

May 6, 2022, the Organic Trade Association applied for funding under the [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#) grant program to create a 5-year pilot to scale up the implementation of climate-smart practices on 1,600 U.S. certified organic and transitioning farms.

KEY GOALS



Reward organic and transitioning producers for being early adopters of climate-smart practices.



Strengthen organic data collection, particularly around soil health and climate-smart practices, and create an easy-to-use soil health measuring tool for organic and transitioning farms.



Communicate and educate the public on the climate-smart benefits of organic production and organic food, fiber, and other products.

In collaboration with The Organic Center, the pilot will provide free soil testing and analysis to organic and transitioning farmers to verify the outcomes of their climate-smart practices. Farmers will also receive free tailored and culturally appropriate technical assistance to add and enhance practices that improve soil health and sequester carbon and enable continuous improvement in their organic farming system. The pilot will increase efficiencies for organic farmers and expand market opportunities by integrating the use and verification of climate-smart practices and outcomes into the existing USDA National Organic Program (NOP) certification procedures and documentation, reducing costs, and eliminating duplicative requirements in current and future programs. Verified climate outcomes will inform a marketing and consumer education campaign on the climate benefits of USDA certified organic products.

OTA recruited a network of over 20 partners in this grant proposal who would promote engagement in the pilot program to more than 12,000 farms and operations across 6 million+ acres producing a wide range of organic goods including vegetables, fruits, berries, nuts, dairy, eggs, corn, soy, cotton, hemp, and more. Each partner's role in the project was mutually determined based on their knowledge and experience of the subject area, geographic reach within their target region, and capacity to deliver on ambitious goals.



Implementing Climate Smart Practices

Organic and transitioning to-organic producers apply to join the project. Enrolled producers will receive free soil testing and technical assistance for enhancing climate-smart practices currently in place and/or adding new practices.



Soil Analysis Verification

Soil samples are collected and lab tested to verify short- and long-term carbon storage responses to climate smart practices and assess other soil health indicators.



Marketing

Facilitating markets by connecting enrolled farmers to buyers and partners across the supply chain. Spreading the word to consumers by letting them know how organic embodies the climate smart ethos.