Organic food industry trade group chief steps down

Katherine DiMatteo to return to organic industry consulting firm

The Sustainable Food Trade Association (http://www.sustainablefoodtrade.org/) (SFTA) said Wednesday its executive director, Katherine DiMatteo, will be stepping down to return to her consultancy business.
SFTA was formed in 2008 in Portland, Ore., by 18 of America’s top organic food companies – UNFI, retailer PCC Natural Markets, Organic Valley, Nature’s Path, Annie’s Inc., Amy’s Kitchen, SunOpta, and Organically Grown Company, among others – in an effort to transition the organic food industry into a sustainable food system.

DiMatteo’s vast experience in the organic industry includes 16 years at the helm of the Organic Trade Association (OTA) until 2006, then as president of the board of directors (https://sustainablefoodnews.com/ifoam-picks-former-ota-chief-dimatteo-for-top-position/) of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the worldwide umbrella organization for the organic movement, from 2008 to 2011. She also helped create the USDA’s National Organic Program (NOP) standards and the United Nation’s Codex Guidelines for Organic.

DiMatteo joined SFTA in November 2013, when she was managing partner and senior associate of organic industry consulting group, Wolf, DiMatteo + Associates (https://www.organicspecialists.com/), based in New Castle, Va., where, a few months later, SFTA moved its headquarters.

DiMatteo had joined the consulting firm, founded by Bill Wolf, also a past president of the OTA, as well as founding president of the Organic Materials Research Institute (OMRI), as a partner in 2007 (https://sustainablefoodnews.com/organic-industry-leaders-bill-wolf-and-katherine-dimatteo-form-partnership/), leading policy, regulatory, and international services. The firm assists customers with product and market development, understanding domestic and global organic regulations, developing organic production systems and sourcing ingredients.

SFTA said it has formed a search committee to replace DiMatteo by July.

“It has truly been inspiring to see the actions taken by the SFTA members to consistently improve their positive impact on their communities and the environment,” DiMatteo said in a statement. “I am grateful for the opportunity to have led the association for the past four years. SFTA is positioned to continue to deliver robust programs and services to those businesses seeking to build sustainability in their mission and operations.”

In related news, SFTA’s board has reelected Jonathan Reinbold, Organic Valley’s head of sustainability, as SFTA board president at its recent annual member meeting.

“Katherine’s leadership has brought stability to SFTA in the way of the Climate Collaborative, our joint project with OSC2, and our relationship with B Lab to simplify member sustainability reporting,” said Reinbold.

Other SFTA board officer appointments include: Renaud des Rosiers, sustainability manager at Amy’s Kitchen as SFTA vice president of the board; newly elected board member Carla Davis, marketing manager of Sweet Additions as board treasurer; and Peter Golbitz of Agromeris, LLC as secretary. Board member Manuel Gorrin of Nature’s Path Foods rounds out SFTA’s executive team.
The other two members of the seven-member board include Nova Sayers, senior business development manager at NSF International, and Kate Campbell, director of operations and sustainability at Coconut Bliss.


SFTA members seek to work toward improvement in 11 action areas including organics, climate change, energy, distribution, labor, packaging, water, waste, animal care, education, and governance/employee relations.

The 2018 report also shows that 61 percent of reporting members generate at least 90 percent of their sales from certified-organic products, and 22 percent generate all their sales from certified-organic products.


Highlights of the 2018 progress report include:

- 5th year in a row that reporting companies have increased the percentage of waste diverted from landfills with 84 percent of waste reported being diverted from landfills – 44 percent via recycling and 21 percent by composting
- 82 percent of the total electricity used by members is from renewable sources, and 58 percent of them generate at least some portion of their renewable energy on-site via the use of solar arrays or other means
- 58 percent of reporting members offer an alternative transportation program, which financially or otherwise rewards staff for using methods of commuting to work that reduce fossil-fuel emissions (i.e. car-pooling, biking, walking, electric cars, etc.) as an employee benefit

The 2018 report contains an aggregate of data provided by SFTA members including: Amy’s Kitchen; Andean Naturals; Annie’s Homegrown, Inc.; Ashland Food Co-op; Bay Baby Produce; Bridge’s Organic Produce; Ciranda; Clif Bar; Coconut Bliss; Community Food Co-op; DanoneWave; Davis Food Coop; Drink Eat Well – Hilary’s; GloryBee Foods; GoMacro, LLC; Guayaki; Hummingbird Wholesale; Mountain Rose Herbs; Na-
tured's Path Foods; North Coast Co-op; Nutiva; Organic Valley; Organically Grown Company; Outpost Natural Foods; Port Townsend Co-op; Sambazon; Scratch and Peck Feeds; Straus Family Creamery; Traditional Medicinals; UNFI; Viva Tierra; Wholesum Harvest.

Read all SFTA members’ annual sustainability reports here (http://www.sustainablefoodtrade.org/members-public-reports/).