

ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION

Retailer Council

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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Organic
trade association

The Organic Trade Association (OTA)'s Retailer Council's aim is to give OTA retail members an organized and ongoing forum for discussing organic-specific retail issues, challenges, and opportunities. We seek to work together to grow the organic industry and to utilize the Organic Trade Association member community for networking and problem-solving.

ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION FORMS COUNCIL FOR RETAILERS

Establishment of the Retailer Council

On September 12, 2018, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) Board of Directors approved the establishment of an OTA Retailer Council, based upon the OTA Sector Council Operating Guidelines. The application for the new Council was first reviewed by the Board of Directors' Community Relations Committee, which gave its support. Board member Mark Squire, President of Good Earth Natural Foods, submitted the request.

Elections Held for Council Leadership

In accordance with OTA's Sector Council Operating Guidelines, the Retail Council formally nominated and approved the election of its Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary during its recent meeting in August 2019. In a unanimous vote, they approved Mark Squire (Good Earth Natural Foods) as the Chair, Ann Marie Hourigan (Whole Foods Market) as the Vice Chair, and Patrick Sheridan (Independent Natural Food Retailers Association) as the Secretary.



Mark Squire, Chair
Good Earth Natural Foods



Ann Marie Hourigan, Vice Chair
Whole Foods Market



Patrick Sheridan, Secretary
Independent Natural Food Retailers Association (INFRA)

Council Defines Its Aim

In a meeting with a majority of its member companies, the Retailer Council formally defined and adopted its aim as a Council. Based upon the original application by Chair Mark Squire, they unanimously voted that the goal of the Council is to create a forum for the issues, opportunities, and challenges for retailers in order to help grow the organic industry.

MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT

Council Hosts Membership Interest Meetings

The Council hosted two informal meetings, at Natural Products Expo East in September 2018 and Natural Products Expo West in March 2019, to engage and recruit retailers to join the Council and the Organic Trade Association. The meetings included discussion about council operating guidelines and the Good Organic Retail Practices (GORP). As a result of these meetings, the Council helped in the

Council Members



INFRA



recruitment of three new members to the Organic Trade Association and the Council: Down to Earth, Pilgrim's Market, and Independent Natural Food Retailers Association (INFRA).

First Meeting of the Council

During the summer of 2019, the Council held its first formal meeting, with 7 member organizations in attendance. During the meeting, the Council formalized its aim as a Council, began discussions on developing its work plan, identified interest in meeting opportunities during the fall, and hosted elections for its leadership. The Council intends to formally adopt a work plan and begin work on updating the GORP in the remainder of 2019 and during 2020, as well as encourage further outreach and growth of retail members from within the Association and outside of it.

The Council will meet during Natural Products Expo East in the Hilton for an hour-long meeting to further discuss its strategy for review and updating the Good Organic Retail Practices.

ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION SECTOR COUNCILS

Our Councils provide ongoing opportunities for networking, leadership development, and education. They communicate sector issues, ideas, and concerns to OTA staff and its Board of Directors.

Submit a Sector Council application online at [OTA.com](https://ota.com) after you've met these requirements:

- Identify at least seven OTA members committed to participating in the Council.
- Identify at least one member who will act as the primary contact until officers are elected.
- Review the Sector Council Operating Guidelines and agree to operate within the requirements required by OTA for councils it approves.



LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020

As the Council approaches the latter portion of 2019 and 2020, the Council members are excited to dig into the Good for Organic Retail Practices and begin the first steps on revising the document with the assistance and support of OTA's Vice President of Regulatory and Technical Affairs, Gwendolyn Wyard.

Future meetings of the Council will include discussing and strategizing opportunities for membership growth, helping to collaborate with the membership department to grow OTA's retailer representation.

As the newest OTA sector council, retailer members are excited to develop and implement a work plan to meet the needs of fellow retailers.



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Locations

Washington, D.C. | Brattleboro, VT
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The Organic Trade Association's Retailer Council is chaired by Mark Squire of Good Earth Natural Foods. Ann Marie Hourigan of Whole Foods Market serves as Vice Chair, and Patrick Sheridan of Independent Natural Food Retailers Association (INFRA) serves as Secretary. Angela Jagiello, OTA's Director of Education and Insights, supports the Council as its staff liaison.