

# WHAT'S HAPPENING ORGANIC FARMING IN MEXICO?

Presented by:

**Esteban Macias Padilla**

Grupo U

Guanajuato, Mexico

**Paola Guerrero**

San Jose y Su Agricultura  
Queretaro, Mexico

**Lois Christie**

Christie Organic Consultants, Inc.,  
San Diego, CA



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# OUTLOOK ON ORGANIC PRODUCTION IN MEXICO

Esteban 20  
Minutes

## Crops:

- ◆ Tree crops: Apples, avocados, pecans, mangos, coconut, vanilla, cocoa, olives, citrus, pears
- ◆ Open field vegetables: Lettuce, radicchio, celery, spinach, broccoli, bell peppers, hot peppers, green beans, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, soy, garbanzo, cactus, corn, squash, melons
- ◆ Agave (wild crafted and cultivated), coffee, pineapple, bananas, stevia, Coconut, Pitahaya, sesame, grapes (table & wine)
- ◆ High-tech greenhouse container production (mainly tomatoes, cucumbers)
- ◆ Livestock: Apiculture, beef, dairy, pork & poultry

Note: Many operations have gone to shade house production, rather than open field, especially in Baja, Sonora & Sinaloa

# OUTLOOK ON ORGANIC PRODUCTION IN MEXICO

- ◆ Destinations: US, Canada, some EU, Japan and Korea from the US); very little direct to EU or Japan from Mexico
- ◆ Farmers' markets (Tianguis): Oaxaca, Michoacán and Chiapas account for 50% of outdoor markets
- ◆ A 2018 report states that Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacán, Chihuahua and Guerrero account for 82% of organic production. While this may be true for the National market; I estimate that other than coffee, the bulk of exports come from Baja, Sonora, Sinaloa, Michoacán (avocados and berries), Jalisco and Guanajuato. SAGARPA is now requiring reporting and this information will be more accurate in the next year or two.
- ◆ Acreage reports are from 420,000 acres (Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation) 741,000 acres (SAGARPA's website)

# MEXICO CROPS



Agave, wild crafted and cultivated (Tequila and Mezcal)



# MEXICO CROPS



Bananas, Colima



Blueberries Guanajuato



Asparagus, Baja Sur & Guanajuato



19 3 2010



Apples, Chihuahua

# MEXICO CROPS

Lettuce, Guanajuato



Mango Inspecting with Inspector Gadget's iPad – one of the first electronic inspections In Mexico



## INTRODUCTION MEXICO ADOPTS ORGANIC REGULATIONS

- ❑ Mexico's LPO (Organic Products Law/Ley de Productos Organicos) was enacted in 2006 followed by the
- ❑ Regulations for Organic products (published in 2010 and implemented in October 2013).
- ❑ The Regulation is under SAGARPA (comparable to the USDA) and administered by SENASICA
- ❑ CNPO (Council for Organic Production assists and guides SAGARPA/SENASICA)
- ❑ 15 certifying agencies are accredited to operate in Mexico



## INTRODUCTION MEXICO ADOPTS ORGANIC REGULATIONS

- ❑ Mexico is seeing an equivalency agreement with the US, Canada & the European Union.
- ❑ A joint US-Mexico Organic Compliance Committee to strengthen monitoring and enforcement controls on organic products traded between the two countries
- ❑ In order to export, producers must comply with many international organic regulations
- ❑ SOMEXPRO (Mexican Society of Organic Production), Homero Blas, President: Consists of producers, processors, consumers, distributors, certifiers and academics related to the organic sector in Mexico



## EXPORTS & IMPORTS BETWEEN THE US AND MEXICO

- ❑ Exports to Mexico totaled 133 million (OTA)
- ❑ Imports from Mexico totaled 278 million (OTA)
- ❑ In August 2018, SAGARPA issued a notice that all organic products imported and/or sold in Mexico must be certified to the LPO.

(Harmonized Tariff Schedule Codes do not track many organic products; therefore the to actual value of organic trade between the two countries is probably higher; these codes are changing and being assigned to organic products)





## DIFFERENCES IN THE NOP & LPO



- ❑ Mexico currently relies on certifiers to approve inputs (OMRI, WSDA, and/or certifier reviews)
  - The LPO is working on a list of approved materials.
  - Part of the equivalency agreement is that Mexico needs to define their own list to lessen risk
- ❑ The original Mexican law stated:
  - Hydroponic was and is currently prohibited and container plantings are considered Hydroponic; therefore container products cannot be sold as organic in Mexico; however, Article No. 5 of the Mexican law was recently amended and awaiting approval by Congress that will allow the use and sales of container production in Mexico
  - All seed had to be organic, which was contradictory to the Mexican law which required all seed be treated under the phytosanitary law.
  - PVC pipes were not allowed
  - All inputs had to be made on-farm

## CHALLENGES GROWING ORGANIC IN MEXICO

- ◆ Export & Border Crossings
- ◆ Seed Sourcing & Importation
- ◆ Inspection Distances, Costs & Need for Inspectors (SAGARPA requirements)
- ◆ Material Sourcing and Costs
- ◆ Exportation Requirements: Regulations for Plant health protection; e.g. APHIS; Honey Bees (carrier of mites and diseases)
- ◆ Equivalency Issues: Requirement of Transaction Certificates (cost to companies up to \$250,000.00 per year; cost prohibitive)

## SEED: STATUS OF IMPORTING CERTIFIED ORGANIC & UNTREATED SEED INTO MEXICO

Lois 10 Minutes

- ❑ Over 15 years with no way for organic producers to legally bring certified organic or untreated seed into Mexico
- ❑ 2009 - Meeting in Irapuato, Mexico: Growers, government SAGARPA staff, certifiers, seed companies and inspectors organized the first small meeting in Irapuato to discuss the seed crisis for organic growers
- ❑ 2011 – Merida ASTA Seed Conference: A second meeting was held in Merida at the Seed Association Conference with some big players in attendance; SAGARPA, USDA (Miles McEvoy), Foreign Ag Service/FAS (Dan Berman), OTA and most importantly the Seed Association of the US and Mexico



## STATUS OF IMPORTING CERTIFIED ORGANIC & UNTREATED SEED INTO MEXICO

It was this second meeting that really broke things loose with all the players realizing how many organic growers there were in Mexico:

- ❑ The OTA Mexico Task Force was created
- ❑ Research was done to establish how many certified companies were in Mexico and how much and what varieties of seed were being used with OTA & FAS with SAGARPA's participation (Dr. Trujillo)
- ❑ This eventually led to SENASICA rule changing:
  - ❑ Allowing organically allowed seed treatments such as Probio T-22.
  - ❑ Approving several important seed companies to be able to legally import certified organic and untreated seed into Mexico, which met companies no longer had to sneak seed into Mexico, which also met they could apply these purchases to their taxes.

**STATUS OF IMPORTING  
CERTIFIED ORGANIC &  
UNTREATED SEED INTO MEXICO**

**Companies Approved by SAGARPA to import  
certified organic and untreated seed into Mexico:**

1. Enza Zaden Mexico, SA de CV
2. Bejo Mexico, SA de CV
3. Seminis, SA de CV
4. Sakata Seed de Mexico
5. Keithly Williams Semillas de Mexico, S de RL de CV
6. Mar Seed Company, SA de CV
7. Syngenta Agro, SA de CV
8. Semillas Harris Moran Mexicana, SA de CV

**LABELING OF PRODUCTS EXPORTED  
INTO MEXICO FROM THE US OR SOLD IN  
MEXICO BY LOCAL GROWERS**

- ◆ All products must be labeled in compliance with the LPO (Mexican Regulation):

***Non-retail containers/produce boxes or accompanying documents (e.g. invoices, BOLs) must contain:***

- a) Name and address of operation and (if different) of the owner/seller of product,*
- b) Name of product and its organic status,*
- c) Name and certifier number*
- d) Lot #*

*Note: Non retail containers include bulk boxes shipped within Mexico to another co-packer for retail or further packing.*



***Retail labels must include the identification numbers of:***

- a) The operation (the Client Code found on the certificate and Client Profile issued by CCOF)*
- b) CCOF (the approval code issued to CCOF by SAGARPA: **SENASICA-OCO-14-009**)*
- c) Certificate number*
- d) Must state: Free of Genetically Modified Organisms*

**LABELING OF PRODUCTS EXPORTED  
INTO MEXICO FROM THE US OR SOLD IN  
MEXICO BY LOCAL GROWERS**



*Upon approval from CCOF, the SAGARPA Mexico Organic seal may be used by CCOF certified operations on products produced in Mexico and verified as compliant with the CCOF Mexico Compliance Program.*

*When used, the following provisions must be met:*

- a) The seal must be used in specific format and colors as defined in Articles 3-9 of the Agreement which discloses the national seal of organic products and the general rules are established for use in the labeling of products certified as organic, available at [www.ccof.org/mexico](http://www.ccof.org/mexico).*
- b) The seal must be placed on the front or side of the package, followed by the statement "Certified Organic by [name of certification agency]."*
- c) If other national or private organic seals/logos are used, they may not be larger than the SAGARPA Mexico Organic seal.*

***Operations using the SAGARPA Mexico Organic Seal are strongly advised to review the Agreement which discloses the national seal of organic products and the general rules are established for use in the labeling of products certified as organic, available at [www.ccof.org/mexico](http://www.ccof.org/mexico).***



# COST COMPARISONS & AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS

- Availability of Materials
- Fertilizer costs comparison
- Pest Control
- Diesel fuel
- Electricity
- Liquid fertilizer 3% n
- Compost

# LABOR & EFI

Government Benefits	Extra Benefits
Paid Vacations	Scholarships
Prima Vacacional 25%	Family Day Celebrations
Social Security	Child Care
INFONAVIT	Housing (Entire family)
FONACOT	Assistance to families in local communities
Aguinaldo (Christmas bonus)	Birthday Celebration
Share company Profits	Keep up with traditions
	Free transportation
	Incentive Bonus
	Productivity Bonus
	Food allowances
	Wedding leave of 4 calendar days
	Death of family leave of 5 calendar days

- ◆ H2A Visas (best managers & trained harvesters leaving for US)

# LABOR & EFI

EFI → EQUITABLE FOOD INITIATIVE



**Responsibly Grown, Farmworker Assured™**

When you see the EFI label on fruits and vegetables, it means the grower met more than 300 rigorous standards for labor practices, food safety and pest management.



Greenhouse Grape Tomatoes  
San Jose y Su Agricultura

# EFI



# PAOLA



# INNOVATIONS IN ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Esteban 20 Minutes

- ◆ Use of Applied Technology/Microbiology
- ◆ Sustainability (water recover, mulching, irrigation, etc.)
- ◆ DNA Analyses/Metagenomics (the study of genetic material recovered from environmental samples); fungi and bacteria discoveries
- ◆ Improving General Practices
- ◆ Weed Control (less hand labor, mulching, sustainability)
- ◆ Fertilizers: Use of nitrogen; locally sourced materials

# INNOVATIONS IN ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Beneficial Habitat in Strawberry  
Production  
San Quintin, Mexico



Compost Spreader





# INNOVATIONS IN ORGANIC PRODUCTION

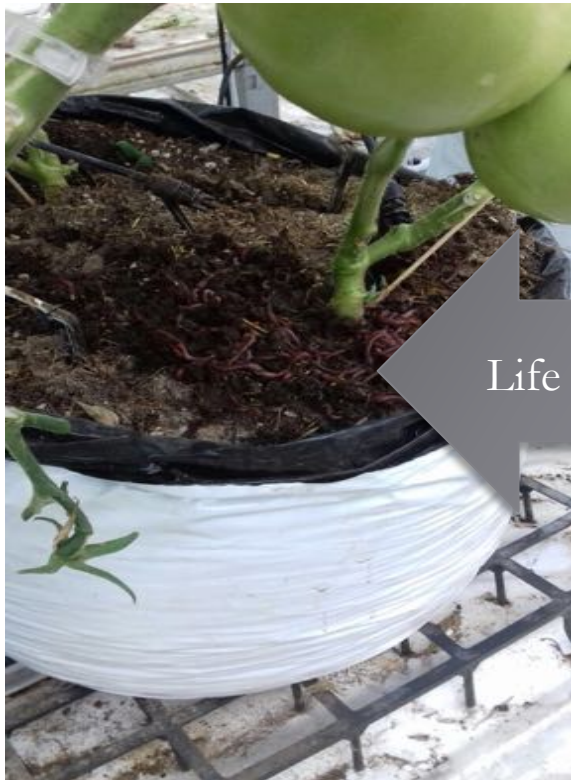


Beneficial Habitat  
inside a High-tech  
Greenhouse





# ORGANIC CONTAINER



Life in container soil!

Worms are fed organic alfalfa grown on-farm



Apple Grower in  
Chihuahua  
(Grower Group)

# RESOURCES

- ◆ SOMEXPRO: <http://somexpro.org> (has links to all important documents)
- ◆ USDA Regulations in Spanish:  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOP-ReglamentosOrganicosEstadounidenses.pdf>
- ◆ SAGARPA Regulations in Spanish:  
<https://www.gob.mx/senasica/documentos/leyes-organicas>
- ◆ SAGARPA (Mexican) Regulations – English:  
[https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/194132/OrganicProductsRegulations\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/194132/OrganicProductsRegulations_1_.pdf)
- ◆ CCOF Certification Services Manual:  
<https://www.ccof.org/certification/services/international-programs/mexico>
- ◆ CCOF Certification Services International Labeling Guide:  
[https://www.ccof.org/sites/default/files/International\\_Labeling\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.ccof.org/sites/default/files/International_Labeling_Guide.pdf)
- ◆ USDA Regulations in Spanish:  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOP-ReglamentosOrganicosEstadounidenses.pdf>

# Q & A

**Esteban Macias Padilla**  
Grupo U  
Guanajuato, Mexico  
[estebanm@grupou.mx](mailto:estebanm@grupou.mx)  
(011-52-1) 461-118-2685

**Paola Guerrero**  
San Jose y Su Agricultura Queretaro, Mexico  
[pguerrero@ganfer.com](mailto:pguerrero@ganfer.com)  
(011-52-1) 442-3868137

**Lois Christie**  
Christie Organic Consultants, Inc.,  
San Diego, CA  
[lois@christieorganic.com](mailto:lois@christieorganic.com)  
760-419-5056

