

# Inspection Information ~ Produce & Livestock

**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.
- You may not repeatedly rely on the same inspector when there are other CNG farmers nearby. Doing so risks compromising the integrity of the program and fails to provide you diverse perspectives and feedback. Such repeat inspections may not be considered valid. Variances may be granted in special cases, as when a particularly experienced inspector is willing to inspect more than once, or very few producers are located nearby.
- 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!
- 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.
- Every CNG producer must *conduct* at least one inspection of another CNG operation (of a similar type) annually. This requirement is waived if there is not another CNG producer within an hour's drive of you.
- You may be de-listed from the CNG program if you do not arrange an inspection for your own 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. This requirement is waived if there is not another CNG farm within an hour's drive of you (but *not* the requirement that your farm *be inspected*).
- Inspections by family members, employees and interns are not considered valid.

**Types of Inspectors ~ Note there are options besides other CNG producers!**

- CNG Producers If possible, have your inspection done by another CNG producer in your area who is familiar with your type of production (so a beekeeper shouldn't inspect a livestock producer, unless they also raise livestock). Remember you can't inspect the person who inspects you. Visit the CNG map at [www.cngfarming.org/map](http://www.cngfarming.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 As an alternative, you may rely on a non-CNG farmer using natural practices. Consider contacting a certified organic farmer, or a non-certified producer using natural methods who is familiar with your type of production. The inspector must be a farmer producing for market, not a gardener.
- Extension Agents, SWCD 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.

## Tips for success

Look at the Map on the website to find CNG members near you. Search by zip code! [CNGfarming.org/map](http://CNGfarming.org/map)

Use the telephone! E-mail is fine for initial outreach, but a follow-up 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.CNGfarming.org/cngforms](http://www.CNGfarming.org/cngforms)