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Sustainable Food Trade Association Annual Report 2016

Our Mission:

Build the capacity of the organic food trade to transition to sustainable business models.

www.SustainableFoodTrade.org Facebook: SustainableFoodTrade Twitter: @SustyFoodTrade Phone: 413-624-6675

Welcome and Overview

My goodness – what a year 2016 has been! With the change in U.S. Administration and the uncertainties about support for climate change commitments, energy, waste and water initiatives and regulations, or protection of our equal rights to "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness", there will be much to do together in 2017 as businesses and individuals. I'm certain that the community of sustainability leaders that are the members of the Sustainable Food Trade Association (SFTA) will continue on the course that they have set to make their businesses sustainable – environmentally and socially – with resulting economic benefits. SFTA is energized, more than ever, to provide the services and engage with partners that will support our members to accomplish their goals, and our collective goals of preserving the planet and its inhabitants.

SFTA has sought opportunities to increase the effectiveness our work through partnerships with organizations that reach further into the business community both within the organic sector and outside. Last year we initiated our partnership with B Lab and their Measure What Matters program. The benefits of the analytics we can access through this program has improved the counsel we provide on members' sustainability programs.

During 2016 a concept to draw attention to climate change and how business can make a difference, has come to fruition through a partnership with OSC² and the expertise of Nancy Hirshberg. The Climate Collaborative will launch in 2017 to leverage the power of the natural products industry to reverse climate change. It's a HUGE vision but we believe that working together collaboratively we can catalyze bold action, amplify the voice of business and promote sound policy that can move toward this vision. The approach is to inspire natural products business to rise to the challenge through bold commitments in areas that matter most, and then, most importantly, assist the businesses to take meaningful steps.

SFTA was fortunate during this year to have the assistance of Jennifer Pappalardo and Parishad Ehfad. Although Jennifer and Parishad each worked for a short time, their efforts increased our ability to respond to the annual sustainability reports submitted by members, and to begin a project to revise and add to the SFTA resources and tools.

I am grateful to the SFTA members for their support and participation through reporting and in committees and working groups, to the SFTA Board of Directors for their advice, to Lisa Spicka for her excellent work on our education programs and resources, as well as facilitating SFTA's working groups, and to the administrative services provided by Sue Wagner and Sandy Mays. We are bound for success in 2017 with this team.



Katherine DiMatteo Executive Director Sustainable Food Trade Association

Education Services

In 2016 SFTA continued to provide education through webinars, workshops, trainings, and presentations, designed for SFTA members and for the larger organic food community.

Workshops and Presentations

As always, our year was packed with providing information and resources, and catalyzing action at conferences across the country.

Our sessions at the **UNFI Portland Tabletop Show** as well as **Provender Conference** focused on what sustainability means, and how to incorporate key programs into your company. This is a popular type of workshop to give, as attendees appreciate learning about real-life examples of sustainability successes in other organizations. The **Expo (East and West)** sessions in which SFTA participated focused on the Climate Collaborate project under development with OSC² (See Resources and Projects section.) It was especially exciting when SFTA members and leaders were able to meet in a private session with Expo East's keynote speaker and leading climate change solutions scientist, Paul Hawken! Wrapping up our special honors and events this year was being asked to speak at **B Lab's Measure What Matters Summit**. SFTA was recognized as experts on how to generate knowledge out of the many (many!) reports and pieces of information that are offered through their "B Analytics" system. We were proud to be recognized as data analysis leaders among over 120 companies who participate in the B Lab partnership, and know that we were delivering this level of quality to our membership.

The list below provides more information about the breadth of workshops given this year. Feel free to reach out to info@sustainablefoodtrade.org if you'd like to know more!

Month	Location	Event / Host	Workshop
March	Anaheim, CA	Expo West	Time to Lead on Climate Change
June	Portland, OR	UNFI Tabletop*	Sustainability in Action
September	Baltimore, MD	Expo East	The Business Path to Reversing Climate Change
September	otember San Francisco, CA B Lab's Measure Matters Summit		Diving into Data - How to Make B Lab Analytics Work for You
October	Hood River, OR	Provender	Sustainability from the Ground Up

* Denotes first-time participation in these events.

Training

In June, SFTA and the Provender Alliance co-sponsored their first half-day training, *Communicate Your Positive Impact*. The group convened in the Fox Tower in downtown Portland, Oregon. Led by Lisa Spicka, SFTA Associate Director, and Melissa Bearns, Founder of Current Shift Media, the interactive training helped attendees identify, quantify, and communicate the sustainability efforts and successes already being made at their companies. Attendees walked away having identified actionable ways to improve their sustainability, and how to leverage marketing channels to let people know about their good work. This workshop garnered such positive comments, another has been scheduled for 2017.

Webinars

The 2016 schedule, offered every other month, included presentations by external experts and memberonly webinars on critical SFTA updates. We were happy to offer a webinar in June that followed up on some of the requests from our Green Fleet working group in 2015.

Date	Title	Description
1/27/16	How to Tell Your Company's Green Story	Current Shift Media discussed key elements marketing should incorporate to make your green story credible, authentic and transparent.
2/3/16	Members Only: Bylaws Revision	Discussed changes to the Bylaws, including member reporting requirements. More on this in the MRC section of this report.
4/19/16	EPA Portfolio Manager	EPA Portfolio manager is an online tool that helps track greenhouse gas emissions, and refine tracking and use of energy and water consumption.
6/23/16	Fuel Efficiency - Measure, Manage, Maximize	Sustainable America addressed the most common sources of unnecessary fuel waste, and best practices for measurement, management and maximization of fuel resources to reduce waste, save money, and minimize your environmental impact for either owned or contracted fleets.
8/31/16	Critical Tools to Refine Scope 1, 2, and 3 GHG Accounting	SCS Global Services reviewed specific tools to help you refine your Scope 1, 2, and 3 greenhouse gas measurements, and reviewed how to build a Scope 3 carbon footprint management program.
9/29/16	Members Only: Member Updates	This webinar reviewed updates to the MRC process, our work on developing a Climate Collaborative with the greater food industry, as well as our progress and success in the Supply Chain working group.

Date	Title	Description
10/24/16	Unpacking the Compostable Packaging Market	This virtual roundtable session highlighted a panel of experts from global packaging company BilerudKorsnas and Sustainable Packaging Coalition. Topics included common types of compostable packaging, how to evaluate "sustainable fiber" packaging claims, how to know if a material is compostable, how to evaluate if a compostable versus recyclable material may be the best for you, and new compostable packaging technology that solves some of the problems currently associated with compostable fiber packaging.
12/14/16	Sustainable Packaging Innovations	This webinar explored the technology developed to overcome sustainability challenges on three innovative packaging designs. These include a packaging made with fibers from agricultural byproducts, a flexible plastic pouch that is 100% biodegradable, and edible six-pack rings made of the spent grain from the beer brewing process!

In addition to these webinars, SFTA held a one-hour webinar for partner Oregon Tilth, called *Increase the Sustainability of your Organic Business* that reviewed sustainability action areas, and how they complement daily operations of organic businesses.

Sustainability Reporting / Membership Review Committee

This spring, SFTA members voted on a revised Bylaws which, optimally, reduces reporting workload and increases access to sustainability indicators benchmarked against thousands of other companies throughout the world. Specifically, Bylaw Section 2.5.D now states:

"Within one year of signing the Declaration, voting members shall complete the SFTA Quick Impact Assessment (QIA) developed in partnership with B Lab; and should either submit to SFTA a self-audit assessing environmental and social performance in the Declaration's 11-point action plan areas; or, submit the member company's self-produced annual or regularly updated sustainability or social responsibility report."

In response to this new Bylaw and in conjunction with SFTA staff, the Membership Review Committee (MRC) developed a new annual review and feedback process for reporting members.

As of this report, we have seen a great improvement in the number of reporting members. Historically, about 22 reports were received annually. However as of this writing, 32 members have completed reports (either the QIA, a supplementary report, or both)! This represents a 33% increase over the last four-year average!

This new process has been particularly useful to members, as it involves a two-step feedback process.



Initially, the MRC reviews a member's report(s) and identifies program strengths and areas of opportunity. Then SFTA staff and the member discuss these initial findings to align on what the biggest sustainability opportunity areas are based on real-time information. Then staff works closely with MRC members to provide resources and guidance to the member based on that discussion. These resources combine a balance of SFTA-generated documents and tools, online resources like white papers or calculators, and best practices gleaned from other SFTA member reports and MRC member companies. Initial feedback has been very positive, as the process has made the MRC committee member workload significantly more efficient and manageable (typical review time reduced from about four to one hour- a 75% reduction!), and it has made feedback more targeted, accurate, and actionable for our members. Some comments include:

"I read your report and was impressed with the reflections included. Very well done — helpful, positive and yet challenging us to be better at what we do!"

> Kenna Eaton General Manager, The Food Co-op of Port Townsend

"From the analysis SFTA provided based on our Quick B Lab Assessment report, Lisa and I worked out a sustainability strategic action plan, pulling together the many parts of the sustainability program at GloryBee."

> Shandy Carroll Sustainability Manager GloryBee

SFTA thanks its past and present 2016 MRC members, including Sydney Fairchild of Bridges Produce, Michelle Suess of LifeSource Natural Foods, Ann-Marie Hourigan of White Wave, James Louderman of Pacific Foods, Hannah La Luzerne of Wholesum Family Farms, and Tessa Young of the Organic Trade Association. A special thanks to our intrepid Chair, Bri Saseen, who completed her fourth year of leadership. Thank you all!

Outreach and Industry Events

Outreach

In 2016 SFTA expanded its outreach with social media, our newsletter, press releases, webinar announcements, and special announcements about upcoming opportunities.

Specifically, the number of Facebook (<u>https://www.facebook.com/SustainableFoodTrade</u>) page likes increased from 750 to 990, and at least 300 Twitter (<u>https://twitter.com/sustyfoodtrade</u>) fans were added this year alone to a total of 3,800. SFTA shares information with our members ranging from opportunities to get involved in legislation, reports on relevant topics, and fun photos of staff at key events. In addition, we "follow" each of our member companies, and help spread their news on a range of topics of interest to our members and fans.

Eight robust online editions of our SFTA E-News were sent during the year to approximately 700 subscribers, full of information on SFTA and member activities, organic, sustainability and related news, and interesting vignettes from our sponsors. We're proud that the average open/read rate (24.1%) continues to be higher than average (21.6%). SFTA continues to provide quarterly articles for the Provender seasonal membership magazine.

Industry Events

B Lab Measure What Matters Summit

In September at the second annual Summit Lisa Spicka represented SFTA and joined the businesses and organizations that are partnering with B Lab on the Measure What Matters campaign. The Summit was an opportunity for the partners to share their experiences with using the B Lab analytics and with engaging members to use the critical information on their sustainability performance to target areas for improvement. SFTA was invited to present our experience as a case study, *Diving into Data - How to make B Analytics work for you*, on how to generate useful knowledge offered through the "B Analytics" system, which is the database system that crunches all the numbers and information provided in the Quick Impact Assessment. (See Sustainability Reporting / Membership Review Committee section.)



Lisa Spicka presents at the B Lab Measure What Matters Summit

Tabletop Events

To have direct contact with companies that have heard of SFTA through our partnerships with National Co+op Grocers (NCG) and the Provender Alliance, SFTA had tabletop displays at the **Consumer Cooperative Management Association (CCMA) Conference** in June and the **Provender Conference** in October. It was also an opportunity to increase awareness to those unfamiliar with all of SFTA activities and services.

Natural Products Expo West

For the third year in a row, SFTA brought our message to the organic and natural foods sector by hosting a tabletop in the Fresh Ideas tent. We answered questions from numerous companies interested in making their operations and supply chains more sustainable.

National Pollicy and Advocacy Events

Katherine DiMatteo attended two events this year that focused on national policy - In May the **Organic Trade Association (OTA) Policy Conference and Hill Visits** and in September the **American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) SustyBiz Summit**. Both events were held in Washington, DC so we were able to meet with policy makers to discuss the importance of organic agriculture as a mitigation solution to climate change and its benefits to natural resource conservation and biodiversity, as well as garner support for policy positions and regulations that enhance the environmental, economic and social well-being of individuals and businesses.



Sandra Marquardt, Marcy Zaroff, Jade Zaroff and Maggie Anderson along with SFTA Executive Director Katherine DiMatteo visit Senator Mark Warner's office during the OTA Policy Conference and Hill Visits.



SFTA members Leslie Apker (Mountain Rose Herbs), Lisa Spicka (SFTA), Annie Hoy (Ashland Foods), Tonya Haworth (Organically Grown Company), Leslie Rush (Organic Valley) and Alyssa Lawless (Mountina Rose Herbs) enojy the Provender Conference.

Resources and Projects

Working Groups

SFTA members have been very active in the working groups that are initiated and led by members. The high level of participation this year has generated excellent results. SFTA members can join any existing working group at any time and can propose new working groups on a subject area of interest.

Supply Chain Working Group

Many thanks and congratulations to the 18 members of the supply chain working group who met six times between Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 to develop a Supply Chain Sustainability Questionnaire – available in English and Spanish! In conjunction with the SFTA Code of Conduct, SFTA members now have additional resources that can be used to leverage their supply chains to multiple sustainability impacts globally.

The group decided that its mission was to "Develop a simplified SFTA audit form / questionnaire for suppliers in the developing world with an added emphasis on fair trade/ farmer and labor policies." Several of the group's members worked together in teams to accomplish this feat.



The final product is an "entry level" questionnaire that can be used to gather basic sustainability information (general efforts and culture, assess status of awareness and existing data) for growers and value-add processors across the world. The questionnaire is divided up into SFTA's 11 Sustainability Action Areas and the questions reflect the SFTA metrics. The working group also developed an introduction letter which can be used to explain efforts and intentions to the supply chain partners.

The group will reconvene in early 2017 to refine this initial questionnaire after trials in the field, and to discuss what a "next level" questionnaire would look like, such as including more specific data questions. A special thanks to Committee Chairperson, Eckhart Kiesel, Vice President of Sustainability and Business Management for Ciranda, Inc., as well as sponsor Wholesum Harvest and Hannah La Luzerne, Wholesum's Sustainability Manager, who translated this questionnaire, its introduction letter, AND the Code of Conduct to Spanish.

Sustainable Packaging Working Group

Exciting new efforts were initiated by the Sustainable Packaging Working Group. The group met twice towards the end of 2016, and developed two primary focus areas that will deliver excellent value to SFTA members.

The first focus will be to identify a common sustainable packaging challenge facing SFTA members, then to work as a group represented by SFTA to catalyze accelerated R&D of a new technology to solve this challenge, or to represent purchasing power strong enough to lower the price point of an existing technology that can answer the challenge but is currently cost prohibitive. This provides an

exciting opportunity for SFTA members to save costs, be vanguards of new technology development, and for SFTA to begin flexing its muscles as a trade organization.



The second focus of the group is to develop a type of "Buyer's Guide to Sustainable Food Packaging." The initial concept is that the Guide will provide a summary of preferred traits for food packaging (in part taken from SFTA's Responsible Packaging Guidelines), complemented by a decision matrix or similar tool to help identify the best possible type of packaging for their product. Additional sections of the Guide will highlight actual (non-proprietary) product information for major product categories (i.e. hot cups) including specifications and vendor information. SFTA members will be able to highlight their work on packaging by contributing to this guide that will help current and future SFTA members to guickly identify sustainable packaging

solutions for their products. Due to the nature of this information, the Guide may be a "living document," whose information is updated periodically by members.

Projects and Partnerships

In addition to the member achievements and activities above, SFTA has worked with partners and on projects to continue to broaden SFTA's reputation and services.

Presidio Graduate School Experiential Learning Program

In September of 2016 SFTA teamed with four graduate students in the Experiential Learning Program at the Presidio Graduate School to analyze our communication and outreach efforts and recommend a marketing strategy to attract new members to SFTA and engage existing members. Through the Fall semester, Nick Dybsky, Susan McMullan, Kyle Overman and Kat Vining (SFTA member and board member), with Katherine DiMatteo, reviewed current engagement activities and the SFTA value proposition in relation to other organizations and consulting businesses.



A final report was completed in December that highlighted strategies to improve content marketing and business development to attract new members, and optimize service offerings, targeted member communications and leverage google analytics to engage existing members. The analysis confirmed some goals identified in the SFTA strategic plan, and some areas of improvement in services and communication identified by SFTA staff. In addition, new ideas and perspectives that will benefit SFTA and a proposed aggressive implementation plan for 2017 and 2018 were presented. We are grateful for the insights provided, specific recommendations and examples, and the professional quality of the work. We will do our best to integrate the best and most appropriate strategies that fit previous commitments and budget constraints. Watch for the changes to come in the next years!

Member Benchmarks

SFTA has taken a look at the consolidated reporting figures from the last two years and is excited to announce that it has turned key pieces of sustainability data into Benchmarks against which you can measure your progress! These benchmarks show what average sustainability performance has been like in areas like waste diversion, local purchases, and organic products bought or sold.



NCG Partnership

SFTA partnered up with National Co+op Grocers this year to provide a three-part educational series for its members that focused on Employee Engagement, Goal Setting, and Water Conservation. It was an excellent opportunity to collaborate with another organization that wanted to deliver increased depth of sustainability materials to its members.

B Lab Partnership

In addition to presenting on our use of BAnalytics for members' benefit (see: Education section), Associate Director Lisa Spicka worked with BLab as a part of a Beta testing and feedback team on the launch of their new BAnalytics platform. This platform is the database that crunches all of the numbers and runs all of the reports that can be generated from the Impact Assessments that are taken on the Measure What Matters website. Several key improvements were noted as a result of this process which has facilitated enhanced SFTA reporting feedback!





OSC² Partnership

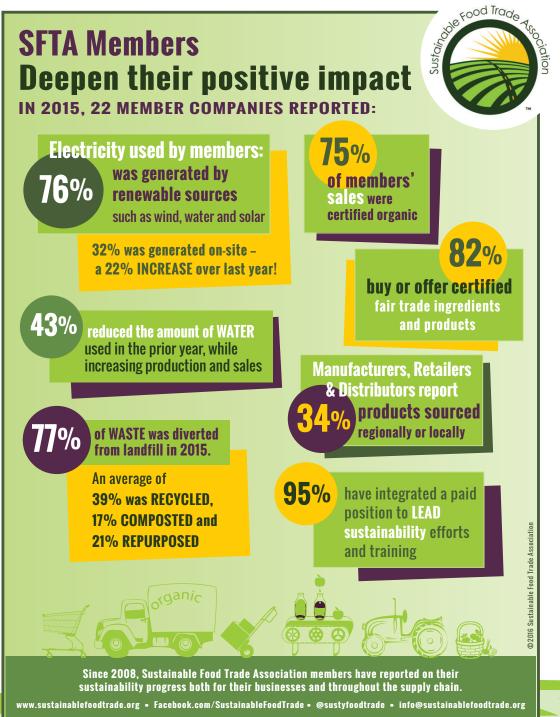
In late 2015 SFTA was approached by Nancy Hirshberg of Hirshberg Strategic and One Step Closer to an Organic and Sustainable Community (OSC²) to join them in creating a project to increase organic business participation in meaningful actions to address climate change. Through 2016 the project became defined and in September both the OSC² and

SFTA boards approved the organizations moving forward in partnership to implement what is called The Climate Collaborative. The planning team, now the fundraising team, and soon-to-be implementation and management team are Nancy Hirshberg, Lara Dickinson (OSC² Executive Director), Jessica Rolph (Happy Family), and Katherine DiMatteo.

The vision of the project is to leverage the power of the natural products industry to reverse climate change. How? Through collaboration among concerned businesses from the natural products industry taking action in nine areas of sustainability. The Climate Collaborative will direct businesses to existing resources and solutions where they exist and help them bring the solutions to scale. Or we will bring businesses together to solve challenges and create solutions. (See Looking Ahead section starting on page 13.)

SFTA Annual Member Sustainability Progress Report

Every year SFTA members are encouraged to submit annual sustainability reports to help measure progress and facilitate continuous improvement and innovation, with the findings aggregated into an annual report. The 2015 Member Sustainability Progress Report confirms that SFTA members are excelling in their overall sustainability journey in a number of bold and ground-breaking ways. The report highlights initiatives from farm to retail in 2014 and 2015, including animal care, climate change, distribution/sourcing, education, energy, governance, labor, organic, packaging, water, and waste — the 11 areas making up SFTA's "Declaration of Sustainability".



January 2017

Looking Ahead: SFTA in 2017

Several exciting events and partnerships are on the horizon for 2017! Take a peek...

Organicology

SFTA is a co-host of this biennial event that brings in over 1000 people from across the country to discuss the latest topics impacting the organic community. The co-organizers – Oregon Tilth, Organic Seed Alliance,



The Study of a Sustainable Food Future

SFTA and Organically Grown Company - have spent a year and a half planning and preparing for the 2017 Conference. In addition to planning and fundraising, SFTA has organized several educational sessions for the conference, including an all-day intensive on February 2nd, a Take Action on Climate Change session on February 3rd and Digging into the Details: Hands on guidance to assess your sustainability progress on February 4th.

The intensive, Creating a Resilient Business through Sustainable Practices focuses on how sustainable practices create business advantage and resiliency. Speakers from Wholesum Harvest, Pacific Foods, Organic Valley, and Chico Natural Foods will touch on how initiatives such as fair trade programs, water, waste, and energy efficiency, and how shared risk and reward structures in the supply chain can put your business ahead of the rest.



Commit. Act. Impact.

Climate Collaborative Project

After a year and a half of planning, the Climate Collaborative – a project of SFTA and OSC² – will launch at Expo West 2017 on Climate Day, March 8th. Natural products businesses will be challenged to join the Climate Collaborative by their peers who have already made commitments to take action to reverse climate change. There will be inspiration in the form of success stories, as well as critical information provided in workshops (on March 8th and 10th), and the opportunity for business leaders to network with peers, experts, and celebrities.

There are nine commitment and action areas identified: agriculture, energy productivity, food waste, forests, packaging, policy, renewable energy, short-lived climate pollutants and transportation. Businesses can commit to one or more areas for action. The Climate Collaborative will provide specific resources to help companies on their journey. These might involve a partner solution provider, networking opportunities, joint projects, white papers, trainings, or other activities.

The project dovetails with the ongoing work and services provided by SFTA to our members and members can easily make commitments that align with their existing sustainability plans and reporting. This project elevates the efforts of SFTA and OSC² members as leaders and models of sustainable businesses. Through the project many more businesses will be engaged so we can go farther together to reverse climate change than any of us have gone before. Collaborating to create scale and momentum, we can drive the change that must happen to create a stronger more resilient industry-and a better future for all.

Provender Alliance

Based on the success of our training partnership this year, SFTA and Provender have already decided on another training to provide in the Pacific Northwest, where many of SFTA's and Provender's members reside. The training will be held in early May, and focus on sustainable purchasing programs, that include everything from what to buy for your business office, to how to work with global suppliers. Topics will include:



- ✓ Key Considerations: Environmental, social, and financial purchasing considerations in categories such as paper products, food ingredients, energy practices, and equipment.
- ✓ Design: building a vision, structure, and support for a sustainable purchasing program
- ✓ Implementation: Prioritizing, building a plan, engaging supply chain

Participants will walk away with tools, examples, and case studies from civil and business purchasing leaders in to begin operationalizing their sustainable purchasing practices and maximize their positive impact.

Member Resources

In 2016 we not only worked hard to improve the quality of the sustainability reporting feedback to members, SFTA undertook a substantial amount of work to begin updating the resources for members to access in the Member Center.

These resources will be organized according to the 11 SFTA Action Areas, as well as Sustainability Management, Supply Chain Engagement and Sustainability Reporting. These areas will deliver curated resources such as white papers, sustainability calculation tools, and technical guidance to use those tools. Organizations that can provide focused and specific help in particular sustainability areas will also be highlighted.

We've already begun organizing these resources behind the scenes and will announce when available in 2017!

Full Members (55)

Agromeris, LLC Amy's Kitchen Andean Naturals Annie's, Inc. Anything But Salads Apex Manufacturing Solutions Ashland Food Cooperative Awe Sum Organics **Bay Baby Produce Bridges** Produce Cascadian Farm and Muir Glen Chico Natural Foods Co-op Ciranda Clif Bar Community Food Co-op Davis Food Co-op Drink Eat Well Earl's Organic Produce The Food Co-op Port Townsend Fruit d'Or GloryBee GoMacro LLC Good Company Ground 2 Table Guayaki, Inc. Heath and Lejeune Hummingbird Wholesale LifeSource Natural Foods

Associate Members (3)

Egg Innovations LLC Homegrown Organic Farms RIBUS, Inc.



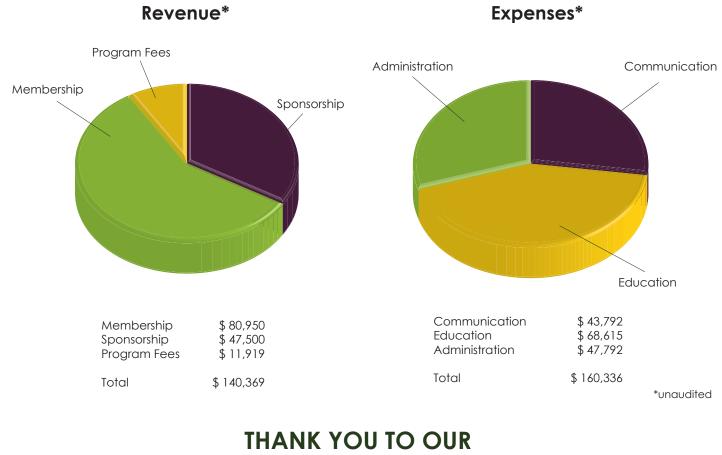
2016 Membership

Luna & Larry's Coconut Bliss Lundberg Family Farms MOM's Organic Market Mountain Rose Herbs Nature's Path Foods Nielsen-Massey Vanillas Inc. North Coast Co-op Nutiva Organic Valley/CROPP Organically Grown Company **Organics Unlimited Outpost Natural Foods** Pacific Foods of Oregon PCC Natural Markets **RW** Garcia Scratch and Peck Foods Sol Simple Stonyfield Farm Straus Family Creamery Sundance Natural Foods The Veri Soda Company **Timeless Seeds** Traditional Medicinals United Natural Foods Inc. / Albert's Organics Viva Terra Organic White Wave Foods Wholesum Harvest Organics

Friends of SFTA (16)

America Knows How California Certified Organic Farmers EarthSOIL, Inc. Global ID Group Hirshberg Stragegic Independent Natural Food Retailers Assoc. Maracuja Solutions National Co+op Grocer **NSF** Agriculture Oregon Tilth Organic Trade Association Provender Alliance Pure Strategies **Quality Assurance International** WISErg Corporation Wolf, DiMatteo + Associates

Financial



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January 2017