Organic Market Development Act
*Take Action Toolkit*

BACKGROUND
The Organic Market Development (OMD) Act was introduced on Sept. 27 in the Senate by Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Sen. Angus King (I-ME), Sen. Peter Welch (D-VT) and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and its companion bill in the House by Rep. Anne Kuster (D-NH), Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME), and Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-CA). OTA applauds the introduction as the legislation will go far in helping to unlock the potential of the organic marketplace and ensure the continued growth of organic in the United States.

The OMD Act is aimed at leveraging investments in new and expanded organic markets by funding and supporting increased processing capacity, market development activities, targeted equipment purchases, and other activities to increase consumption of domestic organic commodities. This legislation, codifying an existing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program, is fundamentally about solving the supply chain gaps for the market to support organic farmers and businesses. It creates a development program, administered by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, to offer grants annually to eligible applicants.

[**Learn more >>**](https://ota.com/news/press-releases/22929)

# TAKE ACTION

1. Contact your representative and senators and tell them to support the Organic Market Development Act.
	* Send a message to your representative in support of the OMD Act (H.R. 5763).
		1. [Search your business's zip code here](https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative) to find the appropriate representative.
		2. Follow the provided link to send your representative a message.
		3. If you have multiple locations, repeat the process for all Congressional districts where your operation is located.
	* Send a message to your senators in support of the OMD Act (S. 2936).
		1. [Search your business’s state location here](https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm) to find the appropriate senators.
		2. Follow the provided links to send your senators a message.
		3. If your operation is located in multiple states, repeat the process for each.
	* If your business is a constituent of a [House Agriculture Committee](https://agriculture.house.gov/about/committee_members.htm) or [Senate Agriculture Committee](https://www.senate.gov/general/committee_membership/committee_memberships_SSAF.htm) member, contact OTA for assistance on this targeted outreach.

## MESSAGE TEMPLATE*\*We encourage you to customize the following message to include why this issue is important to you and your sector of the organic industry.*

Dear Representative/Senator [*Name*]:

I am writing to encourage you to cosponsor H.R. 5763/S. 2936, the Organic Market Development Act—this critical legislation introduced by Representatives Kuster, Pingree, and Salinas/Senators Baldwin and King is important to the development of the necessary domestic infrastructure to continue to grow the organic market.

As an organic [*company/business/certifier, etc.*], the investment in organic infrastructure is important to me because [*INSERT PERSONAL STORY].*

Fortunately, the USDA has recognized the problem and committed $75 million for the Organic Market Development Grant program. However, this program is only available for this fiscal year and applications and requests for grant dollars exceeded the amount set aside by the agency. The Organic Market Development Act codifies this program and ensures the long-term viability and success of organic as well as permitting USDA flexibility to address future issues in the domestic supply chain through additional resources, both through the Commodity Credit Corporation and annual authorization of $25M through appropriated funds.

The development program will:

* + increase the capacity of the domestic organic product supply chain for producers, handlers, suppliers, and processors of certified organic products
	+ modernize manufacturing, tracking, storage, and information technology systems;
	+ improve the capacity of eligible entities to comply with applicable regulatory requirements or quality standards required to access markets;
	+ expand capacity for processing, aggregation, and distribution of certified organic products to create more and better markets for producers of certified organic products; facilitate market development for domestically produced certified organic products;
	+ conduct feasibility studies and market viability assessments to inform organic transition strategies and opportunities;
	+ address barriers to entry to organic product certification for historically underserved entities; and
	+ support market and promotional activities that help build commercial markets for certified organic products in the United States

By creating a grant program designed to meet the needs of businesses operating in the organic space, U.S. organic farmers can better realize the economic benefits of this type of agriculture and consumers can better obtain the organic products they wish to purchase.

I urge you to contact Elizabeth Silvia-Chandley (elizabeth.silvia-chandley@mail.house.gov) with Representative Kuster/ Sydney Scott (sydney\_scott@baldwin.senate.gov) with Senator Baldwin for more information on OMD and how to support federal investments in organic infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Member of the Organic Trade Association
[Name]
[Business]
[Town, State]
[Phone Number]