Organic Program Newsletter

2026 Issue



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New Database coming November 2026!



Pictures provided by ISDA staff

Important Update: Organic Certification Renewal Period Changes

By Rebecca Frey

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Organic Program is introducing a new standardized renewal timeline for all certified organic operations.

What's Changing?

We are aligning all organic certification renewals with a defined **Open Registration Period** and **Late Submission Period**:

- **Open Registration Period: November 1, 2025 – February 28, 2026.** Applications submitted during this time are considered **on time**.
- **Late Submission Period: March 1, 2026 – May 31, 2026.** Applications submitted during this window will still be accepted but will be considered **late**. *Note: There is currently no late fee, but proposed rulemaking may introduce one in the future.*

Know anyone thinking about becoming organic? New applicants are welcome to apply during the Open Registration Period too!

Why the Change?

This adjustment is part of our transition to a new database system, which is set to go live later this year. Standardizing renewal dates will help us better manage workloads and maintain high-quality service for Idaho's organic producers.

What You Need to Do:

- Submit your renewal application during the Open Registration Period to keep your certification in good standing.
- Only update your Organic System Plan (OSP) if changes have occurred. If no changes are needed, no OSP updates are required.

If you plan to surrender your certification for 2026, please notify us promptly. Keep in mind that surrendering certification will result in the loss of organic status for any crops or products currently in storage.

What's Not Changing?

Your inspection will still occur around the usual time next year—this change only affects the application and its associated fee submission window.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact our office. We're here to help!

Important Reminders

By Ashley Buhler





- Labels and OPPs (Organic Product Profiles) need to be reviewed and approved by ISDA staff before use.

- The renewal period for the organic program has changed to November 1st-March 1st so your new anniversary date will be 2/28/2026 for next year. All applications need to be submitted by February 28, 2026. OSPs can be submitted later.

- Operations must submit an annual PLA application to keep PLAs active. Submit this with your renewal and when you add any new PLA customers. You will be invoiced for these annually.

- Alternative Crop Rotation Request Form must be submitted *and* approved by ISDA BEFORE planting the third year of the same annual crop family. Please note *ISDA will not allow 4 years of the same annual crop family to be planted without interruption. Fallow periods of less than 12 months will not be considered an interruption.*

- COR (Canadian Organic Regime) affidavits need to be submitted annually if you need Canadian equivalency listed on your organic certificate addendum.

Organic Database coming soon!!

By Jonnathan Church



In 2024, the ISDA Organic Program began developing a new online database. The purpose of this database is to expedite and simplify the application, inspection, and final review processes. This will reduce turnaround times for new organic certificates and increase the program's capacity. Instead of filling out various forms each year, customers will create accounts in the database and answer questions regarding their operation. Their answers will become their Organic System Plan, and ISDA will be notified whenever changes are made. By fully digitizing the Organic System Plans and Application, the customer's information will be more organized and easier to access.

In 2025, significant progress was made in the development of the database. The Crop and Handling OSPs are built and undergoing testing. The Livestock OSP is currently in development and will enter the testing phase soon. After the OSPs are complete, work will switch to the inspector side. Inspection reports, final review functionality, and other necessary tools for ISDA staff will be built at that time.



Demonstrations of the database have received positive feedback from both ISDA staff and industry members. Comments have focused on how easy it is to make OSP updates and complete annual renewals. The database does not have a launch date at this time but will be coming soon.

Inspection Day Made Easy: Tips for Every Operation

By Mandy Collins

Organic inspections are required every year for all certified operations, and a little preparation can make the entire process smoother. Whether you're a first-time applicant or a long-certified operation, reviewing your Organic System Plan (OSP) and gathering key records ahead of time helps ensure your inspection is efficient and accurate. This short guide highlights what to have ready and what inspectors are required to verify under the National Organic Program (NOP).



What to Expect: Annual Inspections (§205.403)

Every certified operation must undergo an annual on-site inspection to review records and observe all land, handling facilities, and/or livestock areas. Annual inspections must be conducted with an authorized representative who is knowledgeable about the operation. Inspectors will verify that:

- Your practices match your Organic System Plan (OSP).
- No prohibited substances have been used.
- Mass balance and traceability systems work.
- Records support compliance from purchase/acquisition through production to sale.

Recordkeeping Requirements for All Operations (§205.103)

Strong recordkeeping is essential, and operations must maintain records that:

- Cover harvesting, production, and/or handling of all organic products or livestock.
- Are tailored to your specific type of operation.
- Fully disclose all activities and transactions in a way that is easy to audit.
- Provide a complete audit trail from purchase/acquisition through production to sale or transport.
- Clearly identify products as organic
- Are kept for at least 5 years.

Remember that all records must be available during the inspection.

To Prepare, Start With Your Core Documents

Your Organic System Plan (OSP) is the backbone of your certification. Inspectors must be able to review your full application, OSP, and any documents you've submitted throughout the year. Make sure these materials are organized, up-to-date, and available. It's also wise to doublecheck that everything you've submitted is complete and accurate—catching small errors now prevents delays later. All operations must also be prepared to show documentation of the previous year's organic sales. Keep a current copy of the NOP regulations (7 CFR Part 205) and reread the sections that apply to your operation.

Crop Operations: Key Items to Prepare

- Maps showing field names, boundaries, and buffer zones.
- Land Use Affidavits and proof of legal control for new land.
- Organic seed certificates or documentation for non-organic seed (commercial availability searches, non-GMO, untreated).
- Fertility, pest, and/or weed input invoices and OMRI/WSDA, etc., certificates.
- Compost/manure treatment and application records.
- Irrigation shut-off dates or letters confirming no algaecides.
- Field activity logs (planting, tillage, irrigation, harvest).
- Crop rotation documentation.
- Harvest records.

Livestock Operations: Key Items to Prepare

- Permanent ID list for all certified animals.
- Documentation showing animals meet organic eligibility requirements.
- Proof of organic status for purchased livestock.
- Feed purchase records and organic certificates.
- Cleanout logs for shared feed-processing equipment.
- Grazing and feeding records.
- Documentation for feed additives.
- Organic bedding documentation.
- Health records (vaccinations, treatments, hoof trimming, vet visits).
- Confinement records with reasons and dates.
- Manure management and pest-control documentation.

For Dairies:

- Cleaning materials and procedures for milking equipment.
- Purge records for split operations.
- Milk production records.

Handling Operations: Key Items to Prepare

- Process flow diagrams and post-harvest handling descriptions.
- Cleaning and sanitation records.
- Pest control documentation.
- Boiler additive documentation. (if steam contacts organic product)
- Equipment cleanout/purge logs.
- Organic certificates for all organic ingredients.
- Purchase records and documentation that they were produced without prohibited substances ("Big 3 Statements") for non-organic ingredients.
- Organic Product Profiles (OPPs) for multi-ingredient products.
- Copies of all active labels.

If applicable: COR Affidavit, Private Label Arrangement(s) and Annual PLA Application(s).

Inspection Day Access

Inspectors must be able to access:

- Associated Records.
- Fields, pastures, and/or livestock areas.
- Handling and processing spaces.
- Storage areas, buildings, and equipment.



As a final reminder, please plan your inspection day with enough time set aside with the inspector. Being organized with all records and ready to walk the inspector through your operation helps ensure a smooth, efficient inspection. We, the inspectors, look forward to visiting each of you this year. As always, please reach out if we can help answer any questions about the preparation process.



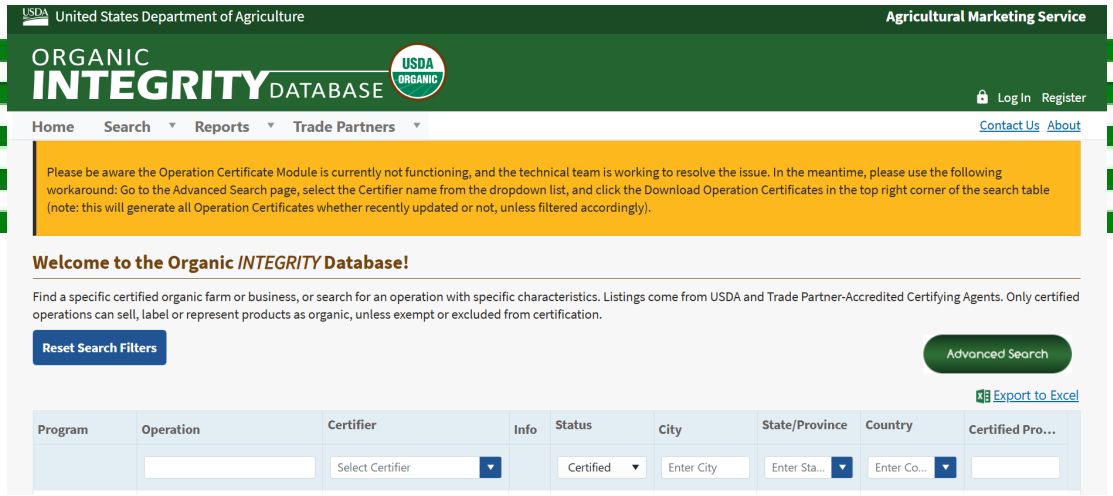


Helpful Tip: Did you Know? ISDA has Inspection Checklists for each scope posted on our website! These checklists can be helpful when preparing for your Organic Inspection.

How to get your organic certificate any time

By Richard Kempton

Many producers have inquired about how to find and use the Organic Integrity Database. In the past, operations had to reach out to certifiers and other businesses to obtain certificates and product lists. Now, the Organic Integrity Database has consolidated this information into one accessible location. Here is a simple guide to help you access the database and understand its capabilities.



- **To begin**, open your computer and type "USDA Organic Integrity Database" into your browser. Look for the website: (https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/).
- **On the homepage**, enter the name of the operation you're looking for into the operation box. This will provide you with the operation details, including certifier information, certification status, and country.
- **Click on the operation you're interested in** and you will be taken to their Operation Profile.
- In the upper right corner next to "**Export,**" you can click on **"Print Certificate."** This will download a copy of the organic certificate that you can then save or print.
- On the same page under "**Product Details,**" you can find information about what the operation is certified for, including crops, handling, and livestock.
- As you become more familiar with the site, you can use the advanced search feature to filter your results by commodities, certification status, locations, and history.
- The Organic Integrity Database is not just a directory; it serves as a transparency tool designed to enhance consumer confidence in certified organic products, increase visibility across the organic supply chain, and help prevent and detect fraud.

How to Check Input Approvals

By Amelia Gronwold

Do you have a product you want to use in your organic operation, but are unsure if it complies with organic regulations? In this article, we will walk through the steps of determining if a material is allowable for use in organic production, resources to check and what to do if you're still not sure.

The first step is to check the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (7 CFR 205.600 – 205.607). Depending on whether you are certified in crop, handling, or livestock, the list of allowed and prohibited substances will differ. Additionally, the restrictions (sometimes referred to as annotations) on substances may differ between crop, livestock, and handling operations. A perfect example of this, using Magnesium Sulfate, is illustrated in the table below. Take note of the restriction on livestock use. This restriction comes from 205.237: Livestock feed. It's important to reference the regulations that discuss your scope, in addition to the National List, to ensure you are remaining in compliance.

Magnesium Sulfate Use in Organic Production

	Allowed synthetic?	Restriction/Annotation	Citation
Crop	Yes, synthetically sourced magnesium sulfate is allowed.	Allowed for use as a synthetic crop or soil amendment with a documented soil deficiency	7 CFR 205.601(j)(6)
Handling	**No.** Only non-synthetically sourced magnesium sulfate is allowed in organic processed food products.	Allowed for use in organic processed food products ONLY if it is from nonsynthetic sources.	7 CFR 205.605(a)(18)
Livestock	Yes, synthetically sourced magnesium sulfate is allowed.	205.237(b)(2) The producer must not provide feed supplements or additives in amounts above those needed for adequate nutrition and health maintenance for the species at its specific stage of life.	7 CFR 205.603(a)(19)

OMRI

If the product contains multiple ingredients, the best thing to do is check the packaging for an OMRI seal. This is often the easiest and fastest way to know if a product is compliant with organic regulations. An OMRI seal indicates it has been reviewed by the Organic Materials Review Institute and has been approved for organic use. However, you can't always trust the packaging—fraudsters are working hard out there! Before buying a new product, be sure to verify the OMRI status and read about any restrictions on the product's use by looking it up on their database: Organic Materials Review Institute

If the product is not OMRI approved, don't worry—there are a few more lists you can check!

First, check the ISDA Approved Materials List. We update this every year and take requests to review new products, as well. We can also check the PCO (Pennsylvania Certified Organic) list for you. Secondly, check the Washington State Department of Agriculture, or California Department of Food and Agriculture's Approved Materials Lists, linked below. All products on these lists have been reviewed by a certifying agency and approved for organic use—be sure to check if there are any restrictions or annotations!



OMRI Listed®

The following product is OMRI Listed. It may be used in certified organic production or food processing and handling according to the USDA National Organic Program regulations.

Product
Drammatic "5N" Liquid Fish Plant Food 5-4-2

Company
Dramm Corporation
Tim Tetzlaff
P.O. Box 1960
2000 North 18th Street
Manitowoc WI 54221-1960 USA

Category
NOP: Fertilizers, Blended with sodium nitrate

Issue date
29-Mar-2013

Class
Crop Fertilizers and Soil Amendments

Expiration date
1-Dec-2021

contains highly soluble nitrogen and must be applied in a manner that does not contribute to the n of crops, soil or water. Its use must be part of an organic system plan that maintains or natural resources of the operation, including soil and water quality, and comply with crop soil fertility requirements.

rtilizer has been inspected and approved for use in NOP organic production by OMRI.

Peggy Miars
Executive Director/CEO

Organic Materials Review Institute
P.O. Box 11558, Eugene, OR 97440-3758, USA
541.343.7600 · info@omri.org · OMRI.org

If the product does not exist on any of the lists mentioned above.

The best course of action is to **contact us.** Email organics@isda.idaho.gov or call the Organics line to inquire about a product, and we will let you know whether it's allowable or not. Upon request, we will add it to our list of materials to review. If it is approved, we will let you know and it will appear on the next year's ISDA Approved Materials List.

Summary:

1. Check NOP National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances
2. Check for an OMRI seal, and verify by looking up the OMRI certificate
3. Check the following approved material lists:
   A. ISDA and PCO
   B. WSDA: WSDA_Organic_Input_Material_List (Ctl + click)
   C. CDFA: Registered OIM List (Ctl + click)

Commercial Availability

By Anais Vazquez –Ruiz



Commercial availability is defined under 205.2 as the ability to obtain a production input in an appropriate form, quality, or quantity to fulfill an essential function in a system of organic production or handling, as determined by the certifying agent in the course of reviewing the organic plan.

Non-organic seed is permitted if organic seed is not commercially available in the required variety, form, quality, or quantity. At least 3 attempts must be made with sources that sell organic products and must be documented in some way, as stated in 205.201(a)(2), along with the reasoning why your operation could not source it as certified organic seed. Your own operation is not allowed to count as one of the 3 attempts needed to stay compliant. This search must be done annually if an operation chooses to source conventionally.





Contracts are not an exception. It must be documented where the seeds were sourced from, whether the seed is proprietary, untreated, treated with NOP-allowed material, GMO-free for GMO crops, and is not available organically.

*If an operation has conventional saved seed, a commercial availability search will be needed prior to using it. *

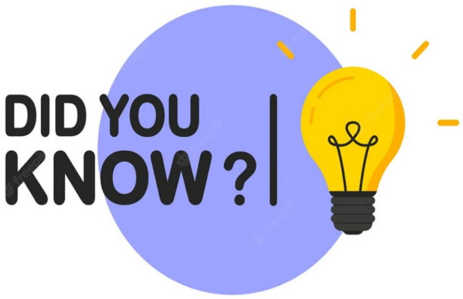
Eight Label Trends Heading Into 2026

By Eleanor DelaRosa

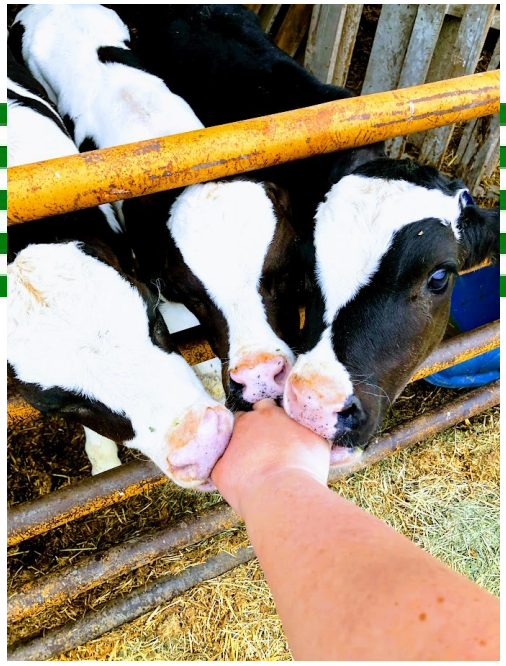
1. **Eco-friendly packaging**- Labels that are made from plant-based films, compostable substrates, FSC Certified paper, and those that use soy and water-based inks to boost recyclability. Eco-friendly materials are no longer optional; they are foundational. Eco-conscious consumers demand transparency.
2. **AI-generated**- AI-generated designs are becoming more popular. AI helps create faster, smarter, and more personalized labels to target your audience.
3. **Raw and Human-Centered Aesthetics**. In a crowded market, embracing "real" over polished helps build emotional resonance.
4. **Interactive and Smart Labels**- Labels are becoming more than static visuals; they are gateways to digital engagement. QR Codes unlock deeper product information, sourcing details, or loyalty benefits. These features enhance connection with consumers, offering value beyond packaging.
5. **Inclusivity, Security, and Authenticity**- Braille embossing and tactile elements for accessibility. Tamper-evident features, holograms, and RFID authentication for traceability. Integration with GSI Digital Link standards to fight counterfeiting. These elements foster trust, inclusivity, and regulatory readiness.
6. **Biophilic and Natural Design Trends**- Designers are weaving nature into labels by adding earthy palettes, greens, browns, and muted oranges. Organic textures, botanical motifs, and even scent-infused embellishments are being used. This approach adds emotional warmth and aligns well with sustainable messaging.
7. **Bold Typography and Minimalists Contrast**- Balance between simplicity and statement making. Dramatic, custom font choices paired with negative space with bold contrast. Minimalism accented with a pop of color. Simple, striking, and unforgettable. A look that commands attention.
8. **Retro Revivals and Nostalgic Nostalgia**- The longing for past aesthetics isn't fading. Vintage-inspired typography, seals, and illustrations evoke emotional connection. Nostalgic design elements remind consumers of familiarity and heritage. These stylistic nods can lend trust, comfort, and brand storytelling finesse.

Cited from
Design Trends for Adhesive Labels & Stickers in 2026 – ClassyMoose® and Top Labeling Trends and Innovations for 2025

Organic Consumer Statistics

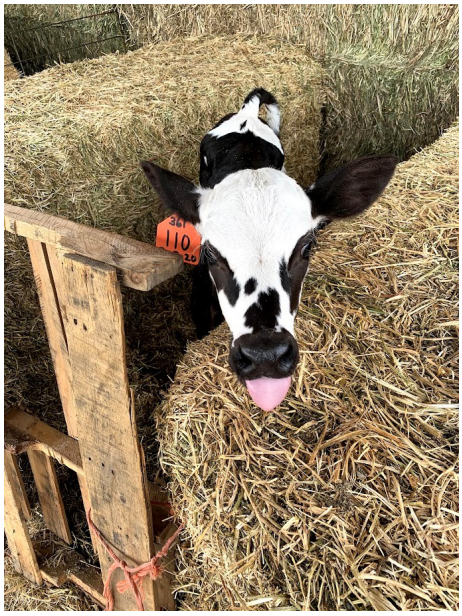


The 2025 Organic Market Report indicates strong growth in the organic sector, with U.S. organic sales reaching $71.6 billion in 2024, marking a 5.2% increase from the previous year



Organic food is now available in more than 80% of grocery stores in the U.S., reflecting widespread consumer demand.

65% of organic consumers report that they are willing to pay more for organic products.



82% of Americans buy organic food at least occasionally, indicating higher consumer acceptance.



75% of organic consumers have cited that they buy organic food to avoid pesticides and chemicals.

60% of organic food consumers are between 18-34 years old.

Cited from

Organic Food Industry Statistics: Reports 2025
Organic Agriculture | Economic Research Service

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

ORGANIC LABELS EXPLAINED

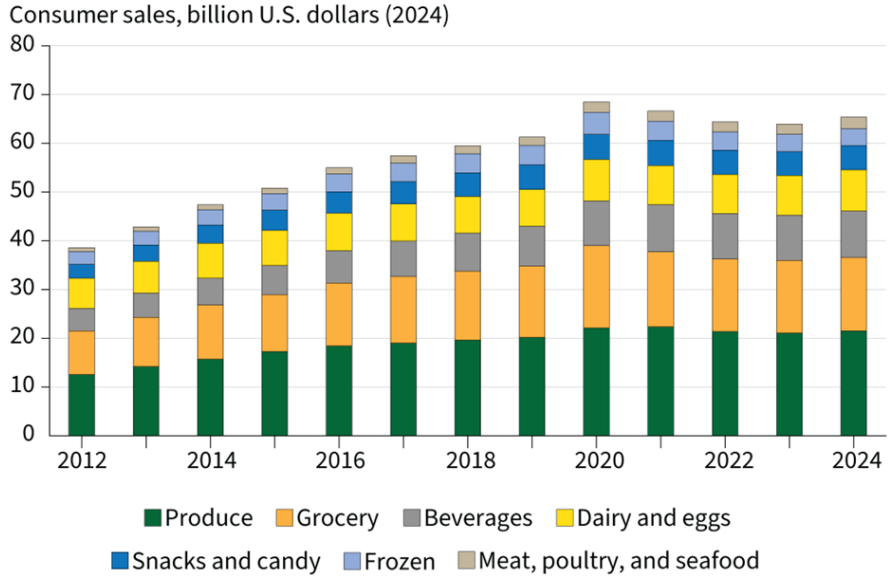
Organic products are labeled according to the percentage of organic ingredients they have. This chart shows what to expect from different labels.

100% Organic	Organic	Made with Organic	Organic Ingredients
✓ Organic seal allowed	✓ Organic seal allowed	✗ Organic seal NOT allowed; Must specify which ingredients are organic	✗ Organic seal NOT allowed; Product can't be described as "organic"
✓ 100% certified organic ingredients and processing aids	✓ 95 % certified organic ingredients	✓ At least 70% certified organic ingredients	✗ No specific % certified organic
✓ No GMOs	✓ No GMOs	✓ No GMOs	✗ May contain GMOs
✓ All ingredients comply with National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances	✓ Non-organic ingredients comply with National List	✓ Non-organic ingredients comply with National List	✗ Compliance with National List not required
✓ Certification required	✓ Certification required	✓ Certification required	✗ Certification NOT required

Learn more about organic labels at www.ams.usda.gov/organic

Agricultural Marketing Service, April 2018
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

U.S. organic food retail sales by category, 2012–2024



Note: U.S. dollars are adjusted for inflation to 2024 dollars based on the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The grocery category includes the following subcategories: instore bakery and fresh breads; dry breakfast goods; baby food and formula; shelf stable soups, stews, and broths; oil, shortening, and vinegars; canned fruits and vegetables; spices; condiments; sweeteners; dried beans, fruits, and vegetables; deli and refrigerated prepared foods; dried prepared foods; baking needs; rice, grains, and potatoes; nut butters, jams, and preserves; pasta; tofu and tempeh; salad dressing and dips; pasta sauces; salsa; and meat alternative and veggie burgers. The frozen category includes the following subcategories: frozen prepared foods; frozen fruits and vegetables; desserts; ice cream; and frozen juice.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the Organic Trade Association.

ISDA Organic Staff



From left to right: Eleanor DelaRosa, Mandy Collins, Rebecca Frey, Ashley Buhler, Anais Vazquez-Ruiz, Amelia Gronwold, Richard Kempton and Jonnathan Church.

A Little bit about us.

Rebecca Frey has been part of the ISDA Organic Program since January 2018 and is entering her fourth season as Organic Program Manager. She holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies with an emphasis in Biology from Boise State University. Based in the Boise office, Rebecca is passionate about supporting Idaho's growing organic industry. Outside of work, she enjoys planning her next vacation, playing trivia at Boise Brewing, and spending time with family and friends.

Ashley Buhler joined the Organic Program in April 2018 and works from the Idaho Falls office as a Program Specialist. Ashley has a bachelor's degree from Utah State University in Agricultural Education. Prior to ISDA, she worked for an organic chicken company in the Midwest. Ashley loves to garden and read fiction novels. She also spends much of her spare time traveling, trying new restaurants, and attending sporting events with her husband.

Jonny Church joined the ISDA Organic Program in September 2022. Before that, he worked as an Operations Manager for a grain processing facility in Emmett, Idaho. He received a bachelor's degree in Horticulture Production from Brigham Young University-Idaho, where he also worked as the school's Greenhouse Manager. Jonny was born and raised in Idaho, where he has lived for most of his life. He enjoys a range of activities, including camping, gardening, and woodworking.

A Little bit about us continued

Rich Kempton began working for the ISDA in August 2019 as an Agriculture Inspector in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program. In 2022, he transferred to the position of Senior Agricultural Investigator in the Organics Program. Rich graduated from Boise State University in 2019 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. Before joining ISDA, he grew up on the prairies of Post Falls, Idaho, where he gained hands-on experience with farming techniques such as changing irrigation pipe and operating combines. He also worked for the Forest Service in Idaho and Montana, focusing on silviculture and wildland fire management. In his free time, Rich enjoys watching college basketball, traveling back to North Idaho, and hiking in the mountains to visit alpine lakes. Based out of the Boise office, he looks forward to collaborating with everyone in the organic industry

Mandy Collins will be entering her third season as Organic Investigator, Sr. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Sonoma State University and an MBA from Boise State University. She brings a diverse background to the role, including many years as a winemaker in California's wine industry, and extensive regulatory experience auditing another USDA program. Outside of work, Mandy enjoys hiking and backpacking. She is based in the Boise office.

Anais Vazquez-Ruiz joined the ISDA Organic Program in October of 2024 and is in the Burley office. Anais grew up in Eastern Washington on a small ranch where she helped on her family's cow-calf operation. She then earned a Bachelor of Science in Animal Sciences in 2024 from Washington State University. During her time at WSU, she gained experience through her summer internship at one of Agri Beef's feed yards and being a part of Cougar Cattle Feeders. Anais enjoys cooking, going on walks, and admiring the scenery around her.

Eleanor DelaRosa joined the ISDA Organics Program in November 2024 and is based in the Idaho Falls office. Previously, she joined ISDA in June 2019 as a Fresh Fruits and Vegetables inspector and has performed Food Safety Audits since 2022. She holds a Veterinary Assistant Certification and has experience with Noxious Weeds in Wyoming. She spends as much time outdoors as possible, making sure her two Border Collies (Hank Williams and Patsy Cline) get to see the world.

Amelia Gronwold started with the Organics program in July 2025 and works from the Twin Falls office. She graduated from Montana State University in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in Sustainable Crop Production. Prior to joining the ISDA, she worked in the sugar beet seed industry, conducting disease trials. Whenever possible, she is out exploring the south hills, training for a triathlon, or hanging out with her wonderful husband and dog.