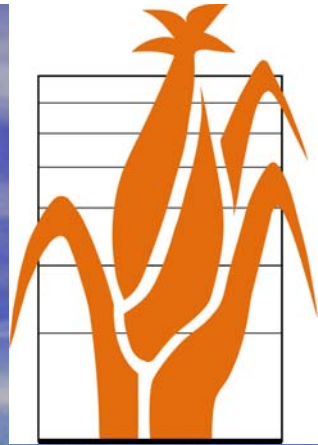




Global Growth, Local Transition: Success and Stress in the Future of Organic Agriculture

Society for Nutrition Education
San Francisco, July 2006

Mark Lipson
Policy Program Director
Organic Farming Research Foundation
www.ofrf.org



ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

- Started by CA organic farmers 1990.
- Competitive grants program to fund organic research and education since 1992.
- Demographic and other information on the national population of organic farmers (surveys).
- Media resource on organic issues.
- National policy analysis and advocacy for organic research.

www.ofrf.org

Scope of Issues

- (Mass) Market Growth & Global Trade
- Institutional Integration
- Research and Development

THE ORGANIC PARADIGM

“An organic farm, properly speaking is not one that uses certain substances and avoids others; it is a farm *whose structure is formed in imitation of the structure of a natural system*; it has the integrity, the independence, and the benign dependence of an organism.”

Wendell Berry

U.S. Organic Definition

“A production system that is managed ... to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity.”

-USDA National Organic Regulation

Global Growth

- U.S., E.U. demand driving increased production.
- U.S. retail doubled in last five years, appx. \$15 Billion in 2006.
- “Mass Market” retail ~50% of all U.S. sales.

-Nutrition Business Journal, March 2006

2005 Organic Market Share

- 2.5% of all U.S. food sales.
- 3.5% of U.S. dairy sales.
- 2.9% of packaged/prepared foods.
- **5.6% of fruit & vegetable sales.**

-Nutrition Business Journal, March 2006

Growing Pains

- Supply shortages.
- Rapid consolidation and concentration.
- High-profile struggles over standards and enforcement.
- “Identity Crisis” at the grass-roots.

Conversion Lag

- Single-digit growth in U.S. production capacity.
- 10:1 U.S. import/export ratio.
- Significant obstacles to increased rate of transition to organic.

Obstacles to Transition

- U.S. commodity support programs.
- No alternative support for transition.
- Crop insurance programs not suited.
- Lack of market/handling infrastructure.
- Labor issues.
- Cultural/community barriers.
- **LACK OF INFORMATION!**

Organic Research & Extension

- 1980 USDA study shelved.
- 1997 OFRF review: <.1% of USDA research & extension portfolio.
- 1998-2002 micro-establishment in agencies & university programs.

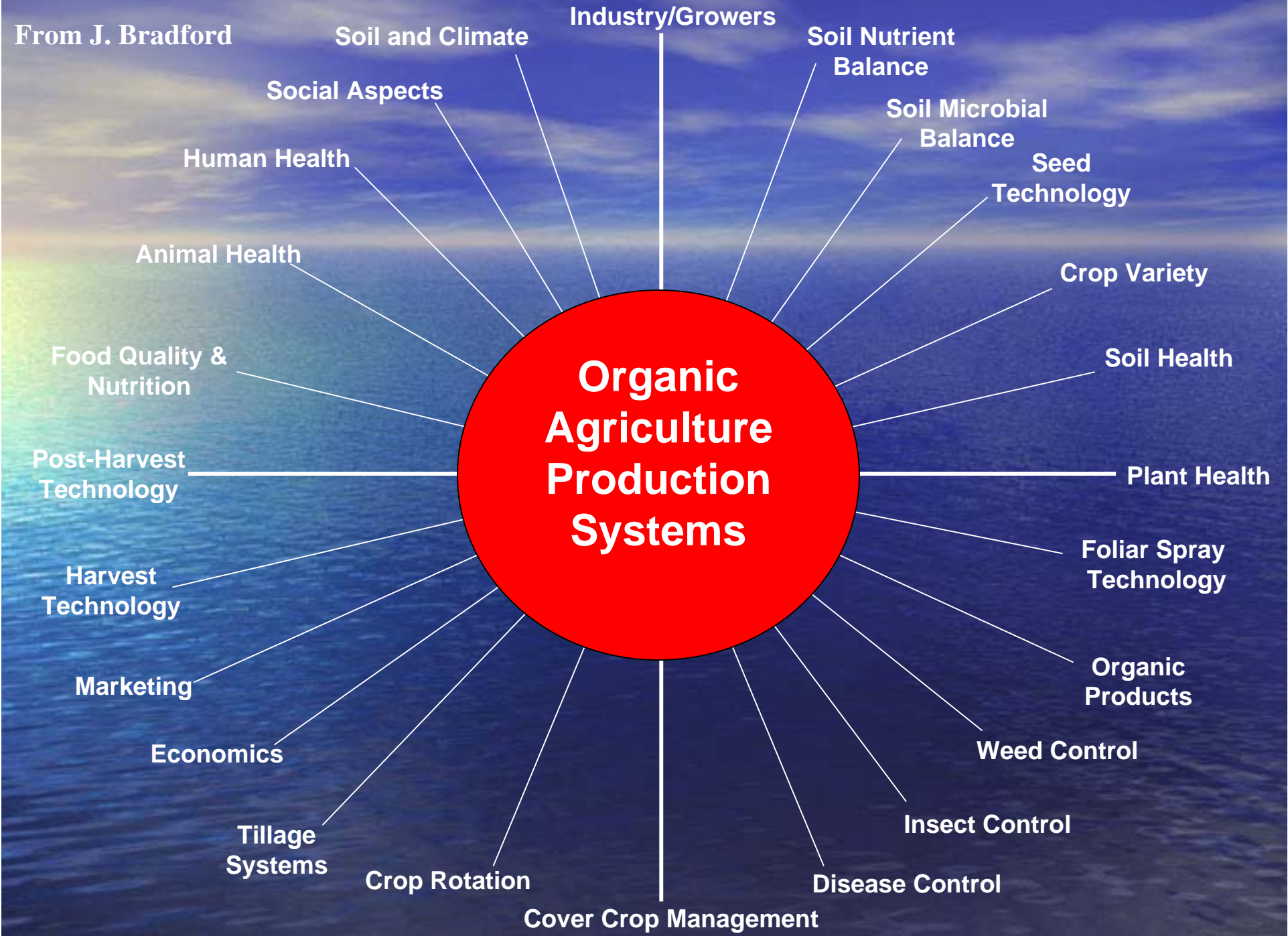
2006 Organic R&E

- USDA-CSREES Integrated Organic Program @ \$5 Million comp. grants.
- USDA-ARS explicit organic projects \$4 Million.
- USDA-SARE \$2-3 Million.
- USDA-Economic Research Service \$500K.
- National Rsch. Initiative \$1-2 Million?

Fair Share for Organic

- 2006 Total of \$12 Million = ~ .6% USDA REE budget.
- “Fair share” based on markets would be closer to 3%.
- European Union organic research expenditures appx. \$100 Million.
- 2007 Farm Bill goal: \$60 Million!

Organic Agriculture Production Systems



System-Management Themes

- Whole-System Measurement
- Organic Matter Management
- Applied Soil Agroecology
- Germplasm Adapted for Organic Systems
- Systemic Biocontrol
- Integrated Livestock Systems
- Product Quality Outcomes
- Market Versatility

Nutrition & Food Quality

The Organic Center

Charles Benbrook, Chief Scientist

www.organic-center.org

From D. Barrett, UC Davis, at www.organic-center.org

Multi-Disciplinary Approach

Understanding effects of cultural practices on food quality

