

Peter Ruddock

CCOF has raised a concern that resonates very strongly with me. Your strategic plan does not mention Organic anywhere in the Strategic Plan, though it is a strong sustainable pest management strategy and one that is commonly used by ecological farmers. Your plan should mention it, as in its absence it raises the concern that Organic farmers will be forced to re-certify under some new state SPM program, despite having an existing certification that is arguably stronger - at their own cost. As an advocate for small food and farm businesses, I am very concerned about the cost of doing business for my constituents, many of whom operate on a very thin margin. Paying twice for certifications which are redundant would be an unacceptable burden on these businesses. Please clarify how SPM will interact with Organic, and potentially other certifications, and make sure that a minimal burden, financial and otherwise, is placed on these businesses, so that we can keep them operating.