

Transitioning to Organic Agriculture Funding Opportunity Fiscal Year 2013

Maine

December 2012

Organic farming is one of the fastest growing segments in U.S. agriculture. From 1992 through 2005, the acres of certified organic cropland rose from 403,000 to more than 1.7 million; organically certified pasture acres rose from 532,000 to over 4 million; and the total number of organic certified livestock rose from 11,000 in 1992 to over 196,000.

Legislative Changes

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) highlights the availability of technical and financial assistance to help producers of all commodities meet their conservation goals, including producers transitioning to organic farming and currently certified organic producers. It specifically includes help to agricultural producers transitioning to organic farming.

EQIP for Organic Transition

There is a new initiative to assist producers transitioning to organic farming develop a "Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition". Technical and financial assistance is being made available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The assistance from NRCS through the EQIP Program helps producers plan and implement conservation practices to allow their organic operations to be environmentally sustainable.

What is a CPSOT

A Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition (CPSOT) is a conservation activity plan (CAP) documenting decisions by producers who agree to implement a system of conservation practices which assist the producer to transition from conventional farming systems to an organic production system.

Developing a CPSOT

Conservation Plans Supporting Organic Transition will be developed by a Technical Service Provider (TSP), who is certified by NRCS and placed on an "approved list" to provide technical assistance to producers for specific conservation programs administered by USDA. You can find the names of certified TSPs at <http://techreg.usda.gov/>, or through your local NRCS office (listed on page 2).

Financial Assistance

A conservation activity plan must be approved in a participant's contract as a financial assistance item in order for the participant to receive \$1,568 (*non-local \$2,530). Participants classified as Historically Underserved will receive \$1,882 (*non-local \$3,036). This financial assistance will help to offset the cost of the conservation planning portion of the Organic Systems Plan required for organic certification. Existing certified organic producers are not eligible.

*No TSP available within a 300-mile radius of the work location.

Application Deadline

Applications are being accepted on a continuous basis.

Need more information? Contact:

Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Counties

254 Goddard Road
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Tel: 207-753-9400

Aroostook County:

Central Aroostook
735 Main Street, Suite #3
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Tel: 207-764-4153

Southern Aroostook
304 North Street
Houlton, ME 04730-9527
Tel: 207-532-2087

St. John Valley
139 Market Street, Suite 106
Fort Kent, ME 04743-1425
Tel: 207-834-3311

Cumberland and York Counties

306 U.S. Route 1, Suite A1
Scarborough, ME 04074-9774
Tel: 207-883-0159

Franklin County

107 Park Street
Farmington, ME 04938-1915
Tel: 207-778-4767

Hancock County

1423 Broadway, Suite #4
Bangor, ME 04401
Tel: 207-947-6622 ext. 5

Kennebec and Lincoln Counties

Central Maine Commerce Center
21 Enterprise Drive, Suite #1
Augusta, ME 04330
Tel: 207-622-7847

Oxford County

17 Olson Road
So. Paris, ME 04281
Tel: 207-743-5789

Penobscot County

1423 Broadway, Suite #2
Bangor, ME 04401
Tel: 207-947-6622

Piscataquis County

42 Engdahl Drive
Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426-3717
Tel: 207-564-2321

Somerset County

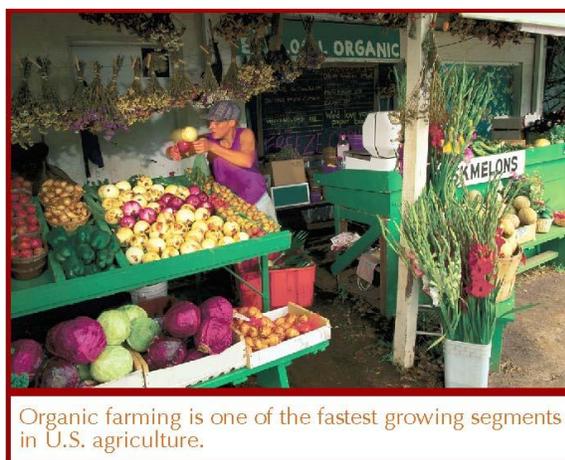
12 High Street, Suite #3
Skowhegan, ME 04976-1998
Tel: 207-474-8324

Waldo and Knox Counties

266 Waterville Road
Belfast, ME 04915-1224
Tel: 207-338-1964

Washington County

8 M & M Place, #5B
Machias, ME 04654-0121
Tel: 207-255-3995



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