

Jim Gerritsen

Jim Gerritsen, and his wife Megan, are organic farmers. They have owned and operated Wood Prairie Farm in northern Maine in the United States for 38 years. Wood Prairie Farm has been a MOFGA-certified organic farm since 1982. The Gerritsens are focused on the production of organic early generation Maine Certified Seed Potatoes, seed crops, vegetables and grain. Their seed potatoes are sold retail to customers in all fifty States through their mail order catalog and web business. Additionally, they sell their organic seed wholesale to several national mail order seed houses.

In addition to farming, Jim has been active in the organic community with NGOs for four decades. He co-founded and now serves as President of the national farmer-run membership trade organization, Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA). OSGATA is headquartered in Washington, Maine, and acted as lead plaintiff in the landmark organic community Federal lawsuit, *OSGATA et al v. Monsanto*. OSGATA's mission is to develop, promote and protect the organic seed trade and its farmers.

In the past, Jim served as President of the educational and research NGO, Organic Seed Alliance (OSA) in Washington State. Additionally, he served for over twenty years on the Certification Committee of Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA). Last year, Jim helped MOFGA pass the State of Maine's GMO Labeling law, the second such law ever to pass in the United States. Jim also serves on the MOFGA Ag Services Committee. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the 80-year-old NGO Direct Gardening Association. Jim has served for many years on the Steering Committee of the local St John-Aroostook Resource Conservation & Development Council, formerly an arm of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Jim is co-founder of Slow Food Aroostook and co-founded a local chapter of Organic Crop Improvement Association. He has been a frequent speaker at farmer conferences in the United States and beyond. Jim has cooperated in numerous on-farm research trials with scientists, including those from the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the University of Maine. He serves as an advisor to the UMO Northern New England Organic Bread Wheat Project.

In October 2011, Jim was named as one of '25 Visionaries Who Are Changing the World' by Utne Reader magazine. In January 2014, Jim was a participant in the week long Agrarian Elders Gathering, held in Big Sur, California.

The Gerritsens reside on their organic farm in the Aroostook County town of Bridgewater with their four children.

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