



## Advancing the ethical development and stewardship of seed

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June 1, 2016

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Nell Newman Foundation

Attn: Maija West

P.O. Box 3263

Santa Cruz, CA 95063

Re: OSA's 18-month report

Dear Nell Newman Foundation:

Thanks to your generosity, Organic Seed Alliance (OSA) continues to lead research, education, and advocacy efforts focused on building seed systems that are responsive to the diverse and regional needs of organic farmers. This letter serves as our 18-month impact report for the grant we received in November 2014. In the coming days you'll also receive our 2015 annual report, which summarizes some of our most recent accomplishments.

**The Nell Newman Foundation's support is critical to our operations and capacity building, allowing us to educate more farmers, conduct more organic plant breeding and other seed research, and influence more seed policy than ever before.**

Your support helped us achieve the following over the last 18 months:

### **We are building our infrastructure and networks by region**

We broke ground at a new research farm in Chimacum, WA, which now serves as a central hub for our Pacific Northwest research and education projects. In 2015, we went through the organic certification process for this land. We also hosted the first-ever California Seed Summit that convened organic seed companies, growers, and other stakeholders to create a plan for developing regional organic seed hubs throughout the state. We now have three California-based staff actively engaged in executing this plan. Our research and education is quickly expanding in other regions as well, including the Southeast and Intermountain West.

### **We are reaching more organic seed stakeholders across the US**

Our staff spoke at 44 events across the country in 2015, collectively reaching more than 2,400 participants. We continue to grow our online community as well, with more than 12,000 individuals now receiving our newsletter and action alerts, and more than

330,000 people following us on Facebook. In 2015, our work was covered or mentioned in more than 90 articles representing major news outlets and agricultural publications and newsletters.

### **We are advocating for stronger actions and policies to support organic seed systems**

In 2015, OSA wrote recommendations in response to a number of policy proposals, including new regulations to govern genetically engineered (GE) crops and organic policy related to seed purity and excluded methods. As part of our work with the National Organic Coalition, our staff traveled to Washington, DC, to strategize ongoing organic policy priorities, including the need to increase organic research investments to expand the availability of public plant varieties that are adapted to organic farms and regional climates.

### **Our programs are widely recognized for their collaborative and innovative approach**

While our work has historically focused on the Pacific Northwest, we are quickly building partnerships and staff capacity in other parts of the country in response to the national demand for our services, including formal research partnerships with 10 universities across seven states. This expansion, guided by our strategic plan (2013 – 2023), requires increased investments in our operations to ensure we are growing effectively and efficiently. Expanding our services into new regions is resulting in stronger local seed systems that support a national supply of organic seed. This requires helping seed growers and other stakeholders connect with each other both in the field and online, and elevating the voices of organic seed policy advocates.

That's why the support of the Nell Newman Foundation is so important. Your general operating support was primarily directed to this expansion by enabling our staff to build collaborative research proposals and deliver educational services in new regions, including the Northeast, Southeast, and Intermountain West. Your support also provided capacity for our advocacy team to respond to timely organic seed policy issues. Finally, your support allowed our organization to continue to improve our operations, including investing in board and staff development, and building online tools to support our organization's fundraising efforts.

We are so grateful for your partnership. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Micaela Colley  
Executive Director

“No other organization's efforts match the work of Organic Seed Alliance. Their research, advocacy, education, and support have had consistent, positive impacts on my organic seed farm.”

**Beth Rasgorshek**  
Canyon Bounty Farm  
Nampa, Idaho

