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The Nevada Organic Review, is a quarterly publication sponsored, printed and distributed by the Nevada Department of Agriculture and the Nevada Organic Council.

Distribution information: Peggy McKie, Nevada Department of Agriculture, Reno, NV (775) 688-1182 X 243. or email: pgmckie@govmail.state.nv.us

## Nevada Organic Farming Workshop Planned for February 26, 2003

THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is pleased to announce Nevada's first Organic Farming and Gardening Conference, to be held February 26, 2003 at John Asguaga's Nugget in Sparks, Nevada. The registration fee is \$10.00 per person, and includes lunch.

This one-day conference will cover topics of interest to organic farmers, ranchers and organic gardeners, including organic livestock certification, techniques for building healthy soil, optimizing native pollinator activity, marketing opportunities for organic products, National Organic Program requirements, and more. Also on hand will be suppliers of products appropriate for use by organic farmers and gardeners.



For farmers and processors who would like to attend and who live out of the immediate area, scholarships are available for lodging and conference registration. Peggy McKie from the Nevada Department of Agriculture's organic certification program said, "USDA provided the state with the grant money to fund the workshop. Thanks to this funding, we are able to offer a limited number of scholarships for growers and processors who ordinarily might not be able to attend because of cost considerations."

Information about the conference, scholarship applications, and registration forms are available by calling Peggy McKie, Nevada Department of Agriculture, 775.688.1182 extension 243.

*Last February ('02) the State Department of Agriculture awarded Churchill Butte Horticulture of Dayton, Nevada a federally funded grant for the amount of \$3,079.00 for the purpose of water expansion and improvement for their home delivered organic vegetables and herbs. The process was very competitive, comprising 43 applications totaling over \$1,700,000.00. The applicants vied for a total grant amount of \$120,000.00 that Nevada received from the USDA targeted for specialty crops as a result of Congress recognizing the need to assist the development of alternative crops, specifically locally grown agricultural goods.*

## Churchill Butte Horticulture Awarded Specialty Crop Grant

CHURCHILL BUTTE HORTICULTURE (CBH) is operated by husband and wife Steve and Marcia Litsinger. It is a solar powered farm located in the Virginia foothills above the Stagecoach valley. *Profile* Certified Organic since the program's inception here in Nevada in 1998 and comprising forty total acres, less than one acre is currently under cultivation. CBH is off the power lines and completely solar-powered (photo-voltaic, or PV), so Steve and Marcia use PV panels to operate D.C. water pumps and grow in unheated hoophouses which moderate the winter temperatures, since conventional greenhouse heaters are not feasible. Serving a select group of CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) clients with fresh-picked, home delivered organic herbs and vegetables, Steve and Marcia practice sustainable agriculture and low-impact farming.



CBH hoop house structures provide for winter growing.

Prior to receiving the grant, CBH operated with a small solar powered 12 volt D.C. pump incapable of delivering water necessary to produce profitably during the summer months. While CBH is currently leading the way in sustainable, solar powered agriculture in Nevada, they were previously unable to (see next page for more...)

L1 of 2

## More Upcoming Events

- > Feb. 2-4, 2003  
Annual Conference of Association of Applied  
IPM Ecologists (AAIE)  
San Luis Obispo, California.  
Information: [www.aaie.net](http://www.aaie.net)  
Call: 707-265-9349
- > Feb. 4-5, 2003  
Organic Viticulture Seminar, Field Tours,  
gourmet organic lunches served  
Paso Robles, California.  
Information: [orgamigo@jps.net](mailto:orgamigo@jps.net)  
Call: Amigo Cantisano at 530-292-3619
- > Feb. 7-8, 2003  
New Mexico Organic Farming and Gardening  
Expo 2003  
Glorieta, New Mexico.  
Call: 505-266-9849  
Or email: [joan.quinn@state.nm.us](mailto:joan.quinn@state.nm.us).
- > February 27th-March 1st, 2003  
Upper Midwest Farming Conference  
"Keeping the Circle Unbroken"  
La Crosse Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin  
Information: [www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org)  
Call: 715.772.3162
- > May 4-5, 2003  
Heartland Celebration of Food, Farming, and  
Healthy Living in California's Central Valley  
Stevenson, California.  
Information: [www.eco-farm.org](http://www.eco-farm.org)  
Call: 831-763-2111
- > May 14-17, 2003  
All Things Organic Conference  
and Trade Show  
Austin, Texas  
Information: [www.atoexpo.com](http://www.atoexpo.com)  
Call: 207-842-5468

## Chef Features Nevada-Grown Produce at Governor's Mansion

CONGRATULATIONS to Chef Michelle Palmer, who has just been hired as the "Executive Chef for the Commander in Chief of the State of Nevada and the 1<sup>st</sup> Lady."

Michelle, owner of "Absolutely Michelle's," is a long-time champion of creating connections between local farmers and local chefs. Michelle is dedicated to buying from local farmers, first, when possible and plans to include Nevada-grown produce in as many state functions as she can, as well as daily meals served at the governor's mansion.

Michelle said her primary function as the state's executive chef is to foster well-being through healthy nutrition and whole foods. *You go, Chef Michelle!*

## Connecting with Retailers

*Continued from page 3*

wholesaler—or better? Be prepared to explain why your stuff is worth more than the stuff from California (fresher, less loss, more customer appeal, truly stunning). If the two of you can come up with a some formula it will be easier for everyone than negotiating the price with every delivery. At least have a *method* for determining price worked out in advance.

Ask when—what day(s) he/she would like you to call to get an order, and how much advance notice they would like that you are ready to start supplying the store. Then *follow through, follow through and follow through.*

*(Next time: post-harvest handling, packing and deliveries.)*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Joanie Quinn is Information Specialist for the New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission—which produces a quarterly newsletter called "Fertile Ground."

## Organic Farming Research at UNR

PHILLIP PARKER, a senior in Agricultural Economics has been awarded a research grant to evaluate organic farming and community supported agriculture in Nevada. His spring study will be based at Custom Gardens in Silver Springs (775-577-2069), and he would like to visit every organic farm in the state, spending a few hours touring each farm and discussing primary issues with farmers. If you are interested in meeting with him or otherwise being part of the study, please contact him at:

(775) 624-1265 or  
[parker@unr.nevada.edu](mailto:parker@unr.nevada.edu)

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We strive to provide helpful, accurate and timely information to our Certified and other Organic Producers and Handlers, as well as Nevada's general public.