

## OTA List Serve Rules and Etiquette

A list serve is an e-mailing list program for communicating with other people who have subscribed to the same list. List serves enable a group of people to communicate effectively with one another without requiring each person to maintain a mailing list of all the other participants. List serves can archive postings in a searchable online database, and send indexed digests to participants instead of individual messages, in addition to the other capabilities described below in "List Serve Options."

### List Serve Rules

By joining and using OTA's e-mail list serves, you agree that you have read and will follow the rules and guidelines set for these discussion groups. You also agree to reserve list discussions for topics best suited to the medium. Other questions should be sent to the appropriate OTA staff person or e-mailed to [info@ota.com](mailto:info@ota.com).

As with any community, there are guidelines governing behavior on the list serves. For instance, violating antitrust regulations, libeling others, selling, and marketing are not permissible. Please take a moment to acquaint yourself with these important guidelines. If you have questions, contact the list manager noted in your welcome instructions. OTA reserves the right to suspend or terminate membership on all lists for members who violate these rules.

OTA staff liaisons actively monitor OTA list serves and undertake editorial control of postings as necessary to maintain the community rules and etiquette. Inappropriate posts will be handled offline by OTA and may result in participants being moved to moderation. Posts from moderated participants will go to the staff liaison for review before they are distributed to the list serve. Messages that do not meet OTA's List Serve Rules will be rejected. If a moderated participant has three posts rejected because they cannot abide by OTA's List Serve Rules, their privilege to participate in any or all of OTA's list serves will be revoked.

- Do not challenge or attack others. The discussions on the lists are meant to stimulate conversation not to create contention.
- Do not post commercial messages.
- Use caution when discussing products. Information posted on the lists is available for all to see, and comments are subject to libel, slander, and antitrust laws.
- All defamatory, abusive, profane, threatening, offensive, or illegal materials are strictly prohibited.
- Please note carefully all items listed in "List Serve Disclaimer and Legal Rules."
- Remember that OTA and other list serve participants have the right to reproduce postings to the list serves.

### List Serve Etiquette

- Include a signature tag on all messages. Include your name, affiliation, location, and e-mail address.
- State concisely and clearly the specific topic of the comments in the subject line. This allows members to respond more appropriately to your posting and makes it easier for members to search the archives by subject.
- Include only the relevant portions of the original message in your reply, delete any header information, and put your response before the original posting.
- Only send a message to the entire list when it contains information that *everyone* can benefit from.
- Send messages such as "thanks for the information" to individuals--not to the entire list. Do this by using your e-mail application's forwarding option (e.g. "Reply" vs. "Reply All") and typing in or cutting and pasting in the e-mail address of the individual to whom you want to respond.

- Do not send administrative messages, such as “remove me from the list”, through the list serve. Instead, use the web interface to change your settings or reply directly to the “unsubscribe” email address provided at the end of each message. If you are changing e-mail addresses, you *do not* need to remove yourself from the list and rejoin under your new e-mail address. Simply change your settings.
- When you post to any of OTA’s Member Forum List Serves, you are inviting people to email you privately in response. However, any response to a list serve posting should be made in a rational, logical and mature manner, whether it is made publicly or privately. If you are harassed, insulted, or otherwise contacted inappropriately off list please forward the message to the OTA staff liaison, so that OTA is aware of the transgression; and consider using your personal e-mail software to block the person from e-mailing you again.

## List Serve Options

OTA’s list serves offer the following options:

- Receive messages as they are contributed
- Receive messages as a digest (choose MIME for better readability)- one daily message with all the contributions for that day
- Receive messages as an index- one daily message with only the subject lines for that day
- Receive no messages via email- login to the web interface to view messages

Once you subscribe to an OTA list serve, you will receive a welcome message with information on accessing that list serves web interface. If you follow the link provided (or e-mail the OTA list administrator at [membership@ota.com](mailto:membership@ota.com) for the appropriate link), the following capabilities are available:

- Read messages
  - Search
  - Thread by Subject
  - Sort by author
  - Sort by Date
- Create messages
- Change Settings
  - Choose to see your own messages when they are distributed
  - Choose to receive a confirmation message after each of your contributions
  - Unsubscribe

Please note that if you are subscribed to more than one OTA list serve, you will have to make changes through each list’s web interface.

## Disclaimer and Legal Rules

OTA’s Member Forum List Serves are provided to members as a service of the Organic Trade Association. OTA accepts no responsibility for the opinions and information posted on these sites by others. OTA disclaims all warranties with regard to information posted on this site, whether posted by OTA or any third party; this disclaimer includes all implied warranties of merchantability and fitness. In no event shall OTA be liable for any special, indirect, or consequential damages or any damages whatsoever resulting from loss of use, data, or profits, arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of any information posted on this site.



Do not post any defamatory, abusive, profane, threatening, offensive, or illegal materials. Do not post any information or other material protected by copyright without the permission of the copyright owner. By posting material, the posting party warrants and represents that he or she owns the copyright with respect to such material or has received permission from the copyright owner. In addition, the posting party grants OTA and users of these lists the nonexclusive right and license to display, copy, publish, distribute, transmit, print, and use such information or other material.

Messages should not be posted if they encourage or facilitate members to arrive at any agreement that either expressly or impliedly leads to price fixing, a boycott of another's business, or other conduct intended to illegally restrict free trade. Messages that encourage or facilitate an agreement about the following subjects are inappropriate: prices, discounts, or terms or conditions of sale; salaries; profits, profit margins, or cost data; market shares, sales territories, or markets; allocation of customers or territories; or selection, rejection, or termination of customers or suppliers.

OTA reserves the right to terminate access to any user at any time.

These rules may be modified at any time by OTA.