

Reimbursement funds available for Oregon organic growers

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

The Oregon Department of Agriculture continues to offer reimbursement for organic certification costs from U.S. Department of Agriculture accredited certifiers. This reimbursement is also available to Oregon growers or processors renewing their certification. Eligibility is based upon certifications dated after October 1, 2007 and through September 30, 2009. Reimbursements for each of two qualifying years will be made on a first come-first serve basis. All qualified growers or processors who obtained organic certification or renewed their organic certification during the designated two-year period are encouraged to apply. Reimbursements are limited to 75 percent of fees paid, with a maximum of \$750 for each year. Authorized by the Farm Bill, the program is designed to assist producers, handlers, and processors of agricultural products in obtaining certification under the national organic guidelines. USDA originally provided funds to reimburse certifications from October 2008 through September 2009 but added funds to provide reimbursements for the previous certification year, beginning October 1, 2007. ODA has been awarded \$405,000 in reimbursement funds, which will be available until all funds have been distributed. An estimated 500 to 600 certified organic growers and producers in Oregon are potentially eligible for partial reimbursement. A reimbursement application for each qualifying year may be downloaded from the ODA Web site. For more information, contact ODA's Agricultural Development and Marketing Division in Portland at (503) 872-6600.

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