

# EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE

## Chief Executive Officer

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This search is being conducted by:

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# I. Opportunity

## Scope of Position

The California Certified Organic Farmers, Inc., (CCOF) is seeking a proven leader of people who can inspire teams and organizations to greatness. The ideal candidate will have knowledge and understanding of the organic food and agriculture industry, membership organizations, and nonprofit management. They will have an unbending passion for CCOF's mission to advance organic agriculture for a healthy world. This individual will be a big-picture thinker who leads proactively and engages effectively with diverse stakeholders



including members, staff, board, committees, and other organizations while understanding the importance of and action on important details in the day-to-day management of the organization. They will successfully balance process, internal and external relationship-building, and the delivery of results. This individual will have a thorough understanding of an association's financial management, successful experience with generating revenue and attracting organizational funding, and an awareness of the importance of advocacy/policy.

## Key Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reports directly to the Board of Directors. The CEO is responsible to the Board of Directors for leadership of the entire CCOF organization including membership, strategic planning, certification, advocacy, finance, communications, programs, human resources and fundraising/development. The CEO represents CCOF to government agencies, the organic community and the public.

The CEO will have six Direct reports. They will be oriented toward forging alliances, sharing resources, and ensuring the success of heterogeneous teams in service of a common purpose. The ideal candidate will have a commitment to maintaining CCOF's great workplace culture and possess an inclusive, collaborative leadership style.

### Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Serves as Chair of the CCOF Certification Services, LLC Management Committee and as Chair of the CCOF Foundation Board of Trustees
- Leads executive team comprised of the Chief Operations Officer, Chief Certification Officer, Foundation Director, Director of Policy and Governmental Affairs, and Director of Marketing and Sales
- In partnership with the Board of Directors, leads, implements, and reports on strategic planning processes, timelines, and status
- Ensures sound financial planning, management, forecasting, reporting, and organizational accountability
- Supports staff in developing an annual budget and ensures the implementation of sound financial practices
- Ensures a culture that rewards positivity, productivity, and collaboration that attracts, retains and inspires a diverse and high caliber staff
- Supports all executives to achieve administrative, programmatic and financial goals, as appropriate
- Develops a dashboard or regular process to review the Strategic Plan, reporting process to ensure that

priorities and resources align. With the Board of Directors' agreement, course correct as needed based on external environmental factors

- Oversees the day-to-day operations of CCOF to provide for the sustainability and long-term stability of the organization

#### **Communication**

- Serves as a key internal and external spokesperson for CCOF, in conjunction with the board Chairman, speaking for the Association to the media and public
- Leads efforts to enhance organizational visibility and awareness, including further developing relationships with relevant partner organizations
- Ensures regular and ongoing effective communications with all CCOF constituent groups
- In conjunction with the senior team, ensures all communication and public relations materials and plans are in keeping with the organization brand and depict the accurate message regarding CCOF initiatives

#### **Board of Directors and Member Support**

- Works with the board chair to prepare for and coordinate four board meetings annually
- Welcomes new board members and works with board to provide orientation as needed
- Supports the board in conducting regular self-assessments and to ensure that board action items are implemented as directed
- Provides the board with quarterly organizational updates
- Ensures adherence to internal organizational bylaws, operating agreements, MOU's, and policies and procedures
- Collaborates with the Board of Directors to develop, plan, and implement the strategic direction of the association ensuring that an outcome-based strategic plan is in place with appropriate annual metrics
- Fosters a sense of engagement and communications within the volunteer leadership and ensure annual Board training



#### **California and National Policy**

- Supports the Director of Policy and Government Affairs to ensure CCOF's positive leadership in policy matters that effect organic agriculture and production
- Elevates CCOF's profile in the arenas of state and national policy
- Ensures that CCOF policy activities are aligned with board and membership priorities through the strategic plan
- Ensures continued productive partnerships with staff and federal policy makers, regulators and collaborating organizations

## Experience, Qualifications, Personal and Professional Qualities

- Bachelor's Degree required; Master's or advanced degree is a plus
- At least 10-15 years' of leadership and management experience with a minimum of 6 years of executive level experience leading a comparable size and scope organization
- Passion for and knowledge of organic food and agriculture industry
- Track record of successfully raising the visibility of an organization or an issue
- Staff leadership and management experience including senior level reports and complex teams
- Experience working for or as part of a membership organization
- Experience working directly for, or as a member of, a board of directors
- Ability to conceptualize, communicate and lead an organization to a shared vision in response to changing needs and opportunities
- Comprehensive knowledge and experience with financial management, budgeting, and reporting
- Strong team-focused, collaborative, and inclusive leadership style
- Demonstrates empathy and emotional intelligence
- Demonstrated experience in building relationships, internally and externally, including partnerships
- Proven ability to work in a dynamic environment with various stakeholders with conflict resolution skills
- Ability to work occasional nights and weekends
- Ability to travel domestically several times each year, and internationally as needed
- Computer/technical skills sufficient to perform required duties
- Well-developed written and verbal communication skills
- Effective communication skills including active listening, public speaking, meeting facilitation, and consensus-building



- Demonstrated comfort and skill in serving as the public voice for an organization

## Measures of Success

While the specific goals and objectives for performance review will be developed between the successful candidate and the CCOF Board after hiring, the following are examples of the accomplishments the Board of Directors would consider in evaluating the success of the new CEO after a year in the position:

- The CEO clarifies and secures buy-in for the shared purpose, strategic priorities, and alignment of the new organizational structure for people, programs, and services
- The CEO demonstrates an understanding of the key issues facing the organic food and agriculture industry, CCOF's members' opportunities and challenges, and CCOF's impact
- The CEO has established strong relationships with the Board, staff, existing and prospective members, and industry partners, with regular and effective communication
- Working with the Board, the CEO has developed a plan for increasing CCOF's visibility and opportunities for building and participating in coalitions
- Working with the staff, the CEO presents to the Board a plan to grow membership and begins implementation

## II. Organization Review

### About CCOF

With a budget of \$15 million and staff of 115, CCOF continues to certify, educate, advocate, and promote organic.

### Mission, Vision and Principles

#### Our Mission

CCOF advances organic agriculture for a healthy world. We accomplish our purpose through organic certification, education, advocacy, and promotion.

#### Our Vision

We envision a world where organic is the norm.

#### Our Values

- Our community
- Farmers and farming
- Mutual appreciation and support
- Integrity in organic production and certification
- Social, environmental, and economic responsibility
- Transparency, respect, and the democratic process

#### Our Organic Principles

Organic standards promote and enhance biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil fertility, and restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony. The legacy of organic will be the catalyzation of healthy, sustainable, and humane production systems. CCOF believes that organic standards should continually evolve to address a broadening range of issues, including:

- **Animal Welfare**  
CCOF believes that organic livestock standards should require humane and ethical treatment of animals during all stages of production, including transport and slaughter.
- **Carbon Sequestration**  
CCOF believes that organic practices offer verifiable opportunities for sequestering carbon and reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) and should be encouraged as an effective strategy for reducing dangerous levels of emissions.

- **Ecosystem Protection**

CCOF believes that organic standards should encourage stewardship of land and waterways, as well as protection of biodiversity and ecosystems.

- **Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)**

CCOF believes that genetic modification is fundamentally incompatible with organic production. The organic market and its producers must be protected from GMO contamination. GMO products must be labeled.

- **Processing Standards**

CCOF believes that organic standards should require processors to minimize environmental impacts by conserving water and energy; preventing contamination of water, air and soil; and promoting the reduction, reuse, and recycling of packaging.

- **Social Justice**

CCOF believes that the organic market should provide adequate and equitable compensation and treatment to farmers, ranchers, laborers, and other participants in organic production and processing. All individuals should be treated with dignity and respect.

### CCOF Foundation

The CCOF Foundation is advancing organic agriculture for a healthy world.

The CCOF Foundation is investing in new organic farmers and businesses and building consumer demand for organic. We educate future organic farmers, help consumers understand organic, assist organic farmers in need, and provide ongoing training for organic professionals.

- **The Future Organic Farmer Grant Fund**

Through this fund, the CCOF Foundation, in collaboration with organic businesses and community leaders, provides grants in three educational categories: kindergarten through eighth grade, high school, and vocational and higher education.

### ■ **The Organic Training Institute**

The CCOF Foundation supports current and prospective certified organic producers, processors, and handlers by providing a series of free or low-cost field days, workshops, and webinars to help improve and grow their operations.

### ■ **Organic Hardship Assistance - The Bricmont Fund**

The Bricmont Fund is the only fund that provides direct financial assistance exclusively to organic producers, processors, and handlers who suffer losses due to extreme hardship.

### ■ **Consumer Education**

The CCOF Foundation's consumer education program informs consumers about the meaning of different food labels and seals through its Buy Certified Organic campaign

## CCOF Premier Certification System

As an original in the organic movement, CCOF has been a critical player in the development of certification processes and organic standards. The CCOF name and seal has been trusted as the mark of organic integrity by consumers and buyers worldwide since 1973.

CCOF's certification system and team are second to none. We have highly trained staff in all areas of certification to meet the specialized needs of all types and sizes of operations.

## CCOF Chapters

All CCOF certified members based in California belong to a chapter based on their geographical region (except the Processor/Handler Chapter, which includes all processors, regardless of where they are located).

- Big Valley Chapter (BV) – Contra Costa, Merced, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus counties
- Central Coast Chapter (CC) – Alameda, Monterey, San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Francisco counties
- Fresno-Tulare Chapter (FT) – Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Mono, and Tulare counties

- Humboldt-Trinity-Mendocino Chapter (HTM) – Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, Mendocino, and Lake counties

- Kern Chapter (KE) – Kern county

- México Chapter (MX) - All certified clients located in Mexico

- North Coast Chapter (NC) – Marin, Napa, and Sonoma counties

- North Valley Chapter (NV) – Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Yuba counties

- Pacific Southwest Chapter (PS) – Desert Valley, Imperial, South Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties

- Processor/Handler Chapter (PR) – Processors, Handlers, Packers, Retailers, Brokers, Private Labelers, and Restaurants

- San Luis Obispo Chapter (SL) – San Luis Obispo County

- Sierra Gold Chapter (SG) – Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, and Tuolumne counties

- South Coast Chapter (SC) – Santa Barbara, Ventura, and North Los Angeles counties

- Yolo Chapter (YO) – Colusa, Sacramento, Solano, Sutter, and Yolo counties

## CCOF Leadership

To help guide our work and serve the organic community, CCOF has three governing boards, including the CCOF, Inc. Board of Directors, the CCOF Certification Services, LLC Management Committee, and the CCOF Foundation Trustees, plus several committees.

### CCOF, Inc. Board of Directors

CCOF's governing board of directors is elected by certified members for three-year terms. Board members include chapter representatives that are nominated by chapter members. CCOF, Inc. also has several committees in place to address a variety of topics such as finance, marketing, personnel, and government affairs (advisory). Chapter affiliation is indicated by the two-letter code in parentheses.

## Officers

- **Phil LaRocca** (NV), Chair, LaRocca Vineyards
- **Malcolm Ricci** (KE), Vice Chair, Bolthouse Farms
- **Vernon Peterson** (FT), Treasurer, Abundant Harvest Organics
- **Thaddeus Barsotti** (YO), Secretary, Capay Organic and Farm Fresh to You

## Directors

- **Genevieve Albers** (NC), Traditional Medicinals
- **Karen Archipley** (PS), Archi's Acres
- **Grant Brians** (CC), Heirloom Organic Gardens
- **Rich Ferreira** (SG), Side Hill Citrus
- **Eduardo Morales** (MX), Promotora Agrícola El Toro
- **Brad Samuelson** (BV), Corigin
- **Renee Thresher** (PR), Lundberg Family Farms
- **Jutta Thoerner** (SL), Manzanita Manor Organics
- **Ted Vivatson** (HT), Eel River Brewing
- **Steve Zaritsky** (SC), SZ Ranch

## CCOF Certification Services, LLC Management Committee

The LLC Management Committee is the governing body for CCOF Certification Services, LLC.

Management Committee members are appointed by the CCOF, Inc. Board of Directors for three-year terms.

- **Brad Samuelson**, Chair, Corigin
- **Cathy Calfo**, CCOF, Inc.
- **Charles Fowler**, Fowler Ranch
- **Jenneke de Jong**, Bonanza View Dairy
- **Tom Willey**, T&D Willey Farms

## CCOF Foundation Board of Trustees

The CCOF Foundation Board of Trustees is the governing body for the CCOF Foundation. Trustees are appointed by the CCOF, Inc. Board of Directors for three-year terms.

- **Allen Harthorn**, Chairman, Harpos Organics
- **Lee Altier, Ph.D.**, Trustee, California State University, Chico
- **Karen Archipley**, Trustee, Archi's Acres
- **Phil LaRocca**, Trustee, LaRocca Vineyards
- **Malcolm Ricci**, Trustee, Bolthouse Farms

## Web Presence

[www.ccof.org](http://www.ccof.org)





## IV. About Vetted Solutions

**Vetted Solutions** is an executive search firm specializing in association, nonprofit, and hospitality/destination marketing community recruiting and consulting. We focus on CEO and senior staff positions.

*Should you have questions about the CCOF search and/or your potential candidacy, please contact one of the lead recruiters listed below. Otherwise, please email your cover letter and resume to Jim Zaniello, who is leading the search, at [jim.zaniello@vettedsolutions.com](mailto:jim.zaniello@vettedsolutions.com).*



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