

PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

Women Leading the Organic Way

Thursday 10/8, 3:30pm (15:30)

Boardwalk Landing

Anne Alonzo | Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA



As Administrator of AMS, Anne Alonzo leads a USDA agency that facilitates the competitive and efficient marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops. From grading to gathering market information to local food, AMS offers services that support growth and economic development across the industry domestically and internationally. AMS also oversees the National Organics Program which develops and enforces standards for the USDA organic seal.

Trained as an attorney, Alonzo earned her MBA and JD from the University of Chicago and the Illinois Institute of Technology, Kent College of Law. Alonzo is a global leader that brings a diverse background in the public, commercial and not for profit sectors to her appointed position. Anne served as Vice President, Global Public Policy, Corporate Affairs, at one of the nation's largest food companies leading all global corporate affairs work in sustainability, tariffs, tax and trade, and health & wellness. She also held several senior positions in the public sector including serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Trade Administration, with the U.S. Department of Commerce and as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S.EPA) first Environmental Attaché to a U.S. Embassy--Mexico City. Alonzo began her career as environmental counsel with the U.S. EPA, Chicago. Alonzo was the first woman to Chair the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), an agriculturally based, non-profit organization promoting a sustainable cocoa economy by supporting cocoa farmers and representing more than 85 percent of the global chocolate industry.

Laura Batcha | CEO & Executive Director, Organic Trade Association

Laura Batcha is CEO and Executive Director of the Organic Trade Association, an umbrella organization uniting and representing more than 8,500 organic businesses across the \$39 billion sector, including farmers, ranchers, dairy farmers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers, certifiers and regional farming organizations. Only the fourth director in the 30-year history of the trade association, she brings 20 years of direct experience as a certified organic producer and handler, and more than 10 years of hands-on experience in the private sector of the organic industry. Batcha began her career in organic growing organic medicinal plants in Vermont, founding the Green Mountain Herbs company in 1991. The company would eventually grow to become one of the largest certified organic producers of medicinal herbs and herbal extracts on the east coast. Batcha is a nationally and internationally recognized spokesperson and authority on the organic industry, organic agriculture and organic policy. Batcha has been appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to serve as a representative of the organic industry on two separate federal advisory committees: the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC), and USDA's Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture (AC21). She also serves on the Board of Trustees for The Organic Center, an independent non-profit research and education organization. Laura splits her time between coasts, working from both California and OTA's Washington, D.C., headquarters.



Melissa Hughes | *General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs for CROPP Cooperative (Organic Valley); President of the Board, Organic Trade Association*



Melissa Hughes has been with CROPP Cooperative in her current role since 2003, managing all of the Cooperative’s legal affairs and overseeing relationships with various governmental groups, including legislators, agencies and other regulatory entities. “It might seem from my cooperative legal duties that I’m here for more professional reasons—and up to a point, I am,” says Melissa, “but my passion for organic food and people is really my compass, and what better fit for me than serving a co-op of revolutionary-minded farmers creating a better future? It’s about perfect for me.” Melissa currently serves on the USDA’s Advisory Committee on Biotechnology & 21st Century Agriculture (appointed by USDA Secretary Vilsack) and as President of the Organic Trade Association Board. Melissa also serves on several not-for-profit boards, including the Environmental Working Group and the Non GMO-Project. With her husband and three children, Melissa lives in Viroqua, Wisconsin—located in the heart of the spectacular Driftless Region—where she enjoys many outdoor activities with her family and trains as a marathon runner. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Georgetown University (1990) and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Wyoming (1997).

Ariane Lotti | *Farmer & Agricultural Entrepreneur, Tenuta San Carlo*

Ariane Lotti is a farmer and entrepreneur, and manages a farm in Central Italy that produces grain crops, has agritourism activities, and includes land and forests managed for conservation goals. She is starting the transition to organic production. Before moving to Italy, she worked for over five years in Washington, D.C., on U.S. federal sustainable food and agriculture policy, with a particular focus on organic agriculture, food safety regulations, and the farm bill. She is a published author, and has worked and conducted research on organic and conventional farms in the U.S. and Europe. She holds a Bachelors of Arts and a Masters of Environmental Management from Yale University.



Liz Neumark | *Founder, Great Performances, Katchkie Farm, and the Sylvia Center*



Liz Neumark is CEO and founder of Great Performances, New York City’s leading catering and foodservice company. Great Performances is driven by the desire to put seasonal and flavorful food on the plates of all New Yorkers and is the first to own and operate an organic farm, Katchkie Farm in Kinderhook, NY. Serving many of the top organizations in the tri-state area, GP is the exclusive caterer for prestigious institutions including the Apollo Theater, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Jazz at Lincoln Center and The Plaza Hotel. GP operates two food trucks and eleven restaurants and cafes throughout the city, including Dizzy’s Club Coca-Cola, Mae Mae Café and BAMcafé. Liz’s passion for food advocacy is demonstrated by her involvement with organizations such as Just Food, GrowNYC, New York State Council on Food Policy, West Side Campaign Against Hunger, City Harvest and the Food and Finance High School. In 2006 she founded The Sylvia Center, a garden-to-table culinary program that teaches children how to cook and eat well. In her

spare time, Liz can be found exploring farm stands and food shops, blogging on The Huffington Post and spending time with her husband and three grown children. Liz is the author of *Sylvia’s Table*, a cookbook inspired by family and the seasons.

Organic AgTech: Exploring the Intersection of Organic Agriculture and Technology
Wednesday 10/7, 4:00pm (16:00)
USA Pavilion, Rooftop Terrace

Nate Storey | CEO & Inventor, Bright Agrotech

Nate Storey is the CEO at Bright Agrotech, a company that leads the industry in vertical and high density farming equipment. Nate helps Bright Agrotech support hundreds of farmers on the ground and grow small farms across the world. With roots in traditional agriculture, Nate has seen the urban and high density urban agriculture grow from a seed to a seedling, and he's excited to see it mature. He completed his PhD at the University of Wyoming in Agronomy, and lives in Laramie with his wife and children.



Julie Versman | Marrone Bio Innovations



Julie Versman's career has encompassed management, business development and marketing responsibilities across many areas of the food industry - from consumer packaged foods, to sustainable agricultural production of food and ornamental crops. For the past 15 years she has focused on the commercialization of natural pest management tools - including pheromones, plant extracts and microbial products - with the goal of providing effective, safe and environmentally responsible solutions to both organic and conventional producers of the world's food supply. Through her work with Marrone Bio Innovations, she is affiliated with the Organic Farming Research Foundation, The Biopesticide Industry Alliance, the International Biocontrol Manufacturers' Association and the Organic Trade Association. Ms. Versman has a B.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Oregon, and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of Texas. She is currently the Director of Global Business Development for Marrone Bio Innovations in Davis, California.

