

## **USDA Appoints Recirculating Farms Coalition Executive Director to Special Task Force**

*New Task Force Members Will Discuss Organic Standards for Hydroponic and Aquaponic Operations*

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**New Orleans, LA** — Today, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that it has selected [Recirculating Farms Coalition](#) Executive Director Marianne Cufone, along with 15 other diversely qualified experts in the areas of hydroponic, aquaponic, and organic production, to serve on a new task force that will discuss organic standards for hydroponic and aquaponic operations.

“I am honored to be selected to participate on the new Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force,” said Marianne Cufone. She continued, “soil-less growing, like hydroponics and aquaponics, has become a significant part of U.S. agriculture, and it is exciting that USDA is considering unique organic standards for these farming methods.”

Task force members will provide the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), an advisory body to the USDA, with essential technical information and analysis through a report about the current state of technologies and practices for hydroponics and aquaponics, and how those practices do or do not align with the USDA organic regulations. The work of the task force will allow the NOSB to determine the best path forward regarding recommendations on hydroponics and aquaponics production systems, a topic that has become a top priority for the organic community.

“I look forward to discussing hydroponic and aquaponic production with the other members of the task force and working with USDA, NOSB and the National Organics Program on this important project.” Cufone said.

The Recirculating Farms Coalition is a national non-profit organization, headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana. The group works with farms and farmers who use recirculating farming – growing systems where water and wastes are constantly recycled and reused. This includes hydroponics - raising plants in nutrient rich water, aquaculture - raising fish in on-land tanks, and aquaponics - a combination of hydroponics and aquaculture, raising both plants and fish together in one interconnected system, as well as “hybrid” systems that combine these techniques with soil-based farming.

For more information see: [USDA announcement](#) on the new Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force appointments and the [Recirculating Farms Coalition](#) website.