



ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

fostering the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman, Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member, Committee on
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and Members of the Committee:

We, the undersigned, respectfully recommend that the Committee incorporate the language and programs detailed in the Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) into the next Farm Bill. As you know, every dollar invested in agricultural research returns \$20 to our economy. This legislation would increase the resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, and result in improved ecological vitality of the landscape by:

- 1. Creating the Coordinating and Expanding Organic Research Initiative.** This initiative charges the Research, Education, and Economics agencies at USDA to catalog the current, ongoing research on organic food and agriculture topics and provide recommendations intended to increase the amount of organic agriculture research conducted and funded by the USDA.
- 2. Bolstering the organic agriculture programs operated by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).** The OSRI Act would provide stair-stepped budget increases to the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI), from \$60 million in 2026 to \$100 million in 2031, while also expanding the statutory priorities to include climate change, organic alternatives to prohibited substances, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. The bill would also provide first-time Congressional authorization for the Researching the Transition to Organic Program (RTOP), currently known as the Organic Transition Research Program (ORG), with an authorization for appropriations of \$10 million a year from 2026-2027 and \$12 million from 2028-2031.
- 3. Bolstering funding for the Organic Production and Market Data Initiative (ODI).** Providing \$10 million over the life of the Farm Bill, the OSRI Act would double the farm bill funding for this crucial joint-initiative of three USDA Agencies: NASS, Economic Research Service (ERS), and Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The data produced through the ODI is essential for

the development of risk management products and targeted market development. The OSRI Act also directs ERS to conduct a full, systematic evaluation of the economic impact organic agriculture has on rural and urban communities, taking into account economic, ecological, and social factors.

All of these policies represent a significant step toward providing needed investments into organic agriculture research, supporting a rapidly growing and maturing organic food and agriculture market. The USDA has made historic investments in supporting organic agriculture producers through the \$300 million Organic Transition Initiative (OTI), but unfortunately there is no research component to OTI. Agricultural and economic research investments must be a part of our nation's strategy to support domestic organic production to meet increasing domestic and international demand for our organic products. Currently, ARS invests less than 1% and NIFA ~2% of their budget into direct organic agriculture research, while organic agriculture makes up more than 6% of the food sales market and 15% of the produce market. The policies in the OSRI Act provide research tools to farmers, but also market signals to researchers that organic agriculture research is a valued and important area of study and incentivizes young researchers to pursue organic agriculture expertise and research projects.

Alongside these market-wide benefits, public investments in agricultural research can have significant impact on rural communities. For example, the competitive grant research programs OREI and ORG require all research projects to involve producers in their research. This participation ensures that the research conducted produces action-oriented, usable research products that ultimately increase the economic profitability and ecological vitality of farming operations. Additionally, nearly all projects provide meaningful compensation to the participating farmers, representing a direct benefit to interested producers.

It is also important to note that while conventional agriculture research often cannot be utilized by organic producers, conventional operators often adopt practices identified through organic agriculture research. Research of practices, techniques, and systems that originate in organic research often are adopted by conventional operations due to economic and ecological efficacy. This includes the increasing use of cover crops in field crop production, as well as integrated pest management techniques like codling moth disruption in apple and pear production.

We thank you for considering the OSRI Act, and look forward to discussing these policies with you and your offices,

Organic Farming Research Foundation, joined by

Amy's Kitchen
April Joy Farm
Beyond Pesticides
Botanical Bites & Provisions, LLC
California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)
California Climate and Agriculture Network
Cedar Valley Sustainable Farm
Center for Food Safety
Climate Land Leaders
Crossroad Farm Organics
Dairy Grazing Alliance
DiMatteo Consulting
Dr. Bronner's
Earley Farm
Equal Exchange
Farm Aid
Farm Fresh Rhode Island
Fleurdelisfarmsllc
Fox Haven Farm & Learning Center
Friends of the Earth
Funders For Regenerative Agriculture
Garden Variety Harvests LLC
Grayson LandCare
Hanover Co-op Food Stores
Healthy Way Market
Humble Snacks Inc.
Hummingbird Wholesale
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Kamut International, Ltd.
Kind of Wild Wines
Kinfolk Gardens
Local Patch
Louisiana Food Policy Council
Lundberg Family Farms
Main Street Pastures
Maine Farmland Trust
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Marbleseed
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Michigan Food and Farming Systems
Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance

Mint Creek Farm
Molino Creek Farm
Narrative Food
National Co+op Grocers
National Organic Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Natural Grocers
Nature's Path Organic Foods
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of CT (NOFA-CT)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Rhode Island (NOFA-RI)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
Northeast Organic Farming Association-Interstate Council (NOFA-IC)
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
Oregon Tilth
Organic Farmers Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM)
Organic Farmers Association
Organic Seed Alliance
Organically Grown Co.
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture
Pennsylvania Certified Organic
Pesticide Action and Agroecology Network
Quapaw Canoe Company
Riverside Natural Foods
Rodale Institute
Roots Farm
Rural Advancement Foundation International
Rural Coalition
Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council
Taylor Farms
The Inspired Garden
The Land Connection
The Synergy Company of Utah, BLLC
Twin Oaks Dairy LLC
Union of Concerned Scientists
Virginia Association For Biological Farming
Whole Foods Market
Wild Farm Alliance

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
Yogaville Farm