

Organic Certification Process

March 2018

History

- Many standards and certifiers
- Organic Foods Production Act of 1990
- Act implemented in 2002
- Consumer demand, market based
- *Only 1 standard; “organic” = USDA*



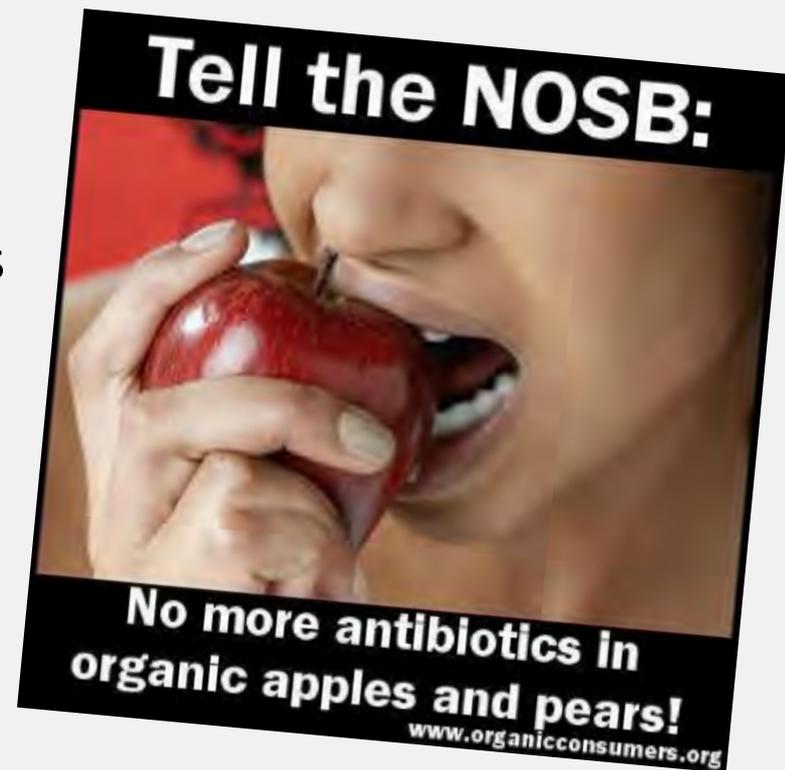
USDA National Organic Program

- Regulations and guidance
- Enforcement
- Accredited Certifying Agent (ACA) provides certification
- Audit ACAs



National Organic Standards Board

- 15 member
- Recommendation about substances
- Development of standards (i.e. commercially available seeds)
- Public



A wide-angle photograph of a rural landscape. The foreground is filled with dense, vibrant green vegetation, likely alfalfa or a similar cover crop. In the middle ground, several large, cylindrical hay bales are scattered across a green field. The background shows rolling hills under a clear, bright blue sky. In the distance, a cluster of white farm buildings, possibly a dairy farm, is visible on the left side. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a clear day.

Steps to certification

Step 1: Application

- Pick a certifier: 13 options in KS of *farms*:
 - 32% w/ Ecocert
 - 28% w/ OCIA (Organic Crop Improvement Assoc)
 - 16% w/ OK Dept of Ag
 - Rest with miscellaneous
- Complete OSP



Step 1: Application / OSP

- Land history
- Buffer zones
- Seeds, planting stock
- Fertility
- Pest management
- Harvest, storage,
- transportation
- Labeling
- Materials
- Recordkeeping

C6 – Crop Management

NOP §205.205 and §205.206

B. WEED, PEST, AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Check the management practices you use to prevent crop pests, weeds, and diseases. Add the name of your significant (recurring or potentially problematic) diseases (fungus, bacteria, virus) and all pest types: insects, mites, birds, rodents, deer, etc. There is no need to name weeds individually.

Management Practice	Weed	Pest	Disease
Crop rotation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soil and crop nutrient management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cover crops, green manures, smother crops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diversified plantings, planting arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sanitation measures to remove disease vectors, weed seeds, and pest habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selection of suitable species for growing location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disease, pest, weed, resistant varieties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timing of planting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water or irrigation management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mechanical or physical means (hoeing, pruning, picking, vacuuming, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Augment pest predators, parasites, beneficials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop habitat for natural enemies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construct habitat for predators (raptor perches, owl or bat boxes, frog ponds, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonsynthetic lures, traps, repellants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mechanical cultivation, tillage, or hand weeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mowing or livestock grazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mulching with biodegradable materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flaming, heat, steam, or electrical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic or synthetic mulch or solarization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Burning crop residue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others, describe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Operator #: Operation Name: Date:

As you describe your natural resource management practices, please note that some of your answers to questions about natural resource management may be relevant to other sections of this OSP as they relate to crop rotation, nutrient and manure management. The following questions are intended to address general, whole-farm goals and approaches to organic natural resource management.

1. Please describe how your farming or ranching practices – crop and/or livestock production practices – maintain or improve natural resources, foster cycling of nutrients, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Please list the specific strategies or practices you use that contribute to each general goal listed below, as applicable.

A) Conserve soil; Improve soil condition; Prevent soil erosion.

B) Prevent water contamination by plant nutrients; Protect water quality.

C) Conserve water

D) Conserve biodiversity (soil organisms, pollinators, natural enemies of pests, predators, native habitat, vegetation and wildlife).



Fees

- 2 fee structures
- (chapter member structure)
Base: \$325
- Acreage based fees (cap at \$3,250/yr)
 - Ex: \$1.50/acre for small grains;
\$2.95/acre for corn, large grains
- Inspection fees (hourly rate)
- OR fees based on sales plus inspection

Fee based on previous year's total organic sales,
or projected annual revenues for first-year operators.

1	\$ 0 to \$ 20,000	\$ 880
2	\$ 20,000 to \$ 30,000	\$ 1,100
3	\$ 30,000 to \$ 40,000	\$ 1,300
4	\$ 40,000 to \$ 60,000	\$ 1,500
5	\$ 60,000 to \$ 80,000	\$ 1,800
6	\$ 80,000 to \$ 110,000	\$ 2,100
7	\$ 110,000 to \$ 150,000	\$ 2,400
8	\$ 150,000 to \$ 200,000	\$ 2,800
9	\$ 200,000 to \$ 260,000	\$ 3,200
10	\$ 260,000 to \$ 340,000	\$ 3,700
11	\$ 340,000 to \$ 440,000	\$ 4,200
12	\$ 440,000 to \$ 560,000	\$ 4,700
13	\$ 560,000 to \$ 710,000	\$ 5,300
14	\$ 710,000 to \$ 900,000	\$ 5,900
15	\$ 900,000 to \$ 1,100,000	\$ 6,500
16	\$ 1,100,000 to \$ 1,300,000	\$ 7,200
17	\$ 1,300,000 to \$ 1,600,000	\$ 7,900
18	\$ 1,600,000 to \$ 1,900,000	\$ 8,600
19	\$ 1,900,000 to \$ 2,300,000	\$ 9,300
20	\$ 2,300,000 up	\$ 10,000



Fees

Crops/Wild Crops

The annual application fee is

\$375

The annual minimum inspection cost is

\$500

The annual certification fee is based on acreage as follows:

NOP Base Certification Cost		Transitional Base Certification Cost
Acres	Base Certification	
0 - 20*	\$240	<p>95% of NOP certification cost if your operation is not otherwise NOP certified</p> <p>If your operation is otherwise NOP certified, add a flat fee of \$500</p>
21 - 100	\$330	
101 - 250	\$410	
251 - 500	\$500	
501 - 800	\$550	
801 - 1,250	\$770	
1,251 - 2,500	\$980	
2,501 - 3,500	\$1,300	
3,500 - 5,000	\$1,470	
5,000+	Please contact us	



United States Department of Agriculture

USDA Organic Certification Cost Share Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service

Making Organic Certification Affordable

You're Certified...Now Get Reimbursed!



1 Contact Your
State Agency

or FSA Office

2 Submit
Information

3 Get
Reimbursed



USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Learn more about the Organic Certification Cost Share Programs at <http://bit.ly/CostShareGen>

Step 2: Review OSP



PART 205—NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM

Contents

Subpart A—Definitions

§ 205.1 Meaning of words.

§ 205.2 Terms defined.

Subpart B—Applicability

§ 205.100 What has to be certified.

§ 205.101 Exemptions and exclusions from certification.

§ 205.102 Use of the term, "organic."

§ 205.103 Recordkeeping by certified operations.

§ 205.104 [Reserved]

§ 205.105 Allowed and prohibited substances, methods, and ingredients in organic production and handling.

§§ 205.106-205.199 [Reserved]

Subpart C—Organic Production and Handling Requirements

§ 205.200 General.

§ 205.201 Organic production and handling system plan.

§ 205.202 Land requirements.

§ 205.203 Soil fertility and crop nutrient management practice standard.

§ 205.204 Seeds and planting stock practice standard.

§ 205.205 Crop rotation practice standard.

§ 205.206 Crop pest, weed, and disease management practice standard.

§ 205.207 Wild-crop harvesting practice standard.

§§ 205.208-205.235 [Reserved]

Step 3: Inspection



Step 3: Inspection

- Inspection cost often hourly = be prepared:
 - Field maps
 - Crop rotation plan
 - Field records (planting, inputs, pest control)
 - Harvest records
 - Input documentation (purchase of seeds, fertilizers, etc)
 - Sales documentation (products, quantities, etc)

Step 4: Review Report



Step 5: Decision



Certification

- Annual update & inspection
- Ongoing updates
- Unannounced inspections
- Residue testing



Record Keeping

- Maintain records concerning the production, harvesting, and handling of organic agricultural products (**§ 205.103**)
- Records must:
 - be adapted to the particular operation (i.e. flexible!) and sufficient to demonstrate compliance
 - be maintained for 5 years
- Lots of templates (ATTRA, certifiers)

Ecocert Seed Search Documentation

Name and Contact of Information of Source	Method of Contact	Date Contacted	Reason Organic Equivalent is unavailable
1. [REDACTED] Does this supplier carry organic seeds (Y/N)? [REDACTED]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fax <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mail	[REDACTED]	Please check at least one reason and provide further justification here: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quantity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form/Variety Explanation: [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED] Does this supplier carry organic seeds (Y/N)? [REDACTED]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fax <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mail	[REDACTED]	Please check at least one reason and provide further justification here: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quantity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form/Variety Explanation: [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED] Does this supplier carry organic seeds (Y/N)? [REDACTED]	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Fax <input type="checkbox"/> Mail	[REDACTED]	Please check at least one reason and provide further justification here: <input type="checkbox"/> Quality <input type="checkbox"/> Quantity <input type="checkbox"/> Form/Variety Explanation: [REDACTED]

Ecocert Documentation Forms

AUDIT TRAIL FORMS

ECOCERT ICO

Page 8/14

FIELD INPUTS LOG

A record of the materials you use for each field

Name of certified operation:

Field ID: Acres: Crop: Year:

Seeds/Transplants

Date	Crop/variety - Planted/transplanted	Seeding rate/Transplant spacing
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Fertilizers/Pest Control

Date	Material applied/ - Brand or Source	Rate/Amount	Notes
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Additional Notes and Observations

<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>

Transitional Certification

- OPTIONAL
- Apply after 1 year (of 3 year transition)
- Fees often same as organic certification
- Can NOT use the word “organic”
- Market incentives?

Kansas Organic





We're celebrating our Investing in INTEGRITY data quality award winners. Find out more at <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAAMS/bulletins/1d9233c>. We're also working on finalizing the 2017 Annual List of Certified Organic Operations. In the meantime, you can quickly download recent data snapshots of the full list in the search results export format (go.usa.gov/xnwCS) and data submission template format (<https://go.usa.gov/xnwrq>).

Welcome to the Organic *INTEGRITY* Database!

Find a specific certified organic farm or business, or search for an operation with specific characteristics. Listings come from USDA-Accredited Certifying Agents. Historical Annual Lists of Certified Organic Operations and monthly snapshots of the full data set are available for download on the Data History page. Only certified operations can sell, label or represent products as organic, unless exempt or excluded from certification.

Certifier Reset

Advanced Search

Export To Excel

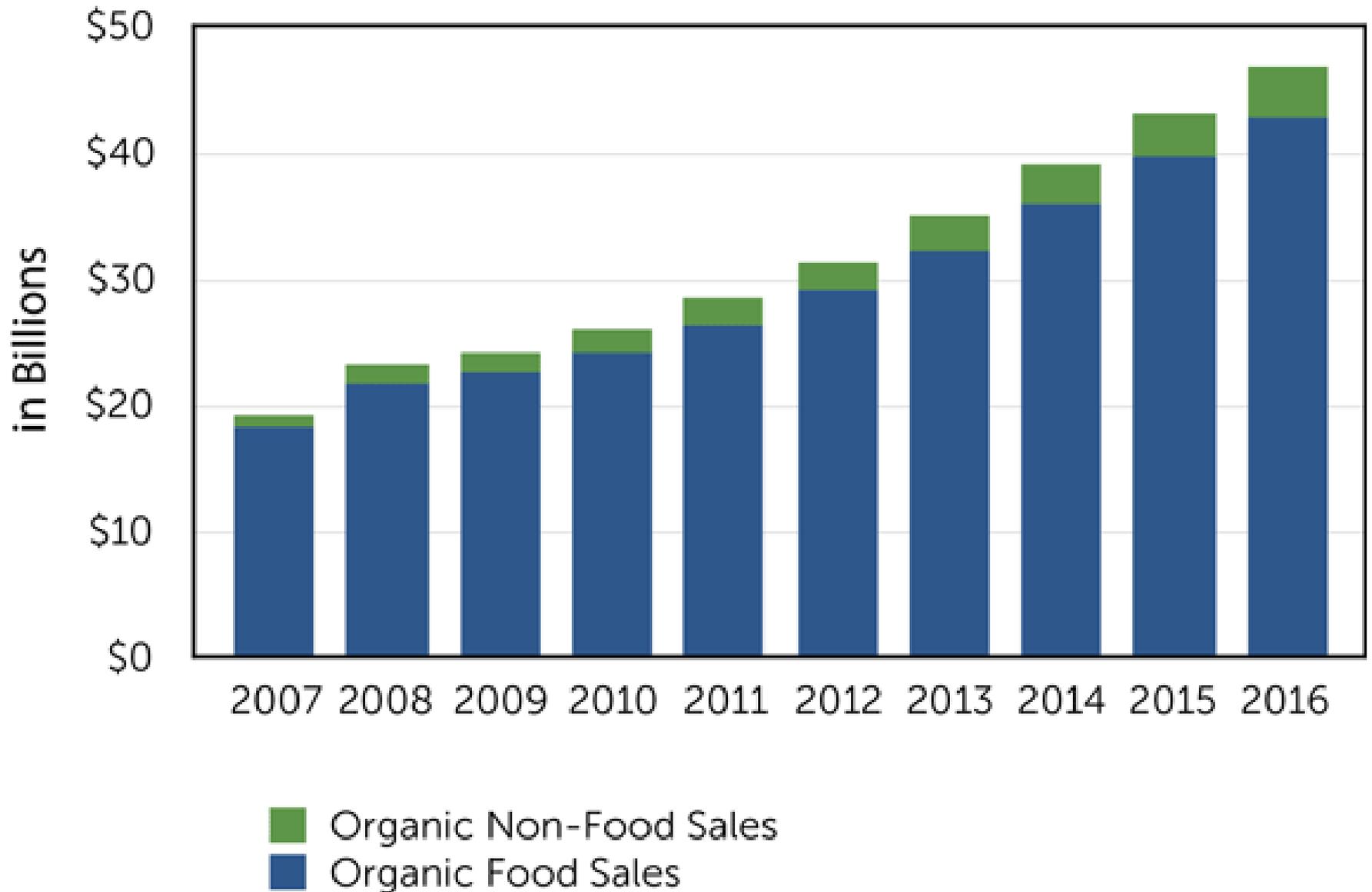
Operation	Certifier	Info	Status	City	State/Province	Country	Certified Products
<input type="text"/>			Certified	<input type="text"/>	KS-Kansas	Enter Country	<input type="text"/>
Advanced Food Services, Inc.	[OCIA] Organic Crop Improvement Association		Certified	Lenexa	Kansas	United States of America	HANDLING: Other: Blending of Organic Product, Bread Mix, Packaging of Organic Products
Agvanced Enterprises	[OCIA] Organic Crop Improvement Association		Certified	New Cambria	Kansas	United States of America	HANDLING: Other: Flours
Akers Three Farm	[OCIA] Organic Crop Improvement Association		Certified	Beloit	Kansas	United States of America	CROPS: Other: Wheat
Alan Krenzel Farms, Inc.	[ICS] International Certification Services, Inc.		Certified	Leoti	Kansas	United States of America	CROPS: Field/Forageable: Wheat
Alba Ranch	[OCIA] Organic Crop Improvement Association		Certified	Robinson	Kansas	United States of America	CROPS: Other: Alfalfa, Clover... More

Kansas Organic

- ~180 certified operations
 - 120 in crop (corn, wheat, alfalfa, vegetables)
 - ~60 handling (feed, slaughter, etc)
 - ~10 in livestock (cattle, hens)



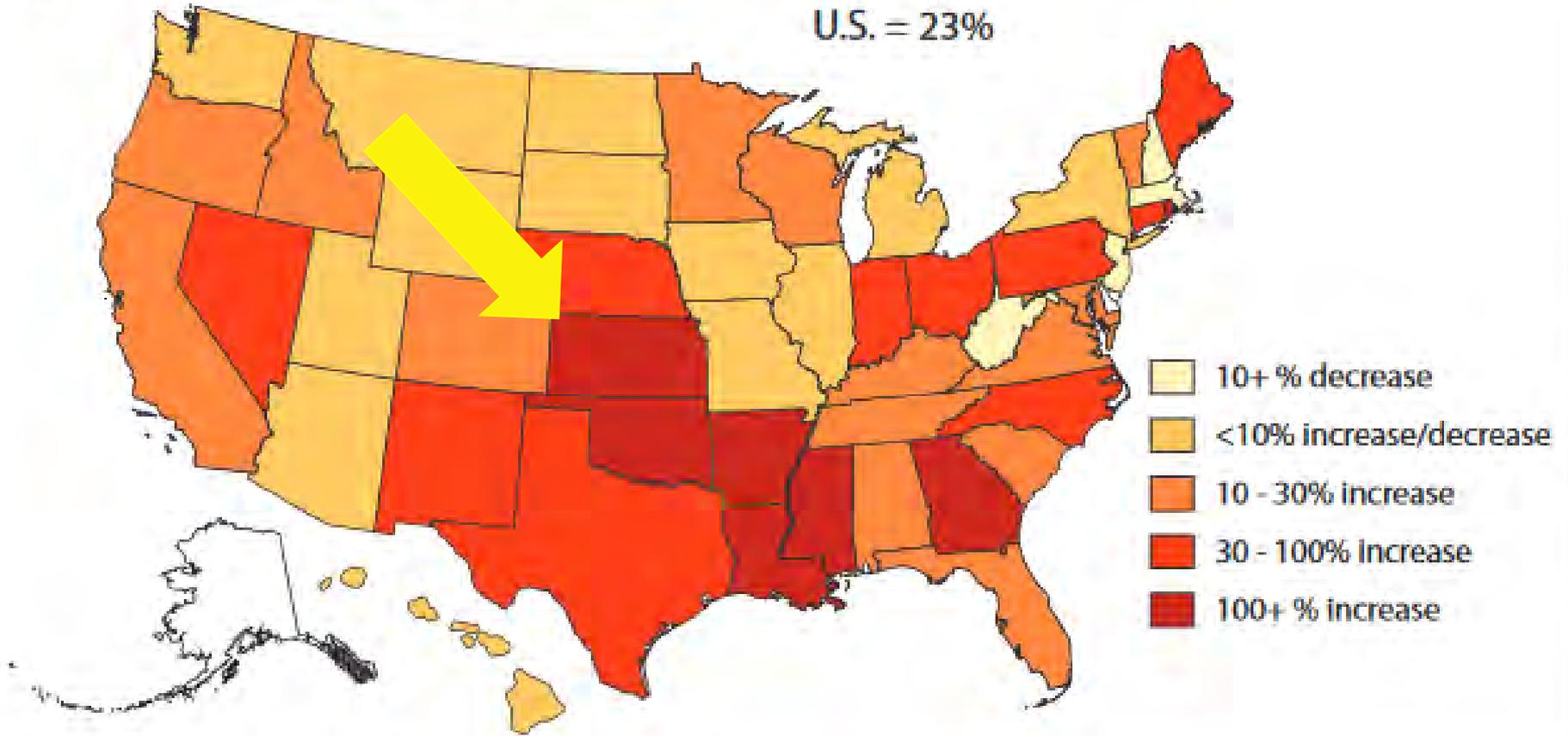
Total U.S. Organic Sales and Growth, 2007–2016



Source: Organic Trade Association

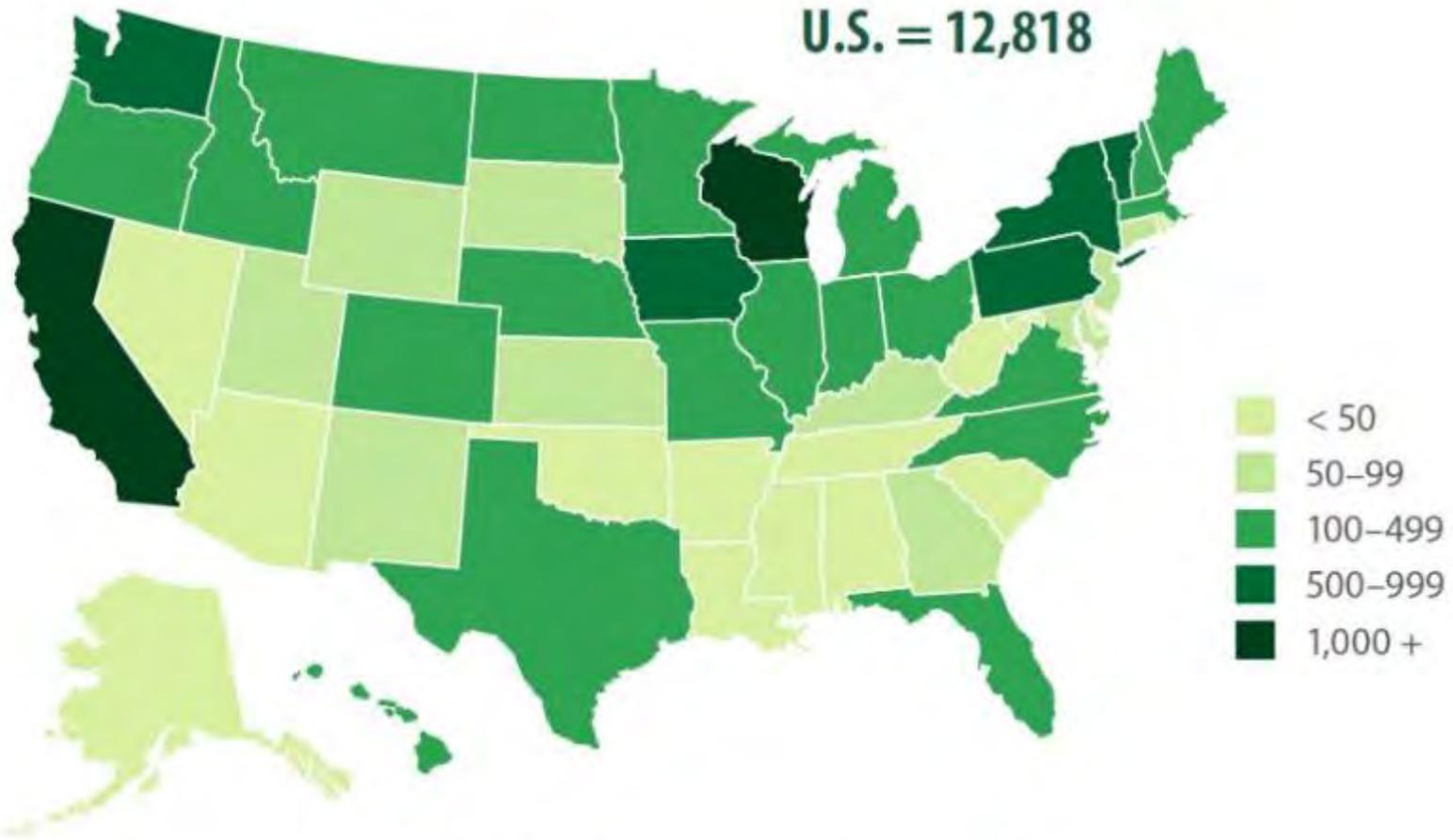
Organic Sales by Percent of Change in the State, 2015 to 2016

U.S. = 23%



Number of Certified Organic Farms, by State, 2015

California and Wisconsin had more than 1,000; South had few



Source: USDA NASS 2015 Certified Organic Survey



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Find out more at www.nass.usda.gov

Questions?
Comments?





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Program



National Organic Program

SHARE



The National Organic Program (NOP) is a regulatory program housed within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. We are responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. Our regulations do not address food safety or nutrition.

Key Activities

- Maintain the list of certified organic operations and help new farmers and business learn how to get certified
- Develop regulations and guidance on organic standards



Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy



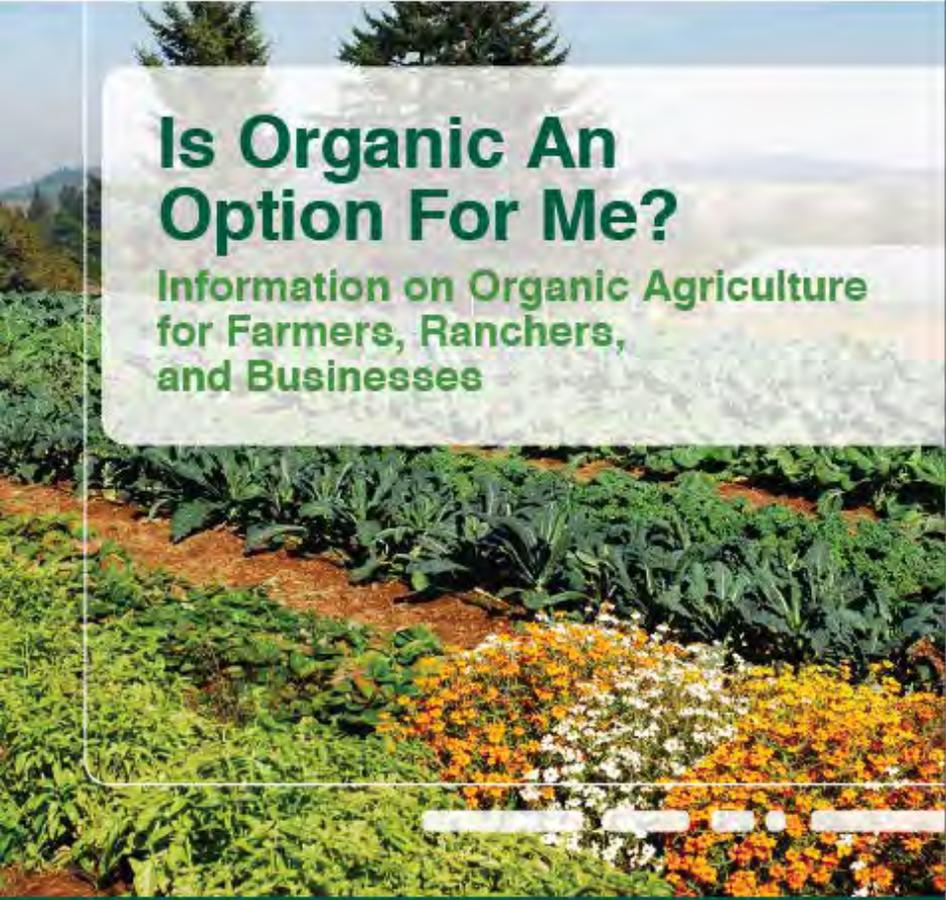
Get USDA Organic Insider updates!





Is Organic An Option For Me?

Information on Organic Agriculture
for Farmers, Ranchers,
and Businesses



April 2015

This brochure provides an overview of the USDA organic regulations and how USDA supports organic agriculture. It includes information on getting certified, funding opportunities, and educational resources.

For more information, visit www.ams.usda.gov/organicinfo or, if viewing this brochure online, use the  icons in each section.

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- What Is Organic?p. 1
- USDA's Role: Oversight and Morep. 3
- Certificationp. 7
- USDA Resources for Organic Producersp. 11
- Where Can I Learn More About loans, grants,
and other USDA resources?p. 17



NOP Sound & Sensible

- Videos, how to guides, self assessments, etc.
- Developed with partners like WSDA, Tilth, and many more

Steps to Certification

Organic Certification doesn't have to be daunting. Explore the five key steps in the organic certification process.



[Click to play](#) [External link]

THE ROAD

TO ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

For maximum benefit, we recommend playing through both character modules. If you are only looking for information on a specific topic, you may want to access the Topic Menu.

[Start Interactive Movie](#)



Guide for Organic Crop Producers

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Technology (NCAT)
Agriculture Specialist
November 2012

Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2	Organic Agriculture – Description and History.....	3
Chapter 3	The Certification Process.....	7
Chapter 4	Writing the Organic System Plan (OSP).....	13
Chapter 5	Soil Fertility.....	18
Chapter 6	Seeds and Planting Stock.....	25
Chapter 7	Crop Rotation.....	29
Chapter 8	Managing Pests, Weeds, and Diseases.....	32
Chapter 9	The National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.....	37
Chapter 10	Greenhouse Production.....	43
Chapter 11	Preventing Contamination of Organic Crops.....	46
Chapter 12	Post-Harvest and Labeling.....	50
Chapter 13	Recordkeeping.....	54
Chapter 14	Structural Pest Management.....	57
Chapter 15	Resources.....	61

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

New farmers, and farmers experienced in conventional agriculture, often find that obtaining organic certification for their crops is quite challenging. This guide is intended to help lead farmers through the organic certification process. Chapters 1 through 4 explain the National Organic Program (NOP) and describe the process of organic certification. Later chapters explain specific USDA organic regulations that apply to planting, soil fertility, pest management, and other farm practices. In addition to interpreting the regulations, this guide explains the practices and materials that are allowed for organic production.

Who should read this guide?

- Conventional farmers who are considering organic certification for their crops.
- Farmers in the process of converting to organic practices.
- Farmers who are new to organic certification.
- Farmers who are exempt from certification because they sell less than \$5,000 of organic produce per year.
- Extension personnel and other information providers.

This guide was designed to be read before completing an application for organic certification. This is not a required document; it is a helpful guide that you may use as you wish.

How to use this guide

To be certified organic by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), farms must be managed in accordance with the regulations in Title 7, Part 205 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Where the USDA organic seal appears, the text quotes from these Federal regulations. The verbatim text of the regulation language follows the section and paragraph (for example, § 205.203). The verbatim text is followed by an explanation of the regulation.

This guide uses the term "USDA organic regulations" to refer to the United States' Federal regulations that govern organic crop production, livestock production, handling, processing, and labeling. Different terminology is often used in other publications to refer to the same regulations: "National Organic Standards," "NOP Final Rule," or simply "standards," "Rules," or "requirements" are common examples. In this guide, some of the section titles in the regulations are referred to as "standards" to correspond with the actual text—for example, "§ 205.204 Seeds and planting stock practice standard."

The term "standard" is also commonly used in relationship to the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). The NOSB is a citizen advisory board that helps the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) determine which substances and practices may be used in certified organic production and handling. However, these recommendations are not part of the USDA organic regulations until the USDA decides the appropriate regulatory direction after completing a formal review and receiving public comments.



United States Department of Agriculture



Making the Transition to Organic Production and Handling

Adopting organic conservation practices can help producers and handlers access new customers and markets as well as comply with regulatory policy. However, making the transition to organic production and handling takes both time and planning. Implementing an organic system requires a tactful approach to successfully carry out common agricultural activities, such as managing pests, building soil health, and improving livestock and herd health. Organic producers and handlers must also take additional care to prevent mixing organic with non-organic products and contact with certain substances.

Organic agriculture uses cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that support the cycling of on-farm resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Conservation practices are typically bundled into a conservation system to maintain or enhance soil and water quality as well as conserve wetlands, grasslands, forests, and wildlife habitat. Avoiding the use of synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering are paramount to organic farming. To learn more about organic practices, see the "Introduction to Organic Practices" factsheet at www.ams.usda.gov/publications/.

After completing the transition, producers and processors must get certified. This requires preparing an Organic System Plan (OSP), submitting it to a USDA-accredited certifier, and having an onsite inspection. Initial certification can take three to six months. Maintaining certification status through annual inspections is a key part of the organic regulations.

To support the progress of organic system planning, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial and technical assistance for the development of a "Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition." This conservation activity plan documents decisions by producers/growers who agree to implement a system of conservation practices which assist the producer to transition from conventional farming or ranching systems to organic production systems. Once certified, organic producers and processors can label their products as organic as long as they continue to follow the organic regulations.

Assistance for Transitioning Producers

Additional support offered by USDA NRCS to producers who are either in transition or already certified is listed below:

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Organic Initiative** provides financial and technical assistance to certified or transitioning organic producers who are interested in conservation planning and who voluntarily implement conservation practices. View information at 1.usa.gov/1rXFWL.
- **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** provides financial assistance to producers that have demonstrated a benchmark for ecological conditions on their farm and are voluntarily enhancing their stewardship activities through advanced level conservation activities. Typically, producers will be guided to CSP after they have successfully completed EQIP conservation practices. View information at 1.usa.gov/1NBvLb.

Transition Overview

Before producers can use land to raise organic products, they must ensure that no prohibited fertilizers or pesticides have been applied to the land during a three-year transition period. Some lands, such as fallow or pasture lands, may be immediately certified if three years have already passed.

Producers interested in participating in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs should ensure they follow policies for highly erodible land and wetland conservation. View information at 1.usa.gov/1j4cYd.

The USDA National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List) identifies substances that are prohibited in organic production. To evaluate whether land needs to undergo a three-year transition, view information at 1.usa.gov/1uOTSHD.