



Demeter & Stellar 2018 Renewal Instructions

Greetings to all and Happy New Year!

2018 is going to be an important year for our clients. Our number one priority is to provide our farms and producers with excellent customer service while upholding the requirements of the National Organic Program and Demeter International. We hope you will be pleased with all the improvements we are making.

One of the big steps we are taking is to implement a cloud-based certification system that will allow you to manage your renewal process and maintain your certification documents on line. This incredible service is being offered cost free to our members. While this will require you to initially invest the time to enter your information into your confidential online file, once it is there the only time you will need to update it is if there is a change to your OSP or other information. [SOW Organic](#) will allow you to digitally manage your records, upload files, and complete your annual certification requirements online, anywhere, any time of day or night. After this first year, your annual renewal work will be a breeze!

We understand that it is going to take us time working together to get SOW fully implemented, and we are here to help. While we need to receive your *completed* Fee Worksheet and renewal fees by February 1 (late fees won't accrue until March 1), you won't need to finalize your online files until later this spring.

We are doing our final in-house testing of the SOW Organic system over the next month. You will hear from us in mid-February when we are ready to start assisting our clients to get all your renewal information entered into SOW. For those of you not excited about computer based system plans, we have staff available to assist with data input if you prefer not to do it yourself.

In the meantime, here are some 2017 highlights we are really proud to share:

- ✓ Advised more than 400 farmers and brands about organic and Biodynamic certification
- ✓ Worked with more than 50 national brands bringing Biodynamic products to market
- ✓ Demeter seal awarded 5 out of 5 stars by Green America's "[The ABCs of Food Labeling](#)" and was the only "Environmental Concerns Labels" that achieved this level of recognition. (NOP Organic received 4 stars)
- ✓ Dr. Mercola continues to tout Biodynamic, calling it the "[Platinum Standard](#)"
- ✓ Cornucopia Institute's [Organic Dairy Scorecard](#) top 11 "5 star/cow" rated dairies included 4 of our Demeter certified members
- ✓ Consumer Reports's [greenerchoices.org](#) awarded Demeter Biodynamic seal highest rating of 'Highly Meaningful'
- ✓ NBC's Today Show featured Biodynamic news not once, but twice! Maria Shriver highlighted Biodynamic farming and Demeter certified One Gun Ranch: "[Meet biodynamic, the food approach that goes beyond organic](#)". Back To The Roots organic and Biodynamic cereal launch in New York

City public schools (the largest school district in the world!) was featured in "School lunches are getting healthier" segment

- ✓ For more incredible press check out our website!

Thanks so much for joining with us in our vision to help heal the planet, and her people, through agriculture!

TO COMPLETE YOUR RENEWAL FOR 2018

1) Complete the [Fee Worksheet](#) including the section on licensing fees, and submit with your renewal fees by February 1. Late fees will begin to accrue March 1. Worksheets can be submitted via email to admin@demeter-usa.org or mail, along with your renewal fees, to PO Box 1390, Philomath, OR 97370. Payment by credit card can be arranged by calling the Demeter/Stellar office. Payment plans can also be arranged if necessary.

Please note: Operations that do not submit the renewal materials (for 2018 this is only the fee worksheet) or contact the Demeter/Stellar office by March 1st **must** be issued a noncompliance. There are no exceptions. If you are not renewing your certification (and we sure hope that isn't the case), we still need you to check the appropriate box on the renewal form and submit it by the deadline.

2) We will be in touch with you in mid- February about getting your files uploaded to SOW.

3) **For Stellar certified organic operations**, you are eligible for the Organic Certification Cost Share Program. The Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) allows individual organic operators to apply for reimbursement of up to 75 percent of their certification costs with a maximum of \$750 per category of certification. Details and applications can be found with your state department of agriculture or farm service agency. Each state has a slightly different management of the grant and requirements, please remember to keep your paid invoices, and stay on top of due dates and requirements for your state. More information here: <http://www.demeter-usa.org/for-farmers/organic-certification-cost-share-program.asp>.

4) **For Stellar certified organic operations located in California only** – Certified organic operations located in California are required to be registered with CDFA as an organic producer (farms) and the Dept. of Public Health as a processor/handler. Please submit proof of registration with your renewal. Stellar is required to verify registration to continue certification for CA operations. For more information, please visit: <https://organic.cdfa.ca.gov/OrganicReg/>

Warm regards,

The Demeter and Stellar Certification Team