

AN INSIDE LOOK AT C-R VIEW DAIRY FARM

Each year as winter blankets C-R View Dairy Farm, the Westabys sit down and analyze the seed catalogue that they receive in the mail. They look for a mix of cover crop and forage seeds that will both promote good soil fertility and meet their animals' nutritional needs over the upcoming year. Theresa and Delmar always try to source 100 percent certified organic seed, however, maintaining healthy soil with a diverse cover crop rotation sometimes requires that they source seed varieties that aren't available as certified organic in the quantities they need.



Recordkeeping Case Study: Seed Search Documentation & History

UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANIC SEED SOURCING PROCESS

The USDA's organic regulations require farmers to use certified organic seeds whenever possible. The regulations provide an exception for using untreated, non-organic seed and stock only if a certified organic equivalent is not commercially available in the appropriate form, quantity or quality. If a seed is unavailable as certified organic, growers need to keep well-detailed records that demonstrate a thorough search was conducted for certified organic sources. While some certifiers

provide "commercial availability forms" for growers to use, C-R View has their own form for keeping their seed records. "When we learn—after searching multiple seed sources—that what we want to grow isn't available organically, we immediately write it down on our form. This way we have the search documentation all in one place, including what we searched for, why it wasn't available, and the non-certified product that we ended up ordering instead."

MAR. 3
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Seed Search

DELMAR WESTABY FARM

VARIETY

Sudan Special
Blend BMR
Sorg X Sudan

REASON

Wanted a
Brown Mid-Rib
Sorghum
Sudan Cross

SUPPLIER

Company A
Company B
Company C
Company D

REASON

Variety not
available organic

Organic variety of
BMRSS sold out at
Company C

BEST PRACTICES FOR SEED SOURCING DOCUMENTATION

The USDA states that non-organic, untreated seed is permitted for use only if commercial availability of organic seed is unavailable in "appropriate form, quality or quantity."

APPROPRIATE FORM, QUALITY AND QUANTITY INCLUDES:

Form
SUCH AS
SEED SIZE AND
TREATMENT

Quality
SUCH AS
GERMINATION
RATE AND DAYS TO
MATURITY

Quantity
ORGANIC
AVAILABILITY DOES
NOT MATCH NEED

DOCUMENT *the SEARCH*

Remembering details of a seed availability search months after seed was purchased or planted is hard to do. Documenting the date of your search, suppliers contacted and communication history (emails, phone logs) immediately will prevent you from digging through your search history.

ORGANIZE *your RECORDS*

Save and organize all of your receipts, labels and packets of both certified and non-certified seeds for the past five years. Purchase records should be easily accessible during your inspection.

REQUEST *a STATEMENT*

Request a supplier statement for all non-certified organic seeds, affirming the seeds are non-GMO (if a GMO version is commercially available), and not treated with prohibited substances.

CREATE *your SYSTEM*

C-R View Dairy Farm created a system for recordkeeping that includes printing seed purchase receipts and recording the quantity of seed purchased directly on the receipts. They also request supplier statements before making any purchase order and store the statements and receipts separately from organic seed receipts so they are quickly accessible.

RESOURCES: APPROVED MATERIAL DATABASES

AOSCA Organic Seed Finder: <http://www.organicseedfinder.org/>

Pick-a-Carrot Seed Search: <http://www.pickacarrot.com>



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