U.S. ORGANIC

A GLOBAL LEADER IN SUSTAINABILITY

In Brief:

— Organic agriculture in the U.S. is based on practices that not only protect environmental health, but also strive to improve it. Organic farmers understand that what 'you put into the soil has a profound impact on what you get out of it'. This is why they rely on natural processes and materials when developing farming systems—these contribute to soil, crop and livestock nutrition, pest and weed management, attainment of production goals, and conservation of biological diversity.

Environmental Stewardship: A commitment to continuous improvement

— In 2019, more than 2.3 million hectares (5.5 million acres) of U.S. farmland were classed as organic.

— U.S. organic practices work to maximize carbon fixation while minimizing the loss of that carbon once returned to the soil, reversing the greenhouse effect.

— U.S. organic farmers strive to preserve and protect natural habitats with the understanding that a diverse biological landscape helps to feed people and nourish the planet.

— U.S. organic entails the use of cover crops, green manures, animal manures and crop rotations to fertilize the soil, maximizing biological activity and helping to maintain long-term soil health.

USDA ORGANIC

The "USDA Organic" label ranks among the TOP 3 seals for consumer recognition

— Organic farming practices in the U.S. help to improve the health and population of important crop pollinators, predominantly bees, which have been declining in the past decade and which in turn could adversely impact global food security.

— U.S. organic farmers use rotational grazing and mixed forage pastures for livestock operations and alternative health care for animal wellbeing.

— All organic farms in the U.S. provide access to the outdoors so that animals can exercise in natural surroundings.

— Pest management on organic farms relies on the 'PAMS' strategy: Prevention, Avoidance, Monitoring and Suppression.

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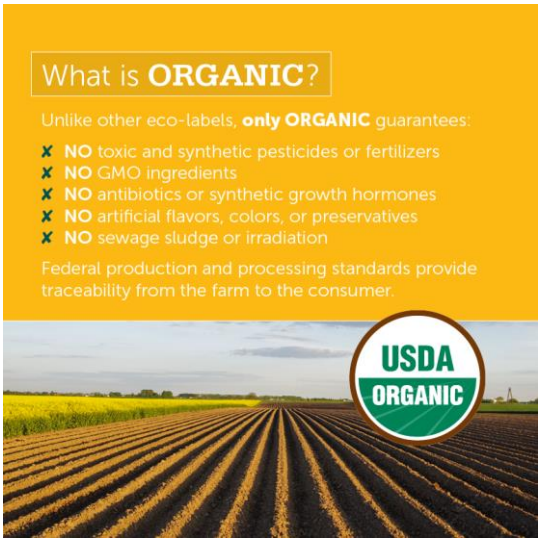
Social Responsibility: A commitment to future generations

- U.S. organic food production offers consumers a choice in the marketplace that can help to meet personal health priorities.
- Organic foods are rich in nutrients, such as iron, magnesium, and vitamin C, which are critical to maintaining good health.
- 26% of U.S. organic farmers are under 45 years old. Organic producers are also more likely to be 'beginning' farmers, with 27% entering farming in the past 10 years.
- More than 103 thousand hectares are being transitioned to organic production, and 29% of farms plan to increase organic production.
- There are 296 organic inspectors throughout the U.S.
- In 2019, the U.S. had 48 IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) affiliates across in the country.

Economic Profitability and Climate Change Mitigation: A commitment to long-term viability



- There are more than 28,000 organic operations in the United States.
- Consumer demand grew by double digits in 2020, as shoppers prioritized their health.
- Organic products are now available in nearly three of four conventional grocery stores, and often have substantial price premiums over conventional products.
- In 2020, organic fruit and vegetable sales represented over 15% of total produce sales.
- 73% of organic operations in the U.S. plan to maintain or increase employment levels.
- Organic farms emit 18% less global warming potential than other farming systems.
- Organic farms have 30% more species and support up to 50% more pollinators than conventional farms.
- Organic farms sequester 26% more carbon than soils from non-organic farms.

Sources

Organic Industry Survey. Organic Trade Association, 2020.
Advancing Organic to Mitigate Climate Change. Organic Trade Association, 2020.
Overview of Organic Agriculture. Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Updated October 2020.

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