

Organic Agriculture in Ohio

Consumer demand for organic agricultural products has steadily increased over the past several decades. U.S. sales of organic food have more than doubled since 2009. Nationally, **the organic market is projected to grow an additional 28% through 2029**, as a result of rising consumer demand and an increased interest in resilient agricultural systems. (OFRF)

Organic certification is the most rigorously regulated food production program in the U.S. Third-party certification provides verification to consumers that farmers are using organic methods. Products that bear the USDA Certified Organic seal follow strict federal guidelines that are certified by regional accredited agencies, like OEFFA Certification.

Ohio is home to 993 organic operations, the eighth highest in the nation. (Organic Integrity Database)

- Organic farms in Ohio brought in **\$139 million in product sales** in 2022. (NASS USDA)
- In 2022, **90 Ohio farms were transitioning** into USDA National Organic Program organic production. (NASS USDA)
- As of 2024, **136,538 acres** in Ohio were certified organic. (Argus Media)
- Ohio is currently **tenth in the nation** for the number of organic dairy cows. (Argus Media)
- In 2023, OEFFA Certification administered the Organic Certification Cost Share Program, providing a cost-share reimbursement to 185 Ohio-based certified organic operations.



Get to Know OEFFA



The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) cultivates a future where sustainable and organic farmers thrive, local food nourishes our communities, and agricultural practices protect and enhance the environment.

1,757 OEFFA members

212,937 OEFFA-certified organic acres

1,103 certified organic operations

The Future of Organic Agriculture

The average age of all farmers is 58.1. The average age of Ohio organic farmers is 47.8, an important point to consider when thinking of farm transition and the sustainability of the organic industry. **Younger people want to farm organically.** (NASS USDA)

A Matter of National Security

Existing farmers are aging out. Foreign actors are increasingly owning U.S. farmland. New farmers with unique and innovative stories and business models have difficulty working with the USDA. **We need more farmers.** OEFFA exists to help make that happen.

Growing the Next Crop of Farmers

As a Midwest partner in the **Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)**, OEFFA's technical support staff served farmers through **~900 calls, emails, Zoom meetings, and in-person interactions** in 2024. They supported 6 mentees transitioning to organic certification.

Other staff assist farmers in navigating USDA programs, connecting mentor farmers with mentees, and providing direct payments and soil testing to farmers for soil-building practices that **improve their profitability and resilience** in the face of extreme weather like last year's historic drought.

Helping to keep more farmers on the land, OEFFA took **57 land access technical assistance calls** in 2024, linking 9 farmers with the land they need to farm.