



ORGANIC  
FARMING  
RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION

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# CASE FOR SUPPORT

2025

[www.OFRF.org](http://www.OFRF.org)



# The Roots of Organic 2025

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The earthy, primal scent of living soil, the hum of pollinators moving between blossoms, the quiet resilience of farmers nurturing their land—this is the heartbeat of organic agriculture. It feeds both the soil and the soul, sustaining not only crops but communities and ecosystems.

At the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF), we work to ensure that organic farmers have the knowledge, resources, and support they need to thrive. Rooted in science and guided by the voices of farmers, we champion research, education, and policy solutions that prioritize soil health, biodiversity, and ecological balance. We strive to create a future where organic farming is more than a method—it's a movement toward a healthier, more sustainable future and we invite you to be part of it.

Our core programs include:

- Conducting nationwide research to understand organic farmers' needs.
- Championing policies that put farmers first.
- Creating accessible, science-backed resources for organic farmers.
- Supporting farmer-led innovation with on-farm research trials to advance climate-resilient farming practices.
- Expanding public understanding of organic farming and its benefits to the environment.

## Our Mission

At OFRF, we are dedicated to revolutionizing agriculture by fostering the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming systems. We achieve this by cultivating impactful organic research, [advancing education](#), and shaping federal policies that expand organic acreage and support the farmers who nourish our communities. We envision organic farming not only as the leading form of agriculture but as a lifeline for healthy and resilient ecosystems and economies, thriving on the bedrock of [regenerative organic practices](#). These practices boost the productivity of farming systems and are crucial in safeguarding our planet for future generations.



## Organic Matters

Support for organic research lags behind producers' and consumers' growing interest in organic agriculture. Organic farmers are increasingly pressured not only by market demands but also by economic and climate change challenges exacerbated by historically inadequate investments in organic agricultural research. This deficiency prevents their access to essential, science-based resources and technical support. This knowledge gap leaves many producers without the necessary information on best practices, pest management, soil health, and resilience strategies—crucial elements for the sustained growth and viability of all farms, not just organic ones.

**ORGANIC FOOD MAKES UP  
6% OF TOTAL U.S. FOOD  
SALES & 15% OF ALL U.S.  
PRODUCE SALES**

Yet organic research receives less than 2% of USDA's research funding, leaving farmers without critical support—especially now, as future funding faces uncertainty.



**PUBLIC AGRICULTURAL  
RESEARCH FUNDING HAS  
DECLINED BY 20% SINCE  
2000**

Despite this drop, every \$1 invested in agricultural research generates over \$20 in economic benefits.



**LESS THAN 1% OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
SERVICE'S BUDGET FUNDS ORGANIC RESEARCH**



## The Roots of Agricultural Change



Rooted in a mission to transform, OFRF tackles these challenges head-on by integrating research, education, and advocacy to stimulate significant change. With insights from seven of our national studies, including the influential [2022 National Organic Research Agenda](#) (NORA), we craft and disseminate [science-backed educational resources](#) that translate intricate research into practical, actionable strategies for farmers.

Our efforts are also geared towards dismantling barriers, ensuring that organic farming remains a successful, accessible, and beneficial path for all who seek it. By working in coalition with farmers, researchers, and policymakers, we bridge the gap between on-the-ground challenges and policy initiatives, securing investments in organic agriculture where they matter most.

**Looking ahead**, we see OFRF as more than a participant in the organic sector—we are a leader in shaping its future. We will continue amplifying the voices of farmers driving policy change, sharing their stories as they stand before policymakers to advocate for a food system built on health, sustainability, and community. Like the first light of dawn, quietly persistent in illuminating new possibilities, OFRF is planting the seeds of lasting change.

Building on our legacy as a convener of the organic research community, OFRF is launching the Society for Organic Researchers and Professionals to fill a critical gap in agricultural research. This new society will serve as a vital platform for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and advocacy, fostering a vibrant community committed to advancing farming through rigorous research and innovative practices.

This future—energized by connection, innovation, and the collective power of organic farmers and advocates—is what OFRF strives to cultivate. Each person touched by our mission helps drive a global shift towards practices that honor and sustain the very essence of our farmlands for generations to come.



## Stories From the Field

### “Farming is in my blood.



Photo: Moore Family Farms

“For generations, my family has worked the land at Moore Family Farms in North Carolina. Transitioning to organic was an investment in our farm’s future, but through my internship at OFRF, I saw the bigger picture—**organic farming is a movement that connects research, policy, and farmers like me.**” – *Dakota Moore, Organic Farmer & OFRF Intern*

“The farmers we interviewed didn’t just share their experiences—they shaped the Crop-Livestock Integration resources in a way only they could. Their insights on infrastructure, rotations, and food safety turned research into real-world solutions. I can still hear the voices of the farmers we interviewed and can practically smell the pig pens through their photos—a reminder that organic farming is built on lived experience.” – *Brian Geier, Organic Farmer & OFRF Communications Manager*

### Bringing Farmers Voices to the Forefront



Photo: Local Color Farm & Fiber

At this year’s Organic Association of Kentucky Annual Conference, OFRF Farmer-Led Trial farmer Maggie Dungan presented her research on solarization, and the response was immediate—farmers asked how she used it, what worked, and how they could try it themselves. **That’s the power of farmer-to-farmer learning: one farm’s experience sparking real change in others.**

### Farmer-Led Research in Action



Photo: Salad Days Farm



## Cultivating Equity and Collaboration

At the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF), we recognize that organic agriculture cannot thrive without racial equity. As a predominantly White-led organization, we acknowledge the historical injustices in agriculture and the structural barriers BIPOC farmers continue to face in accessing land, capital, markets, and research support.

We are committed to dismantling systemic racism in organic farming and ensuring that BIPOC farmers, researchers, and communities have greater access to resources, education, and policy representation. This commitment is not just a goal—it informs everything we do. From prioritizing BIPOC-led research and developing culturally relevant farmer resources to advocating for equitable federal policies, racial equity is embedded in our mission.

This work is amplified through partnerships with organizations such as H.E.A.L Food Alliance, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), National Organic Coalition (NOC), and Tuskegee University, among others. Each partnership enriches our understanding, amplifies our impact, and helps ensure farmer voices—especially those from historically underserved communities—are shaping a more inclusive and equitable organic farming landscape.

Our collaboration with the First Nations Development Institute (FNDI) is a poignant example of this commitment in action. Together, we embarked on a critical initiative to understand the unique challenges faced by Native and tribal agricultural producers in attaining organic certification. Together, we co-developed a culturally relevant survey and research protocol tailored to the distinct needs of these communities. This effort was not just about gathering data, but about crafting a tool that resonates with the lived experiences of Native farmers, reflecting their rich agricultural traditions and current realities.



*Photo of Kokoasse Kpomblekou-A (2nd from left), member of OFRF's Board of Directors, at Tuskegee University's organic research fields.*

We know there is more work to do. As we continue striving toward an inclusive, equitable, and resilient organic farming system, we invite partners and funders to join us in creating lasting change—ensuring that organic agriculture remains accessible and beneficial for all farmers.



## Our Work is Ambitious

2025 has ushered in some significant shifts in the organic agriculture sector that could impact our shared work for years to come. The changes in federal funding have shaken up even the farthest reaches of our community. For OFRF, this means we could see a much as \$700,000 in funding shortfall for our most critical farmer-facing work, such as Farmer-Led Trials and resource creation. And now, more than ever we need to ramp up the voice of organic farmers in D.C. With the Farm Bill still in flux and drastic shifts in how money is appropriated, we must fight to keep the gains of the last 30 years and continue to grow our mission.

**We are asking you to partner with us with general operating support.**

**\$200,000**

Ensures farmers have access to the science-based information and education resources they need.

Supports a strong voice advocating for critical USDA programs that organic farmers rely on.

**\$150,000**

**\$100,000**

Allows us to provide stipends and technical assistance for one cohort of Farmer-Led Trial farmers.

Brings scientific expertise and resources directly to farmers at conferences and in-person events..

**\$50,000**

**\$10,000**

Covers over one month of technical assistance for Farmer-Led Trials farmers.

Ensures the accessibility of our resources through activities like translation and outreach services.

**\$5,000**



# ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

*fostering the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming*



## Join Us in Shaping a Stronger Food System

At the Organic Farming Research Foundation, our dedication to advancing organic agriculture is unwavering. As we continue to champion pivotal research, advocate for supportive policies in Washington D.C., and provide essential resources to organic farmers, the role of our partners and supporters becomes ever more crucial.

**We invite you to be part of this transformative journey.** We are at a turning point for organic farming. With federal funding in flux and organic integrity under threat, we need partners who believe in the power of soil, science, and farmers' voices. Your support can make a tangible difference in how we address the challenges facing farmers today and how we shape a more sustainable agricultural future. **Will you stand with us?**

### Here's how you can make an impact:

- **Donate Now:** Your immediate contribution will empower us to sustain our programs during these uncertain times, ensuring that vital scientific research and advocacy continue unabated.
- **Pledge a Future Gift:** If you are planning your future budget allocations, consider a commitment to OFRF. Your pledge will provide us with the financial stability to plan ahead and innovate within our key initiatives.
- **Connect Us with Allies:** Introductions to potential partners—corporations, foundations, or individuals—who share our vision for a thriving organic sector can amplify our efforts far beyond traditional funding.

The upcoming year is pivotal for OFRF and for the field of organic agriculture. With your support, we can bridge the current funding gaps and maintain the momentum necessary for our critical work. **Together, we can foster a vibrant, sustainable future grounded in science and filled with success stories from every corner of our farmland.**

**Your involvement is not just a contribution; it's an investment in a healthier, more resilient future.**



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