

> ASK: NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM (NOP) AT \$29 MILLION

The National Organic Program is the regulatory program housed within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service responsible for developing and enforcing national standards for certified organic agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The NOP is vital to meeting growing consumer demand for organic products. Recognizing the continued growth of the industry, we ask for \$29 million, the full authorization to be requested in the 2024 Farm Bill and continuing the ten percent increase year over year. Moreover, this would give NOP the resources it needs to enforce the organic regulations globally, to continue to develop international equivalency agreements to expand the market for American organic products worldwide, and to develop organic standards for emerging sectors.

FY24 enacted: \$22.8 million

> ASK: ORGANIC MARKET DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM AT \$25 MILLION

The Organic Market Development Grant Program (OMDG), offered by USDA in 2023 as part of its Organic Transition Initiative, is a critical component of solving domestic organic supply chain bottlenecks - creating accessible markets for organic producers and unlocking the promise the organic marketplace offers farmers and consumers. U.S. organic farmers often struggle to access processing infrastructure to bring products to market or enhance the value of organic farm commodities - limiting those farmers' opportunities for success and conceding some of the organic market value to imports. OMDG offers grant resources for organic market development - through funding processing infrastructure, specialized equipment, and market education. In 2023, OMDG received \$218 million in project requests from nearly 190 applicants nationwide; and was funded at only \$75 million. We urge Congress to commit \$25 million to OMDG in FY25 to help meet this demonstrated demand and secure the economic, health, climate, and rural development contributions offered by organic food and farming.

> ASK: ORGANIC TRANSITION RESEARCH PROGRAM (ORG) AT \$15 MILLION

The overall goal of the Organic Transition Research Program (ORG) is to support the development and implementation of research, extension and higher education programs to improve the competitiveness of organic livestock and crop producers, as well as those who are adopting organic practices and transitioning to organic certification. Practices and systems addressed include those associated with organic crops, organic animal production, and organic systems integrating plant and animal production. ORG consistently receives more funding requests than can be accommodated as consumer demand for organic products outpaces domestic production. Without continued funding of ORG as an organic-specific research grant program, this gap will only increase. The program should be funded at \$15 million, to facilitate growth of this important research.

FY24 enacted: \$7.5 million

> ASK: ORGANIC PRODUCTION AND MARKET DATA INITIATIVE (ODI) AT \$1 MILLION

The Organic Data Initiative (ODI) collects and disseminates data regarding organic agriculture through the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). This program has been successful in providing valuable information to Congress, government agencies, and the organic industry at a low cost. The Organic Trade Association asks for funding specifically designated to the Organic Data Initiative authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill and urges strong intra-agency cooperation on continuing and expanding organic price reporting and organic data collection.

FY24 enacted: \$1 million

> ASK: ORGANIC AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION INITIATIVE (OREI) AT ADDITIONAL \$10 MILLION

OREI is the USDA's flagship research program for organic agriculture. Research is necessary to measure and optimize the outcomes of organic agriculture systems and develop new ecological technology. Organic makes up 6% of U.S. food sales and should be equally represented in federal research funding. OREI receives mandatory funds through the Commodity Credit Corporation, but an additional \$10 million of discretionary funding would ensure that the benefits of organic research reach farmers in the field through increased extension and outreach activities. This increased discretionary authorization will be requested to be included in the 2023 Farm Bill.

FY24 enacted: \$0 million

> ASK: NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM/FSA AT \$11 MILLION

The National Organic Certification Cost Share Program (NOCCSP) provides a 75 percent reimbursement to help defray the cost of annual certification for organic operations. One of the barriers to organic certification for farmers is the cost of annual certification, an important step requiring all certified organic operations to be inspected annually to ensure compliance with rigorous USDA organic standards. In recognition of the economic, environmental, and human health benefits of organic production, Congress has long seen fit to help defray the costs of certification. While \$8 million for the NOCCSP was included in the one-year Farm Bill extension enacted in December of 2023, that funding falls short of the total needed. Given the uncertainty about Farm Bill action in 2024, we are requesting that \$11 million be made available for the program in the Fiscal Year 2025 Agriculture Appropriations bill to ensure continued support for our nation's organic farmers and handlers.