

2016 OCO Board Nominees

Producer Sector

Bill Redelmeier, Southbrook Winery

Bill has been a proud farmer all his life. Southbrook has been certified organic since 2008 and we have been leading the push towards quality organic and biodynamic wine since that time. Our particular aim has been to grow the organic wine sector.

Processor Sector

Tom Manley, Homestead Organics

Owner-operator of Homestead Organics since 1997. Past board member of OCO. Past Board member of COG National. Past chair of COG Ottawa Chapter. President of the Alfred College Community Advisory Committee.

Distributor Sector

Ralf Thorsten Arnold, Persephone Market Gardens

Under the lead of my wife Kristine, we run Persephone Market Garden since 2009. Since 2016, I am also managing an emerging food distribution co-operative that sells local food, supplemented with organic out-of-area products. I was involved in this initiative from the start as lead consultant for a business plan. He has a PhD in Agriculture.

Marketing Sector

Jonathan Eric Ferguson, OH International

Jonathan is the Director of Sales and marketing at OH International and brings a wealth of experience in media relations and journalism to the board.

Retailer Sector

Michael Budd, Organics Live

Michael has 2 years experience on the OCO board, and 20 years with business building. He represents a growing community of consumers and business owners who are keenly interested in the success of the organic brand and ideology.

Association/NGO Sector

Sarah Bakker, National Farmers Union-Ontario

Sarah Bakker and her family run Field Sparrow Farms, which raises pastured poultry, pork, and grass-finished beef on 100 acres in Bobcaygeon and markets direct to consumer at farmers' markets and wholesale through co-ops. She is also the General Manager of the National Farmers Union - Ontario. She hopes that her experience will bring increased awareness of organic across sectors and commodity groups. She also brings an understanding of challenges in organic certification for the small farmer and an interest in developing policy. Previously, she sat on the boards of the Lindsay Horticultural Society and the West End Food Co-op.

Certifier Sector

Joel Aitken, EcoCert Canada

Joel has a degree in agriculture science and a masters in Capacity development and extension from the University of Guelph and has been working in the organic sector as a researcher, inspector, certification officer and consultant for the last 7 years.

At-Large Members Seeking Appointment

Rob Wallbridge, Green Bridge Agriculture

Rob has been an organic farmer since 1998, operating a mixed farm and selling certified organic vegetables to consumers, retailers, and chefs in the Ottawa area. He is an IOIA-trained organic inspector, has volunteered on the Livestock Working Group of the CGSB Technical Committee on Organic Standards since 2008, and was recently invited to sit on the Organic Value Chain Round Table. From 2002 until May 2015, he was part of the Member Relations Team of the Organic Meadow Co-operative, providing extension services to organic and transitional-organic farmers across Ontario, with a focus on Eastern Ontario. He continues to provide consulting services to a wide range of farmers and businesses in Ontario's organic sector. He wants to help OCO become a professional, truly representative voice, and the go-to organization for information, resources, and perspectives on Ontario's organic sector.

Titus Sequeira, Farm2Me Inc

A Conscious and disruptive Agile Technology and Business Practitioner with over 35 years in strategy development and implementation with a keen eye on Balance Sheet as much as Disruptive technologies. For the last 4 years sharing Organic movements, and promoting local and global Organic brands. Been an executive member of board and advisory board members in a number of companies for over a decade.

Simon Jacques, Organic Grain Producer

Simon has a particular interest in the Organic Standard as it relates to crop inputs. He participated in the recent Standard Review Process in the "Permitted Substances List; Crops" working group, with the aim of making the organic standard more sustainable.

Mary Wales, Independent Consultant

Mary has worked for the Organic Council of Ontario in the past as well as for other agricultural organizations, mainly in communications roles. She has a strong understanding of agricultural issues, both from growing up on a farm and through her education and career. She has completed an IOIA organic crop inspection course.