### National Organic Standards Board Crops Committee 2012 Sunset Proposed Recommendation Ethylene Gas

March 2, 2011

# List: §205.601 Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production.

(k) As plant growth regulators. Ethylene gas—for regulation of pineapple flowering.

# **Committee Summary**

The Crops Committee (CC) requested and received a new Supplemental Information Report on the use of Ethylene gas as a plant growth regulator, for the induction of pineapple flowering. Reference was made to the current scales of production in the US (which are in Hawaii and California) and do not amount to a large ratio of global production. The CC found the report to be sufficient, while seeking information regarding large-scale pineapple operations outside of US borders (specific reference was made to Eco-LOGICA in Costa Rica for more information). The scale of operation and the impacts on others was discussed in order to ensure that varied sizes operations were referenced. Alternatives were mentioned, including African cases with individuals carrying applicators (ensuring that small-scale operators could use products thus applied) as well as regarding research in Taiwan which showed that cold water applied three to four times at the correct time and right time intervals (24 hours) yielded production results similar to both Ethylene gas and calcium carbide options, though slightly (3-4 weeks) delayed. In addition to operation size and location concerns, the CC discussed that the subject of unnatural pineapple flower induction, facilitated using synthetic-sourced (petroleum) Ethylene gas, is inconsistent in multiple ways with overall organic standards.

## **Committee Recommendations**

The motion was to continue the listing of ethylene gas as a plant growth regulator, for the induction of pineapple flowering. The CC recommends against the continued listing of Ethylene gas.

## Committee Vote

Motion: To relist Ethylene gas—for regulation of pineapple flowering, on § 205.601(k)Motion: Colehour BonderaSecond: Tina EllorYes: 0No: 5Absent: 2Abstain: 0Recuse: 0