



Washington State Department of Agriculture
News Release

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WSDA's McEvoy to head USDA's National Organic Program

OLYMPIA – The founding manager of the state's Organic Food Program is heading to Washington, D.C. to take on yet another national leadership role. Miles McEvoy has been named director of the National Organic Program after more than 20 years of service at the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

McEvoy is recognized in international circles as a leader in the organic food movement. He has presented at numerous international conferences and serves as president of the National Association of State Organic Programs. Beginning Oct. 1, he will lead the federal program that develops the rules for organic agriculture enforced by certification agencies around the country, including WSDA.

“Miles played a formative role in developing the organic food industry in Washington and across the nation. Every organic certification agency and the entire industry will continue to benefit from his expertise,” said WSDA Director Dan Newhouse. “WSDA is committed to maintaining the track record of excellence in the Organic Food Program that Miles established during his tenure with us.”

McEvoy joined WSDA in 1988 as the first employee of WSDA's Organic Food Program. Under his leadership, the program has grown steadily to the current 23 employees. State law requires that program activities and staffing are funded exclusively through fees paid by those who apply for organic certification.

The organic industry continues to thrive in Washington state. WSDA certifies more than 1,200 organic growers, processors, handlers and retailers. Growers are farming 120,000 acres of organic apples, hay, vegetables and numerous other crops. Total value of WSDA-certified organic products exceeded \$700 million in 2008, up from \$2.5 million 20 years ago.

WSDA is currently conducting a nationwide search to fill the position vacated by McEvoy. Les Eklund, the program's assistant manager, will lead the team on an interim basis.

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