

Organic – Conservation Cross Training
April 20 – 23, 2009 Double J Jerseys; Corvallis, OR
EVALUATION FORM - AGGREGATE REPORT

1. Which of the following best describes your background and expertise:

- ☐ a resource conservation professional - 7
- ☐ an organic agriculture professional - 7

Total = 14 Evaluations (out of 15 participants)

2. How satisfied were you overall with the Organic-Conservation Cross Training?

Audience	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Resource Conservation				3	4
Organic					7
Combined total				3	11

3. Did you feel the QUANTITY of information presented was appropriate for a multi-day training session?

Audience	No	Somewhat	Yes
Resource Conservation		1	6
Organic		1	6
Combined total		2	12

4. Regarding QUANTITY of information: If too little, what do you suggest adding? If too much, what do you suggest leaving out?

Resource Conservation Professionals' responses:

- Because you can't cover everything in this short time, you should consciously identify what you are going to cover as well as what you aren't going to cover.
- Just right. Enough to get word out. Not so much to bury us.
- I think this is a good place to start. I need more specific technical training.
- Think this could lead to future technical sessions w/ specific focus (i.e. soil quality, water quality)
- Many multi-day workshops repeat information. Everyday of this workshop brought new exciting adventures in cross-training opportunities! Super! Tired at end of day, yet brain spinning with contemplation.
- Lots of good info – perhaps reduce scenario complexity unless more field time will be included in forthcoming sessions. Reduce formality of group discussions (less presentations between groups).

Organic Professionals' responses:

- The first farm visit didn't click. Good tour, good info – but difficult to stay on task – either filling our NRCS 3-page questionnaire or organic system plan questions.
- I think there was a very good mix of instruction time and interaction time between the professionals.
- 12-hour day (Wed) was too long.
- It was a lot of info, but I wouldn't want to remove any of it, nor make the training additional days, expense, etc. Great job!
- It was great. I think there was enough quantity & I would not want it to be any less. Day-length fine!
- Quantity was good. More pre-meeting info would help participants become familiar with concepts/terms prior to the meeting

5. Did you feel the QUALITY of information presented was appropriate for a multi-day training session?

Audience	No	Somewhat	Yes
Resource Conservation			7
Organic			7
Combined total			14

Tough session to target knowledge levels. *(additional comment from resource conservation prof)*

6. What did you like best about the cross-training session?

Resource Conservation Professionals’ responses:

- Field time and producer presentations – both Jon and the panel.
- Interactions with other participants and producers. Group activities.
- Meeting every other person who attended and learning from their strengths. #1 spending two glorious days on an organic dairy talking soil quality.
- The one-on-one exchange of information.
- I think we broke down some barriers to cooperating.
- The fact that it was cross-training.
- The interactions and discussions. I particularly like having to answer the question “What 3 things am I going to take away.”

Organic Professionals’ responses:

- Nice weather. Field work – practical experience with NRCS professionals. Dr. Lane’s presentation.
- Field work then applied w/ work discussion. Excellent finishing speaker.
- Mix of in-class and field was great. Plus mixing the groups of organic cert w/ NRCS provide additional depth, either intentional or not.
- Talking w/ NRCS professionals.
- Interactions between the professionals.
- Opening my eyes.
- By the end, I liked the required participant participation but it put me off at first.

7. How could this cross-training session be improved?

Resource Conservation Professionals’ responses:

- I can tell a lot of time and effort went into organizing and arranging the details. I appreciate all the effort and think it paid off.
- Lodging and common hotel would have provided more time after hours for participants to exchange information.
- The could be the beginning to a series of trainings.
- Stretch to include further technical training sessions.
- Perceived as an NRCS (SWCD) person, I was guided to attend the organic presentation. I would also like to attend the NRCS presentation. One body – two places – very difficult.
- Provide actual assessment sheet used by organic certifiers in order to help conservation professionals understand how inspectors/certifiers are taking info from producers to make certification decisions. This info will also help conservation professionals better understand balances behind checkboxes and not just balancing NRCS check boxes with organic producers assessment questions.
- Reduce the focus of some of the group discussions & activities to make more manageable even time constraints.

7. How could this cross-training session be improved?

Organic Professionals' responses:

- More of it (training), then adding it to everyone's annual training & professional improvement plans at annual evaluation time.
- A little more time, just a little to really process all of the information.
- Visit more than one farm.
- “?”
- Just a little more time for individual / team discussion in field.
- Meeting rooms and lodging in same location. More pre-meeting info. More breaks.
- Too long.
- I have a suggestion for that first exercise/tour of the farm; it may be more effective to pair up one NRCS with one organic professional instead of the bigger sub-groups. Then its very clear the responsibility and the discussions would be shorter and focused. Fill in gaps of expertise later.

8. The following sections/activities sought to increase your understanding of the similarities, differences and connections between organic agriculture and resource conservation. How would you rate the quality of each section/activity?

	Poor	Weak	Average	Good	Excellent
Organic regional trends (Monday evening)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			1	3	2
Organic Profs			<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Combined total			2	7	4
Speaker video and discussion (Monday evening)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs				4	2
Organic Profs			<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Combined total			1	8	4
Background, process, & standards: NRCS <i>or</i> Organic (Tuesday morning)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			2	4	1
Organic Profs				<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
Combined total			2	5	7
Host farm visit and assessment (Tuesday afternoon)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs				3	4
Organic Profs			<u>1</u>		<u>6</u>
Combined total			1	3	10
Soil quality indicators (Wednesday morning)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			1	6	
Organic Profs				<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
Combined total			1	7	6

	Poor	Weak	Average	Good	Excellent
Farm management scenarios (Wed. morning & afternoon)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			1	2	4
Organic Profs				<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
Combined total			1	4	9
Producer panel (Wednesday evening)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs				2	5
Organic Profs			<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Combined total			1	4	9
Harmonization strategies discussion (Thursday morning)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			2	3	1
Organic Profs				<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
Combined total			2	5	5
Grazing / forage mgmt (Thursday morning)	◇	◇	◇	◇	◇
Resource Conservation Profs			2	1	4
Organic Profs					<u>6</u>
Combined total			2	1	10

9. After participating in this training session, are you likely to apply new information / resources you acquired in the professional services you offer to farm operations?

Audience	Never	Not likely	Likely	Definitely
Resource Conservation				7
Organic				7
Combined total				14

10. Please feel free to share any additional comments in the space below:

Resource Conservation Professionals' responses:

- This is a great ntroduction. I need to know how to apply tech guide practices from an organic perspective.
- The reason I answered good as opposed to excellent is because I felt we were constantly being cut off. I know it's a hard balance to give the right amount of time but I felt there was too hard of a push to keep on time rather than learning all the material we possibly could. There should have been a little more time allowed for transition or discussion, etc. Also, some less structured evening time would have allowed for more relationship development.
- "It's not what lies in front of us or behind us, but what lies within us." – Ralph Waldo Emerson
- In talking with organic professionals in my group, I found confusion with OREVT-1 and how to interpret it. When describing this tool, discuss how questions on it are related to specific NRCS assessment tools such as RUSLE-2, SCI, pest management, nutrient management. Discuss w/ organic professionals in more detail how soil maps and understanding not only soil characteristics but soil genesis has on how soils react to different mgmt practices. I discussed concept of source



& transport with an organic professional to describe conservation & water quality protection concepts. This concept seemed to help understanding.

- Instructors need hand-out packet. Break on Wednesday pm (4:30-6pm) let us clean up after farm visit and answer emails, but may have been used to shorten length of day committed to training.
- I like the fact that we had exercises to do but were not required to rush through every item, preventing us from truly understanding what we did work on. This kept us from rushing through the process. If this doesn't make sense, call Mitch Cummings.
- Include Extension in cross training.

Organic Professionals' responses:

- Thank you all. In the next several days, I'll think this through & review in my mind all of it. Then will send you a more in-depth evaluation & feedback. Thank you to all who planned & carried out this event. – Mike Hackett
- Loved the CD!
- Well done!
- Definitely want to keep knowledge & communication flowing between the groups. Excellent time management & group facilitation; excellent time allotment in-house & most of the time in the field. Sharp activities to keep us thinking & learning.
- It would be nice to somehow include a comparison between organic & conventional management – or between good vs. not-so-good management so that we could observe/experience how mgmt practices affect natural resources.
- Need a little more free time/breaks.
- There was no time to review the NRCS forms/checklists prior to arriving at the dairy farm. It was difficult to understand the forms. It was unclear what we were supposed to do with the forms. Need a preview session to review the forms prior to going out to the field.