

Inspection Information 2012

Please read this now to ensure your certification remains in good standing.

- You are responsible for making the arrangements to have your farm inspected (no one else will set them up for you).
- To avoid a conflict of interest, there is no trading inspections. If Farmer A inspects Farmer B's farm, then Farmer B can not turn around and inspect Farmer A's farm. Such inspections would not be considered valid.
- An inspection round of three or more is allowed (encouraged!). That's when Farmer A inspects Farmer B, who inspects Farmer C, who in turn inspects Farmer A. This is the beginning of a local network!
- Every CNG farmer must *conduct* at least one inspection of another CNG farm annually. This requirement is waived if there is not another CNG farm within 100 miles of you (but not the requirement that your farm *be inspected*).
- New members should arrange for their inspections as soon as possible (once the growing season starts) but no later than two growing season months from the date when they were accepted into the program.
- Inspections shall be conducted annually (4-month grace period) ideally by different qualified inspectors each year.
- If your farm is Certified Organic you may send a copy of your organic certificate in place of a CNG inspection report.
- You may be de-listed from the CNG program if you do not arrange an inspection for your farm in a timely manner.
- You may be de-listed from the CNG program if you do not *conduct* an inspection of another CNG farm when there is a CNG farm within an hour's drive from your farm that needs an inspection.
- Inspections by family members, employees and interns are not considered valid.

Types of Inspectors

- CNG Producers If possible, have your inspection forms filled out by another CNG producer in your area. Remember you can't inspect the person who inspects you. Visit the CNG map at www.naturallygrown.org/map to see who is near you. (Call us if you don't have internet.) Or rely on one of the other types of inspectors listed below.
- Other Producers using natural practices If there isn't another CNG farmer in your area, rely on organic farmers or others who are familiar with the challenges and techniques of natural practices, whether certified or not.
- Extension Agents and Master Gardeners In many areas extension agents have been pleased to conduct inspections. Several have sent detailed reports and enthusiastic letters of appreciation for the work of this program! Attitudes vary, though. The response you get may depend on how big-ag-friendly your extension agency is.
- Customers (three or more) Pick a time and date in the season when things are interesting and active (and you'll be able to spare a couple hours). Make the inspection an open house for your customers, and be sure at least three of them are prepared to follow the inspection worksheets and complete the report. *The inspection forms are designed to walk people who don't know a lot about farming through a meaningful inspection process.*
- Educators Someone who teaches courses on natural farming practices may conduct your inspection.
- Soil and Water Conservation District Agents These folks can be a good resource as well.

Tips for success

Look at the Map on the website to find CNG members near you. Search by zip code! Naturallygrown.org/map

Use the telephone! E-mail isn't a very effective tool for this kind of request. A phone call will get much better results.

Follow-up! If your inspector made vague plans to come by, but never did, go ahead and give them another call. A friendly reminder is usually all that's needed to get the job done. Or, if necessary, find someone else to inspect.

Find Inspection Forms at www.naturallygrown.org/documents or use the Order Form if you're not online.