

Peggy Sutton, To Your Health Sprouted Flour Company

When did this individual get involved with the organic industry and in what capacity?

Before building one of the industry's latest organic trends, Peggy Sutton was a pioneer, innovator, and health-conscious, family-focused home cook. It all started in Peggy's kitchen in 2005. Peggy was experimenting for a few friends and family members after she researched the benefits of sprouted grains. Sprouting is the time-honored tradition of how our ancestors would harvest grains that had naturally sprouted in the fields. Whenever she began to explain the benefits of sprouting to family and friends, the response was always, "Can't you just do it for me?" And so she did! And that's how To Your Health began. To Your Health Sprouted Flour is an organic, sprouted flour company located in Bullock County, Alabama.

Peggy wanted to make sprouted baked goods available to several markets and retail outlets, so her husband, Jeff, built a commercial kitchen in his barn in 2006. The business then obtained state licensing as a food processor, hired two part-time employees and was on the grow. In February 2008 the business transitioned to offer only sprouted organic grains and flours. Today, TYH employs 30 people, 28 of whom reside in Bullock County one of the most economically deprived counties in the state. TYH plays a vital role in the local economy. After so much market interest Peggy has expanded their facilities 3 times. With the latest expansion TYH added about 20 new jobs with the build completion last July.

How has this individual demonstrated personal commitment and vision as an emerging leader in the organic industry?

Peggy has demonstrated personal commitment and vision as an emerging leader in the organic industry in four ways: product innovation, Community education and economic impact, and commitment to growing organic acres.

Product Innovation. There are few people in this country and around the world who know more about sprouting organic flours and grains than Peggy Sutton. She is the industry expert. Peggy resurrected this ancient method in her kitchen and has not looked back. Once considered hyper-niche, Peggy's sprouted flours and grains are the key ingredient for mainstream players like Kellogg. The TYH brand is sold all over the world. A personal interest and desire for organic clean eating has led Peggy and TYH to start an industry trend that is not slowing down.

Community education. Peggy's great grandfather settled their farm down the road from the current TYH location in 1898. The Griswold family (Peggy's maiden name) has a long history of farming in the area and was raised with sense of duty and dedication to community and family. Peggy is sponsoring an education project with the Montessori school in Montgomery. She is helping students cultivate 2 plots of organic black beans, garbanzo beans, blue corn, green peas, and amaranth. The students will use the full school year to learn the complete sprouting process from sprout to mill. Next, 2016 is the year of the maker in Alabama. As such, TYH is participating at multiple makers fairs throughout the state educating the public on organic and sprouting.

Economic impact. As mentioned before TYH started as a hobby project in Peggy's kitchen. Now the company has expanded facilities three times in the last 8 years creating nearly 50 jobs in one of Alabama's poorest counties. In fact, the governor of Alabama stated that 1 job in Bullock county is equal to 27 jobs in other areas of the state.

Commitment to growing organic acres. Peggy is actively involved in the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network. Under her leadership, TYH has made a commitment to source grains from Alabama farmers. As such, Peggy has taken on the hard work of helping long-time conventional farmers transition, creating a market for their organic grains and compressing costs of businesses by helping farmers sell directly to a committed and well established customer thereby eliminating some of the anxiety transition brings. These are just a few ways Peggy has demonstrated her leadership in the organic industry.

Has this person been an OTA member and/or made positive contributions to OTA?

Peggy, and TYH has been a longstanding member of OTA. TYH has participated in multiple export activities in Europe and Asia. Peggy serves as a sprouted question expert whenever I, a buyer or other international contact has a question about not only the product, but the process and benefits of sprouted ingredients. Peggy continually offers product for OTA use at international events and is on the ready to support OTA's transition work. TYH participates regularly in export activities and provides expertise and leadership for other OTA members on sprouted questions.

In what capacity do you know the nominee?

To Your Health Sprouted Flour is very active in the export market. Peggy's sprouted flour products were some of the first of its kind at Biofach and received immediate attention from the health-conscious buyers in Germany, and all around Europe. I've work with she, her husband Jeff, and other members of the TYH team. Despite their rapid success, they run their business with patience, integrity, and care. Their employees are delighted to contribute and view Peggy as a mentor as well as a leader.

Other comments you wish to add about why this individual should receive the OTA Organic Leadership Award.

I wholeheartedly support this nomination. Peggy Sutton is a Rising Star, she is an organic leader, and she deserves to be recognized by her industry, trade association, and peers. Peggy represents what's best about the organic industry. She wanted something better for her friends and family, couldn't find it so created it. Peggy wanted to share the benefits with a broader community and expand. She saw opportunity to impact her state with job opportunities and education projects and continues to do both. She serves as an expert and a mentor. Peggy enables her staff to be leaders, learn from the ground up, take pride in themselves and their work; opportunities not always available in Bullock county without Peggy's dedication. Her sprouted products have made their way from the home kitchen, to the barn, to a Kashi box (with her picture on it) shelved at every major retailer in the country. Peggy truly is an organic rising star.

Do you plan to submit endorsement letters for this nomination? YES

Submitted by

Monique Marez, Organic Trade Association

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



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STATE OF ALABAMA

March 17, 2017

Ms. Allison Stewart
To Your Health Sprouted Flour Company
1138 Highway 82
Fitzpatrick, Alabama 36029

Dear Ms. Stewart:

I am writing this letter as a recommendation for the nomination of To Your Health Sprouted Flour Company's Peggy Sutton, for the Organic Trade Association's Rising Star Award.

I had the pleasure to present Ms. Sutton an award at our 2015 Alabama Launchpad Entrepreneurial Luncheon, when I first learned about To Your Health Sprouted Flour. She, and her company, have an amazing story. Founded at her kitchen table in Bullock County, her company grew and is now located in a modern facility not far from her home. I am proud that she and her husband chose to keep their business in this rural Alabama county.

To Your Health recently completed an expansion which created more jobs. The State of Alabama supported this expansion through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). Startup small businesses in our rural counties contribute in so many ways, and To Your Health is no exception.

Peggy Sutton is a rising star in Alabama. I urge the Organic Trade Association to give her consideration for their Rising Star award. She is most deserving of this recognition.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Bentley".

Robert Bentley
Governor

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

JIM BYARD, JR.
DIRECTOR

STATE OF ALABAMA

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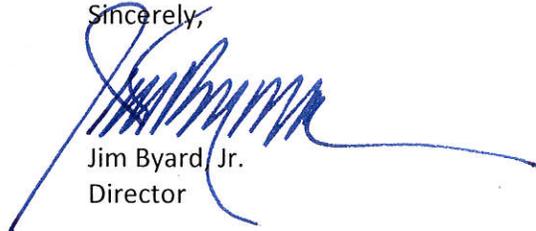
I first met Ms. Sutton at an Alabama Launchpad entrepreneurial awards luncheon in 2015. That meeting led to a tour of her facility and a first-hand account of her journey toward owning an organic health company. Ms. Sutton founded her company at her family's kitchen table in rural Bullock County, Alabama. Over several years, her company outgrew her kitchen and her barn, and is now located in a modern facility located not far from her home. One of the most impressive aspects of her journey is that having the opportunity to take her business virtually anywhere in Alabama, she and her husband made a conscious effort to keep the business located in their home county, thereby employing hometown folks.

To Your Health recently completed an expansion which created more jobs, allowing the growing company to continue to meet its demand. I am pleased that the State of Alabama, through the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) assisted the company with its expansion. Local startup businesses in our rural counties contribute in so many ways, and the Sutton's are no exception—they, and their company, are making a real difference, as well as a tremendous impact, in their county.

I urge the Organic Trade Association to give utmost consideration to Peggy Sutton for their Rising Star award. She truly is a "rising star" and is most deserving of this recognition.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Jim Byard, Jr.
Director

JB:pbg



David Uzzell
Kashi Marketing
Solana Beach, CA 92075
March 6, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation to support the nomination of Peggy Sutton (or as we at Kashi call her, Ms. Peggy) for the OTA Rising Star award. I believe she is a wonderful ambassador for the organic food movement and believe she is doing a great work that is truly making a difference in our food system. There is no doubt in my mind that the health of people and our planet are better because of Ms. Peggy.

I first met Ms. Peggy when Kashi decided to launch a cereal using 100% Sprouted Grains. Come to find, our supplier of these Sprouted Grains was Sprouted Flour Co. As a marketer, I was learning about sprouted grains and was looking for a “hook” to tell the story of this product to our consumers. In my research of the Sprouted Flour Co, I stumbled upon Ms. Peggy’s story of how she was inspired by her ancestors and how she was committed to evangelizing the benefits of organic sprouted grains to people. What an honorable mission she is on so I just had to tell our consumers about it. That is why you can find her on the back of our [cereal box](#) now and you can find a [video](#) with her (and me) in it.

Ms. Peggy has been instrumental in educating thousands of people (including us at Kashi) about the benefits of organic sprouted grains for both people and the planet. I’ve witnessed firsthand her and her husband Jeff’s commitment to organics and sprouting with laser focus with only producing 100% organic sprouted products. She is not only a leader in spreading the word of organic sprouted grains, but she is also a leader in her home town of Bullock County, Alabama. She intentionally keeps her operations local, hires workers and is committed to supporting her community.

Throughout our interactions (videos, photoshoots, phone calls, shows, etc) – we have not only become business partners, but I definitely consider Ms. Peggy a friend and a part of the Kashi family. She is a pioneer in our industry and I believe she is the definition of a “rising star”. What a visionary to look to her familial past as inspiration and translate the good parts of her past and to bring that forward for thousands of people today. Just a few years ago, she started out sprouting on a small scale in her kitchen to a recent expansion to be one of the largest sprouting facilities in the world. It is my honor to be a part of her story and I’m thankful she is a part of Kashi’s as well.

I would be more than willing for any follow up questions or comments.

Regards,

David Uzzell (on behalf of the entire Kashi family)