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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Organic Landscaping Course Addresses Growing Need for Chemical-Free Experts  
Four Day Course at USM Accredits Organic Land Care Professionals (AOLCPs)**

**June 1, 2016: Derby, CT** – Landscaping professionals transitioning to organic practices, and those already using chemical-free options who want to learn more, are invited to attend a 30-hour professional training course at the University of Southern Maine, Portland on August 15, 16, 22, & 23, 2016, and sit for the accreditation exam. Since 2002, The NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care has been the definitive professional training course for landscapers, lawn care specialists, municipal groundskeepers, landscape architects and environmental educators to learn and adopt best practices for caring for the land without synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Attendees who pass the accreditation exam on August 23 become Accredited Organic Land Care Professionals (AOLCPs), joining over 500 NOFA AOLCPs in 20 states, including 8 in Maine.

Landscaping professionals in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and other New England states increasingly consider this course a savvy investment in distinguishing themselves as highly trained experts in the growing market for non-toxic and organic landscaping services. Demand for organic land care professionals is increasing rapidly in Maine due to a growing concern about the hazards of synthetic pesticides and the adoption of ordinances banning or restricting the use of chemical pesticides on town, and sometimes private, land in twenty-seven towns including Ogunquit, Rockland and most recently, South Portland. After receiving requests from Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), Portland Protectors, and many individuals to bring the course to Maine, NOFA is pleased to announce its inaugural course dates and offer early bird registration of \$695 until June 30 at [organiclandcare.net](http://organiclandcare.net).

“This dynamic course is packed with an enormous amount of information delivered by some of the organic landscape industry’s most knowledgeable and engaging speakers” says February 2016 course graduate and AOLCP Jen Dunlap, a Horticulturist with Maine Coastal Botanical Gardens in Boothbay. “Business owners, organizations, and individuals, alike, will benefit from this excellent value and keen marketing tool. Whether you are new to the idea of organic land care or are interested in advancing your skills to the next level, this course can meet your needs.”

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Local professionals joining the roster of notable Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care instructors include David Melevsky of Go Green Landscaping Inc. of Scarborough, Maine who will teach “Organic Tick Control” and Paula Kovecses of The Way It Grows, a landscaping company in Eastport, Maine, will teach "Introduction to Permaculture." Seasoned instructors include leading organic land care industry experts Chip Osborne of Osborne Organics, Michael Nadeau of Wholistic Land Care Consulting, Frank Crandall of Frank Crandall Horticultural Solutions, and Paul Wagner of Greener Pastures Organics. The curriculum includes soil health and proper soil testing, site analysis, green stormwater infrastructure, plant care and organic turf.

The course runs from 8:00am - 5:00pm each day and can accommodate up to 60 students. The early bird registration fee of \$695 includes all course materials, lunch, the final exam and 2016 Accreditation. Group discounts and payment plans are available. For more details including a course curriculum, and to register, contact the Northeast Organic Farming Association (CT NOFA) office at 203-308-2584 or visit [www.organiclandcare.net](http://www.organiclandcare.net).