

## **Background of NOSB Members: July 2021**

### **Class of 2021**

**Amy Bruch** is a farmer and President of Cyclone Farms in East Central Nebraska. According to the Cyclone Farms website, they grow “organic, transition, or conventional crops.” She is also the co-founder of AgriSecure, an organic advisory service provider that describes itself as an “industry partner” to the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and regularly promotes their programs. Both Cyclone Farms and AgriSecure are members of OTA and AgriSecure is on OTA’s Grain, Pulse, and Oilseed Council. Ms. Bruch participated in OTA’s Farmer Advisory Council virtual “fly in” to Washington, DC in February 2021.

OTA provided a letter of support for Ms. Bruch’s appointment to NOSB and included her in “A special shout out to our members who have been appointed by @SecretarySonny to serve on #NOSB” on their official Twitter account. She holds one of the NOSB Organic Producer (farmer) seats.

**Logan Petrey** is the Southeast Ranch Manager for Grimmway Farms. Grimmway is an OTA member managing 50,000 acres of production, and their president was the recipient of OTA’s Farmer of the Year award in 2020. Ms. Petrey was a presenter at an OTA webinar in March 2020. She received a letter of support from OTA for her appointment to NOSB and was also recognized as a member and congratulated on their Twitter account. Additional letters of support came from OTA members Grimmway and Quality Certification Services. She has previously worked with Robinson Fresh and is on the board of the Florida Growers Association (whose Executive Director was on the OTA board for many years and was one of its most prominent spokespeople).

Ms. Petrey holds one of the NOSB Organic Producer seats.

**Carolyn Dimitri** is on the faculty of the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies at New York University. Her research has often been cited by OTA and she has been a speaker at their conference. She also cites their work in her research. She is on the Scientific Board of The Organic Center, the educational and research organization operating under the administrative auspices of OTA, as well as serving on the Organic and Regenerative Agriculture Advisory Council at General Mills and the Executive Board of the Organic Farming Research Foundation (both OTA members).

OTA provided a letter of support for her appointment. Dr. Dimitri holds one of the Consumer/Public Interest seats on NOSB.

**Brian Caldwell** owns and operates Hemlock Grove Farm, a certified organic farm producing tree fruits and nuts in West Danby, New York. He was a founding member of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) and is retired from Cornell University.

Mr. Caldwell holds one of the Consumer/Public Interest seats on NOSB.

**Kyla Smith** is a Certification Director at Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), an OTA member. She was PCO's representative on OTA's Global Organic Supply Chain Integrity Task Force in 2017 and has been an OTA webinar presenter. Ms. Smith has served on the board of the Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA) and received letters of support from numerous OTA members and their representatives (PCO, ACA, California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), Danone, Ecocert, Florida Organic Growers, Heritage Poultry, International Organic Inspectors Association, and MOM's Organic Market). She was also recognized as a member and congratulated on her appointment to the board on OTA's Twitter account.

Ms. Smith holds the USDA Accredited Certifying Agent seat on NOSB.

### **Class of 2020**

**Nathan Powell-Palm** operates a 1,000-acre certified organic farm outside of Belgrade, Montana. Mr. Powell-Palm has a long resume of extensive involvement with the OTA and some of its affiliates.

Mr. Powell-Palm started growing his operation at a young age, and he serves on the board of the Montana Organic Association (MOA), one of just two organic farmer groups that we know of that endorsed an OTA proposal for an industry checkoff (tax) on agricultural producers. Another MOA board member currently sits on OTA's Board of Directors.

Mr. Powell-Palm has spoken at OTA conferences, participated in their Capitol Hill lobby days, and, in 2019, received the organization's coveted "rising star" award. He is also trained as an organic inspector. He sits in an NOSB seat reserved by Congress for an Organic Producer.

**Kimberly Huseman** works for Pilgrim's Pride, a \$12 billion business enterprise and the second-largest conventional poultry producer in the United States. Pilgrim has a growing interest in organic production as well. Ms. Huseman's responsibilities include procurement of feed grain for their livestock. She sits on the NOSB in a slot reserved for a Handler/Processor.

Pilgrim, an OTA member, is part of an industry that has been under scrutiny for depending on a copious amount of imported feed rather than supporting and purchasing from domestic organic farmers.

Therefore, Ms. Huseman's positions on this issue are being closely watched. The NOSB has also failed to resolve a number of scale-related poultry issues.

Another poultry-related issue, a years-long controversy the NOSB has stalled on resolving, that will now be considered by Ms. Huseman, is the continued use of the synthetic amino acid methionine. Many public interest groups have accused major poultry producers and OTA of paying lip service to phasing-out the feed ingredient utilized, in part, to "supercharge" their production and facilitating confinement, factory farm conditions that are considered illegal in organics.

**Gerald D'Amore** works for a major conventional/organic industry produce handler, Munger Farms, which is a member of OTA. He has previously been employed by a number of other major, primarily conventional, agribusinesses. Many of these companies are also OTA members, including Dole, Chiquita, and Driscoll's Strawberry Associates. Driscoll's is certified by the nation's largest USDA-accredited certifier, California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF). CCOF certified early adopters of hydroponic technology, including Archi's Acres in southern California. In light of the laws governing organics and previous NOSB decisions, most public interest groups believe soilless production is illegal. CCOF is among OTA's largest financial supporters.

Mr. D'Amore is listed as a former vice president of Driscoll's, the world's largest berry marketer. With his experience in the company that helped pioneer certified organic hydroponic production, his voice on certified organic hydroponics is being watched carefully. Mr. D'Amore is currently listed in his LinkedIn profile as an independent consultant, although this was not disclosed by USDA. He sits in one of the Handler/Processor seats on the board.

**Mindee Jeffery** is currently working as the Organic Activism and Education Coordinator for OTA member Good Earth Natural Foods. She also manages a joint compost program for Good Earth and Tara Firma Farms. She has been active in the Independent Natural Food Retailers Association (INFRA), also an OTA member.

Ms. Jeffery previously served as chair of the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC) and nominated Karen Archipley as her replacement. Archipley, a small-scale hydroponic-greenhouse grower from San Diego County, served as a spokesperson for an "Astroturf" group formed and financed by Driscoll's, Wholesome Harvest, and other major hydroponic agribusinesses.

Ms. Jeffery sits in an NOSB seat reserved for a Retailer.

**Wood Turner** currently serves as Senior Vice President of Sustainability at an investment firm, Agricultural Capital. Prior to that he worked for Stonyfield Farms, a major OTA member and contributor (with a staff member currently sitting on the OTA board), now owned by the French dairy giant, Lactalis. According to press accounts and industry insiders, OTA, with Stonyfield's leadership, brokered a provision in federal law, commonly known as *The Dark Act*, that established a weak labeling law concerning disclosure of genetically engineered ingredients, stripping states (like Vermont)—with preemption language—of the right to adopt more stringent state food labeling disclosure laws. Groups have pointed out that the “compromise” legislation has led to deceptive GMO [genetically modified organisms] labeling of food that sends consumers to company websites, which are misleading and fraudulent in extolling the benefits and safety of GMOs. The legislation also provides for the use of a warm and fuzzy logo.

With a background in urban and environmental planning, Mr. Turner serves on the Board in an Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation seat.

### **Class of 2017-18**

**Asa Bradman** is an environmental health scientist and Professor of Public Health Sciences at the University of California, Merced. He also co-founded and helps lead the Center for Environmental Research and Children's Health (CERCH) at UC Berkley.

Dr. Bradman has participated on the board of The Organic Center, the educational and research organization operating under the administrative auspices of OTA, since 2014 and was a charter member of their Science Advisory Board. He has been a presenter for OTA in webinars and at conferences, and his research has been cited in their publications. He holds one of the Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation seats on the board.

**Sue Baird** is the owner/CEO of SueBaird Organics, a consulting service for organic producers and processors, and the owner/manager of Instant Nutrition Foods. She is a former Executive Director of the Missouri Organic Association (dba Mid-America Organic Association) and currently acting as a consultant to the industry.

Ms. Baird's membership in OTA is featured, along with their logo, on her website and OTA is listed on the resource page. She also highlights her memberships in Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA), both members of OTA. Ms. Baird was previously employed by IOIA as an organic inspector and worked for OTA member Quality Assurance International (QAI) as an organic certification manager. As marketing manager and governmental liaison for Mystic Foods, she provided technical production oversight to aquaponic greenhouse

operation and implemented organic certification for the company. Ms. Baird holds one of the Consumer/Public Interest seats on the board.

**Steve Ela** is a partner/manager of Silver Spruce Partners (dba Ela Family Farms), a certified organic farm and fruit orchard in Hotchkiss, CO. The operation is also certified for processing and handling organic applesauce, dried fruit, and other fruit products.

Mr. Ela formerly served as a consultant to OTA member Gerber Products and was a board member and chairperson of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, also a member of OTA. He is currently on the advisory board of the Real Organic Project and his farm is featured in their Know Your Farmer video series. Mr. Ela holds one of the Organic Producer seats on the board.

**James R. "Rick" Greenwood** is an Adjunct Professor in the Fielding School of Public Health at UCLA and a participating faculty member in the Institute of Environment and Sustainability. He is also an organic avocado grower in San Diego County. His avocado farm is certified by California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), an OTA member.

Dr. Greenwood holds one of the Environmental Protection and Resource Conservation seats on the board.

Due to a resignation the seat reserved for a Scientist is currently vacant.