Looking Ahead to 2023:

The Sustainability Council’s goal for 2023 is to use the Organic Wheel of Sustainability as a framework for discussing the true cost accounting of organic. The Council will identify member initiatives and collect data points to enhance clear and consistent messaging around organic and sustainability; OTA’s Organic Wheel of Sustainability and other Organic Opportunity Communications Toolkit resources were identified as a good starting place.

- Leveraging industry partnerships and supplier engagement for sustainable packaging improvements
- Sustainable development broader than climate change
- Social responsibility
- Structural conversations and collective data points help keep a large group engaged and progressing toward a shared goal

The Sustainability Council also hosted engaging breakout groups and guided discussions in council meetings around questions and topics of interest to the Council members:

- Measuring and reporting on the positive impacts of organic purchasing and climate action
- Engaging the broader supply chain in advancing organic and regenerative practices, and sustainability
- Materiality assessments
- Science-based targets
- Social responsibility
- Sustainable development broader than climate change
- Leveraging industry partnerships and supplier engagement for sustainable packaging improvements

Council members value opportunities to share successes and challenges, collective advocacy and impact, and benchmark progress through mandatory reporting.

Council members in the coming year. Key takeaways identified from their previous two years of work included:

- The Climate Change Task Force concluded work on their specific projects, but the need for climate advocacy and communication remains a top priority for OTA members. Establishing the OTA Sustainability Council encompassing these groups allows this work to continue at a larger scale on an ongoing basis.

The Sustainability Council is a hub for all member stakeholders engaged in sustainability management strategies.

The Council meets quarterly with additional opportunities to connect and collaborate throughout the year.

2022 Highlights:

The SFTA Council, Climate Change Task Force, and Advocating for Organic within National Retailer Sustainability Initiative Task Force merged to form the new OTA Sustainability Council under the OTA Board of Director’s approval in November 2022. The SFTA Council spent much of 2022 analyzing takeaways from each group’s previous work and building its 2022 work plan and project goals that allow for OTA Board engagement from Council members in the coming year. Key takeaways identified from their previous two years of work included:

- Council members value opportunities to share successes and challenges, collective advocacy and impact, and benchmark progress through mandatory reporting.
- Structural conversations and collective data points help keep a large group engaged and progressing toward a shared goal.
- Climate-focused initiatives are the biggest focus for most Council members.
- There is a need for clearer and consistent messaging around organic and sustainability; OTA’s Organic Wheel of Sustainability and other Organic Opportunity Communications Toolkit resources were identified as a good starting place.

Council members value opportunities to share successes and challenges, collective advocacy and impact, and benchmark progress through mandatory reporting; OTA’s Organic Wheel of Sustainability and other Organic Opportunity Communications Toolkit resources were identified as a good starting place.