Plains Farmer Production Resources

Curated research, guides, and experts from the Organic Research Hub picked for producers in the Plains region of the US.

Organic Research Hub

The Organic Research Hub was built by the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF), a nonprofit that has supported organic farmers with science-based research and guidance for more than three decades, and was funded by the USDA. It exists because organic farmers kept asking for the same thing: one trustworthy place to find research-backed answers, instead of piecing them together from scattered websites and forums. Today, the Hub brings all of that research together into a single, free, searchable library, so you can spend less time hunting for answers and more time using them.

ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION
ORGANIC RESEARCH HUB

See all resources and a directory of organic experts curated for the Plains region at hub.ofrf.org/regions/plains.

Featured Resources for the Plains Region:

The Plains region includes Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Oklahoma.

Research Summary

First Field Evaluation of a Polylactic Acid-based Weed Barrier with Compost for Carrot Production

Biobased plastic mulches could provide many of the same benefits as a conventional plastic mulch, without relying on single-use, petroleum-based plastic. Multi-layer biobased fabrics have been created out of polylactic acid (PLA), a biodegradable plastic material that can be manufactured from vegetable starch. Researchers at the University of Nebraska and 3M created a set of field experiments to determine how PLA mulch could be deployed as a plastic mulch in organic carrot production systems.

Grazing, Forage and Cover Crop Effects on Weed Dynamics During Transition to Organic Production in a Semiarid Environment

Cover cropping and grazing can provide effective, natural methods for managing weeds during the transition to organic. This study evaluated the weed control capabilities of six unique cover crop mixes (grazed and ungrazed) in a reduced-tillage, organic-transitioning cropping system in North Dakota.

Factsheet/Guidebook

Soil Solarization for Control of Soilborne Diseases

This factsheet, produced by Oklahoma State University Extension, explains how covering moist, tilled soil with clear polyethylene film during summer months can control soilborne diseases, insects, nematodes, and weeds without chemicals. The process works by trapping solar heat to pasteurize soil, and is suitable for both commercial and residential use.

Guide to Organic Transition with Regenerative Practices in South Dakota

Transitioning to organic and regenerative agriculture is both a journey of stewardship and an opportunity to access new markets. This guide, produced by South Dakota Specialty Producers Association (SDSPA), offers practical steps to help you align your operation with organic certification requirements while enhancing the ecological and economic vitality of your farm.

OFRF Research Grant Report

Farm Made: A Guide to On-Farm Processing for Organic Producers

This 44-page guide addresses the general requirements for developing an organic processing enterprise on-farm. It also features four example enterprises—sorghum syrup; packaged fresh salad greens; jams, jellies & spreads; and table eggs. In each of these examples, the basic requirements for production and processing are addressed and followed with the specific requirements needed to make the enterprise certified organic. Extensive resources are provided.

Tools

Weed Control in Organic Field Crops

In this free online course prepared by the Organic Agronomy Training Service (OATS), learn about weed control strategies for organic field crops commonly grown in the northern tier of the U.S. The course covers: strategies to prevent weed emergence; cultural and mechanical control strategies; and more.

Podcast

Certified Organic in Kansas, Beef Cattle Recordkeeping, & Planning for the Vegetable Garden

This K-State Agriculture Today podcast episode covers three topics: (1) Kansas USDA state statistician Doug Bounds discusses findings from the latest Kansas Certified Organic Data Report; (2) K-State's Beef Cattle Institute experts share practical record-keeping strategies and insights on wintertime listeriosis in cattle; and (3) horticulturist Ward Upham offers tips for planning the vegetable garden as seed catalogs arrive.

Webinar/Video

Organic Dry Beans—Roller-Crimper Research & Market Opportunities 2025

Join Rodale Institute for a webinar about Tuxedo Corn Farms' certified-organic dry bean cleaning and processing facility in Olathe, CO. This webinar will examine market opportunities for organic dry beans, production challenges, reduced/no-till adaptations, and strategies for growers entering this niche.

FIND AN ORGANIC FARMING EXPERT NEAR YOU

Connect with 20+ verified Extension agents and researchers across the Plains — search by name, state, or an interactive map. The directory is growing regularly.

*View a PDF version of this document with hyperlinks, along with other resources on USDA programs that support organic production at **www.ofrf.org/resources/topp/**.*

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