7,200 registered biocide products, such as pesticides, are used in Australian agriculture and these are often present in non-organic food. Organic food is grown without the use of chemical herbicides, fungicides, insecticides or synthetic fertilisers. Eating an organic diet for just two weeks has been proven to rid the body of nearly all pesticides!

### **3 - Know what you put on your skin**

Organic is not only about food - up to 60% of what you put on your skin absorbs into your system. On average, most women apply 126 different ingredients to their skin on a daily basis and roughly 90% of these ingredients have not been evaluated for safety. Synthetic colouring agents, fragrances, ethoxylated ingredients, silicones, paraffin, petroleum products and animal testing are prohibited under organic standards.

### **4 - Humane treatment of animals**

Organic farming follows strict animal welfare regulations providing living conditions which allow animals to express their natural behaviours. It does not allow the use of hormones or routine antibiotics and it uses organic feed for the animals. Animals on organic farms are truly free range, happy and healthy.

### **5 - Help combat climate change**

Many organic farming practices (e.g. minimum tillage, returning recycled organic materials to the soil, the use of cover crops and rotations...) increase the return of carbon to the soil, raising productivity and favouring carbon storage. This in turn creates healthy living soils which are more resistant to droughts/floods and therefore more resilient to climate change.

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### **6 - Help protect our wildlife**

On average, organic farms support 34% more plant, insect and animal species than non-organic farms. For pollinators such as bees, the number of different species is 50% higher!

CORE is also asking Australians to get involved in National Organic Week by organising or participating in the events held nationwide and by voting in the Organic Consumer Choice Awards (OCCA's) which is one of the highlights of the campaign and have been promoting and rewarding the best organic stakeholders around Australia since 2009.

The OCCA's are the only truly whole of industry organic awards program decided by consumers.

Mr Love says "After 6 years of running these awards the program consistently achieves significant increases in sales of organic products by building customer loyalty to organic brands involved in the awards. The OCCA's also recognises those brands that have a customer focus resulting in increased capacity in the industry".

This year there are 9 categories including a new award created in association with the OFA, "The Rising Star Farmer of the Year". This award aims to recognise young innovative organic farmers. The winner in this category will win a scholarship generously offered by the OFA. Voting will open from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October on the National Organic Week website [www.organicweek.net.au](http://www.organicweek.net.au). Voters will be eligible to be placed into a draw for some great organic prizes!

National Organic Week will run from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> October.  
Voting in the Organic Consumer Choice Awards is open until 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**END**

### **TALENT FOR INTERVIEW:**

**Eric Love** – Chairman, Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE) – 0419 619 455

**Simone Tully** – Board Director, Organic Federation of Australia – 0408 451 078

**Jan Denham** – Chairman, NASAA Certified Organic - 08 8370 8455 or 03 5027 9249

**Ann-Jane Brown** – CEO, The Organic Food Chain - 07 4638 5682 - 0407 884 246

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