



# Transitioning to Organic Agriculture Funding Opportunity Fiscal Year 2017

Natural Resources Conservation Service - Maine

January 2017

*Implementing an organic system requires a tactful approach to successfully carry out common agricultural activities, such as managing pests and building soil health.*

## Legislative Initiative

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2014 (2014 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 an initiative to assist producers transitioning to organic farming with development of 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. Certified TSPs can be found at <http://techreg.sc.egov.usda.gov/>, or through your local NRCS office.

## 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 \$2,278 (\*non-local TSP \$3,555). Participants classified as Historically Underserved will receive \$2,733 (\*non-local TSP \$4,266). 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  
Lewiston, ME 04241  
(207) 753-9400

#### **Aroostook County:**

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

Southern Aroostook  
304 North Street  
Houlton, ME 04730  
(207) 532-2087

St. John Valley  
139 Market Street, Suite  
106 Fort Kent, ME 04743  
(207) 834-3311

#### **Cumberland and York Counties**

306 U.S. Route 1, Suite A1  
Scarborough, ME 04074  
(207) 883-0159

#### **Franklin County**

107 Park Street Farmington,  
ME 04938  
(207) 778-4767

#### **Hancock County**

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

#### **Kennebec and Lincoln Counties**

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

#### **Oxford County**

17 Olson Road  
So. Paris, ME 04281  
(207) 743-5789

#### **Penobscot County**

1423 Broadway, Suite  
#2 Bangor, ME 04401  
(207) 947-6622, ext. 3

#### **Piscataquis County**

42 Engdahl Drive  
Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426  
(207) 564-2321

#### **Somerset County**

70 East Madison Road  
Skowhegan, ME 04976  
(207) 474-8324

#### **Waldo and Knox Counties**

46 Little River Drive  
Belfast, ME 04915  
(207) 338-1964

#### **Washington County**

8 M&M Place, Suite 5B  
Machias, ME 04654  
(207) 255-3995