

Organic Cost-Share Program

What You Need to Know – Due date Nov. 1, 2009

As most of you are aware, the National Organic Program (NOP) has made funding available through the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program to help producers and handlers of organic products obtain certification. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) has entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to administer the program in Virginia. Virginia will have \$50,000 for fiscal year 2008-2009. A second cooperative agreement between USDA and VDACS provides an additional \$50,000 for fiscal year 2007-2008. All paperwork must be submitted to us by November 1, 2009.

This program will provide reimbursement to eligible producers and processors for 75 percent of their certification costs up to \$750. These reimbursements will be for organic producers or processors who have successfully completed their organic certification with a USDA accredited certifying agency between October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2009. Funds will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis until the entire allocation has been depleted.

Please fill out the application form for the fiscal year in which you were certified (October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008 OR October 1, 2008 - September, 2009). You can apply for both. In addition to the completed form, you will need to include a copy of your organic certificate and organic product verification form from an accredited certification agency, a dated receipt showing the total cost of services rendered, and a completed W-9 form. After the completed applications are received from producers and processors, VDACS will review them, and then forward applications to USDA for approval. Once approved, USDA will forward the necessary funds to VDACS, which will then prepare and distribute reimbursement to eligible producers. This process may take some additional time, so please be patient.

Please fax your paperwork/applications to Cathy Belcher at 804-371-7786. Her phone number is 804-786-4046. Her mailing address is 102 Governor Street, Room 317, Richmond, VA 23219. Her e-mail is cathy.belcher@vdacs.virginia.gov.

If you have any questions regarding the cost share program or organics in Virginia, please contact: Catherine Cash, Organic Marketing Specialist at 804-382-0909 or e-mail at: catherine.cash@vdacs.virginia.gov.