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OMRI reduces costs for listing in improved Organic Seed Database

EUGENE, ORE. (January 22, 2008) – The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) has slashed prices for seed suppliers to list organic varieties in the Organic Seed Database. Best known for its work as an independent nonprofit to ensure the compliance of fertilizers and pesticides for organic agriculture, OMRI established the database in October 2006. The site (<http://seeds.omri.org>) uses an online search tool to assist organic farmers and certifiers seeking organic seeds and planting stocks.

The change represents a dramatic fee reduction for suppliers. Previously, seed companies paid a flat \$25 plus \$50 for every five varieties included beyond the initial five. The new fee will simply be a \$60 flat rate effective today. Payments not made through PayPal cost \$15 extra.

“We wanted to encourage the participation of smaller, more diverse companies in our service,” explains David DeCou, OMRI executive director.

Since December, OMRI has utilized Google’s Adwords to place high-profile ads alongside search results. “We are seeing a 40% increase in visits over last year at this time,” reports Miguel Guerrero, marketing director. “The service helps connect seed companies with new organic commercial customers.”

Organic certifiers report that the online tool is highly effective in their work. Certifiers must verify that the non-organic seeds used by organic farmers are not commercially available in organic form. John Stalley, farm reviewer for Oregon Tilth Certified Organic, said that the service is “great” because it saves him time while reviewing farm plans for organic certification.

The Organic Seed Database enables organic growers to instantly search the ever-broadening diversity of available organic seed, both open pollinated varieties and newly developed hybrids. Additionally, the Organic Seed Database offers an inexpensive opportunity for innovative seed companies to connect with growers on a new scale.

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