



ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

fostering the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming

Request for Applications: Virtual Focus Groups for Organic and Transitioning Agricultural Producers

Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) and Organic Seed Alliance (OSA) are seeking applications from organizations that support certified organic and transitioning agricultural producers to facilitate and coordinate a virtual focus group. Focus group data will be used to inform the 2021 National Organic Research Agenda (NORA) and State of Organic Seed (SOS) reports.

Participating organizations will select organic and/or transitioning producer participants, manage invites to producers, and facilitate and record the focus group. The focus groups will be anywhere from 60-90 minutes and will be facilitated using a protocol and tool-kit provided by OFRF and OSA during a webinar training.

The goal of the focus groups is to hear directly from farmers and ranchers what issues or challenges they face on a number of important topics, such as organic production practices, economic and social barriers to organic production, and information and resources that would support their success as an organic producer. The information gathered from these discussions will be used to build a comprehensive roadmap for future research investments to advance organic agriculture across the United States.

Selected applicants will receive:

- Visibility through blogs and/or acknowledgment in both national reports.
- Valuable training in facilitating focus groups, including a virtual focus group toolkit.
- \$1,000 stipend to compensate for staff time.
- \$25 gift cards for each participating farmer/rancher that attends the focus group.
- Physical copies of the NORA and SOS reports.

Expectations and Requirements for Applying

To be eligible, your organization will need to:

- Have a membership list or an adequate past event attendee list of organic and/or transitioning producers that can be used to select a random sample of at least 15

growers or have the capacity to host an open call to a broad farmer/rancher base to participate in the focus group.

- Select and invite 15 certified organic or 15 transitioning producers to participate in the focus group, with an expectation to secure 8-12 participants.
- Host the virtual focus group before February 28, 2021.
- Have at least one employee attend a 2 hour virtual training to learn how to recruit participants and facilitate the focus group.
- Have two employees attend the focus group to facilitate the discussion and take notes.
- Provide contact information of participants to OFRF in order to issue participation gift cards (or organization agrees to disburse gift cards).

OFRF will provide the Zoom platform and technical assistance to run the focus group.

Application Process

A simple application to the program can be [found here](#). Applications must be submitted by September 15th by 5pm PST. Applicants will be notified of selection by October 1, 2020. Applicants that can provide diverse grower representation (by region, commodity, farm size, and producer demographics, including race and ethnic diversity) will receive preference.

For questions, please email office@ofrf.org or call 831-426-6606.