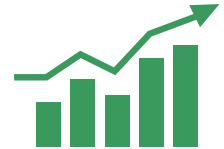


## Other Organic Trade Association Priorities for the Farm Bill

In addition to increased oversight, investment in organic research, and protecting the role of the National Organic Standards Board, the next Farm Bill should include the following priorities:

### RISK MANAGEMENT

Organic farmers need USDA to continue making improvements in the farm safety net to achieve appropriate risk management tools for organic farms. **Congress should direct the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to prioritize development of additional organic price elections for crop insurance** coverage, and review policies that cap Contract Price Addendums at two-times the conventional price election for any specific crop.



- ✓ Continue Whole-Farm Revenue Protection established in the 2014 Farm Bill and recognize the change in farm revenue after a farm has transitioned to organic. Eliminate the 30% cap on increased production value under the expansion provision.
- ✓ **Congress should direct the Farm Service Agency to develop organic price elections for storage loans offered.** Producers will then have the ability to access working capital based on the actual value of their crops to cash flow their operations.
  - Utilize existing data developed by RMA to establish storage loan prices.
- ✓ Congress should direct RMA to consider organic farming practices when developing the “good farming practices guide,” and ensure that organic producers’ ability to obtain crop insurance is not negatively impacted.

### ORGANIC DATA INITIATIVE

**The Organic Production Market and Data Initiatives (ODI)** is USDA’s flagship organic data collection initiative that collects information vital to maintaining stable markets, creating risk management tools, tracking production trends, and increasing exports. **The organic industry cannot continue to thrive and maintain stable markets without good data collection.**



- ✓ **Congress should maintain the same level of program funding from the 2014 Farm Bill by providing mandatory funding of \$5 million** over the life of the 2018 Farm Bill and an additional authorization of appropriations of \$5 million per year.

### CERTIFICATION COST SHARE

The *National Organic Certification Cost Share* program is important to transitioning farmers and to attracting new young farmers to organic. Farms can receive up to \$750 each year (75% of the certification fee) to help defray the annual costs of organic certification.

**The next farm bill should maintain funding and allow maximum flexibility in administering the program.**

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The next farm bill should focus on access to capital, infrastructure, technical expertise, and market connections between buyers and sellers.

Congress should encourage organic's eligibility within the following rural development programs:

- ✓ Rural business development grants
- ✓ Locally and regionally produced agricultural food products
- ✓ Value-added agricultural product market development grants

**Support H.R. 4671, Organic Farmers Access Act introduced by Rep. Duffy (R-WI) and Rep. Welch (D-VT).**

## CREDIT

Opportunities exist for expanding organic production by focusing on *access to credit, capital, and loans* especially during the critical transition period.

- ✓ **Congress should include organic's eligibility in:**
  - Valuation of local and regional crops
  - Definition of qualified beginning farmer and rancher rural business development grants.

## CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

**Organic practices strongly align with approved practices within conservation incentive programs generally.** Organic producers utilize and rate strongly *Environmental Quality Incentives Programs (EQIP) and the Organic Initiative (OI)* within EQIP.

- ✓ **Congress should maintain and support EQIP OI.**
- ✓ Congress should direct USDA to recognize required organic practices within the full suite of conservation programs including the *Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)* and expand CSP organic bundles to transitioning organic farmers. CSP transition bundles will assist farmers with implementing organic practices, provide technical assistance during the transition period, and offset the financial costs of transitioning.

## EXPORT PROMOTION

U.S. organic exports are up 60%, creating jobs in the U.S. and driving demand overseas. **Expansion of the Market Access Program (MAP) will create new opportunities for U.S. farmers, especially when targeted to emerging growth sectors.** In 2017, nearly \$1 million in MAP funds were invested in the organic sector, which led to over \$37 million in onsite and projected overseas sales opportunities for U.S. organic operations— a remarkable return on investment of over 4000%!

- ✓ **Support H.R. 2321/S.1839, the Cultivating Revitalization by Expanding American Agricultural Trade and Exports (CREAATE) Act** introduced by Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Chellie Pingree (D-ME) and Senators King (R-ME), Donnelly (D-IN), Ernst (R-IA), and Collins (R-ME) that includes increased funding for MAP and the Foreign Market Development Program (FMDP).

