

June 8, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Glenn "G.T." Thompson  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support the Opportunities in Organic Act to Meet Demand with Domestic Growth**

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Boozman, and Ranking Member Scott,

American consumers want organic food: 4 out of 5 households across the country regularly purchase organic products. With targeted policies in the Farm Bill, we could meet this consumer demand for organic with domestic production, rather than relying on imports. Growing domestic organic means setting more farms up to thrive, putting organic food in reach for more families, protecting our natural resources, and driving prosperity in our rural communities.

Organic agriculture is a time-tested and scientifically supported approach to farming and ranching that centers ecological diversity, soil fertility, and natural systems rather than conventional practices. To label their products “organic,” producers must follow strict rules:

- Maintain or improve soil health with holistic practices like composting and cover crops, and without synthetic fertilizers;
- Rely on natural pest and disease control strategies instead of synthetic pesticides;
- Raise animals with more time on pasture and without antibiotics and other drugs;
- Reduce additives and protect against chemicals in processed organic foods;
- Avoid genetically modified organisms (GMOs), irradiation, and sewage sludge; and
- Preserve and protect biodiversity and natural resources.

Every organic farmer, rancher, and processor must work with a third-party certifier that is approved by USDA and undergo annual inspections. This rigorous oversight has built strong consumer trust of the “organic” label, but it also presents challenges for producers.

The Opportunities in Organic Act ([S. 1582](#) and [H.R. 3650](#)) will provide flexible resources that reduce barriers to organic agriculture, so anyone who wants to grow organic can succeed.

The bill would close policy gaps for organic by transitioning the existing Organic Certification Cost-Share Program into a comprehensive Opportunities in Organic Program that will:

- Reimburse up to \$1500 in organic certification costs for farmers, ranchers, and processors, with flexibility to ensure that costs are not a barrier;
- Provide flexible transition and resilience funding to meet a wide range of organic supply chain needs, from training and purchasing equipment to business planning and market development; and
- Ensure public institutions and NGOs provide regionally appropriate and organic-relevant technical assistance to help farmers reduce reliance on costly inputs and build healthy soil to stabilize farm incomes and our food supply.

We, the undersigned farming, environmental, rural, and health organizations and businesses, urge you to deliver a level playing field for organic producers in the 2023 Farm Bill, including the flexible support proposed in the Opportunities in Organic Act.

Sincerely,

Agriculture and Land-Based Training  
Association

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

American Federation of Government  
Employees Local 3354

American Sustainable Business Network

California Farmers Union

Californians for Pesticide Reform

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association

Catskill Mountainkeeper

CCOF

Center for Food Safety

Central Plains Organic Farmers

Consumer Reports

Diane's Market Kitchen

Dr. Yolanda Whyte Pediatrics

Earthjustice

Endangered Species Coalition

Environmental Working Group

Farm Action Fund

Flower Hill Institute

Friends of the Earth

Frog Hollow Farm

Future Roots Farm

Georgia Organics

Green America

Hispanic Access Foundation

Interfaith Power & Light

Iowa Organic Association

Island CultureZ

Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative

Latino Farmers & Ranchers International, Inc.

Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners  
Association

Marbleseed

MI ALMA

Midwest Organic Services Association

Molino Creek LLC

National Co+op Grocers

National Family Farm Coalition

National Organic Coalition

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

National Young Farmers Coalition

Natural Grocers

Natural Resources Defense Council

Naturepedic Organic Mattresses

New Jersey Conservation Foundation

North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers  
Land Loss Prevention Project  
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of  
New Jersey  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of  
New York  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of  
Vermont  
Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association  
Oregon Tilth  
Organic Farmers Association  
Organic Farming Research Foundation  
Organic Seed Alliance  
Organic Voices  
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture  
Pennsylvania Certified Organic  
Pesticide Action Network  
Regenerative Organic Alliance  
Rodale Institute  
Rowan Food and Farm Network  
Rural Advancement Foundation  
International-USA  
Rural Advancement Fund of the National  
Sharecroppers Fund  
Rural Coalition  
Safe Ag Safe Schools (Monterey Bay)  
The Cornucopia Institute  
Toxic Free North Carolina  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
Wild Farm Alliance