

2026 OEFFA Candidate Questionnaire

The [Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association](#) (OEFFA), founded in 1979, cultivates a future in which sustainable and organic farmers thrive, local food nourishes our communities, and agricultural practices protect and enhance our environment. Annually, we host a conference, in addition to farm tours, workshops, and webinars, to facilitate learning and connection. We also offer organic certification and organic production transition support, and advocate with farmers to address their needs in food and farm policy. Over the past 10 years, OEFFA's Policy Program has been a leader in advocating for organic and sustainable agriculture.

We invite the candidate to complete this questionnaire based on priorities from the OEFFA community. The following questions have been cultivated with various food and farm advocates and organizations across Ohio. We will share the responses on our [website](#) for members and partners to reference. **Please reach out to policy@oeffa.org with any questions.**

Prior to the survey, we encourage the candidate to review the priorities and definitions section below for context on issues we care about. The questions also include links to the relevant definitions.

OEFFA's member-driven priorities (underlined> and related programs and definitions:

Local and Regional Food Systems: Policy changes that support local and regional food system infrastructure, processing systems, and investments that boost local economies, promote sustainability, and secure a resilient food system

- **Local food infrastructure:** The foundational elements (physical, organizational, and financial) required to produce, process, store, distribute, and sell food within a specific locality or region
- **Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program:** The federal program that funded Ohio CAN (Community + Agriculture + Nutrition)
 - o Ohio CAN enabled over [191 local producers](#) to partner with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks to distribute products to more than 2 million Ohioans in all 88 counties, allowing producers to expand into new markets while providing communities with access to healthy local foods. The program was cancelled in 2025.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** A nutrition program providing food benefits to low-income individuals and families to support their grocery budgets
- **Produce Perks Midwest Family Fruit & Vegetable Coupon Program:** Supports access to healthy produce for low-income families and is funded through a state allocation of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funding

Farm and Farmer Viability: Breaking down barriers in farming to ensure accessibility for all, promote farmer resilience, and make certain that agricultural government programs work for everyone by creating a system that is fair, functional, and informed

- **Farm safety net:** A group of federal programs and policies regularly administered by the [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA), like federal crop insurance, commodity programs, and disaster assistance, that are designed to protect farmers and ranchers from financial crises
 - o From 1995-2025, more than [\\$292 billion](#) in taxpayer dollars went to commodity subsidies, with much of the money flowing to the [largest, wealthiest farms](#).
- **Beginning farmers:** [Defined by the USDA](#) as “an individual or entity who has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years”
 - o Signed into law in 2022, the [Ohio Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Program](#) offers tax credits to beginning farmers who attend a financial management program and to individuals or businesses that sell or rent farmland to beginning farmers.
- **[Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach Program \(FOTO\)](#):** A program established in the 2018 Farm Bill that includes the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP), which provides training, technical assistance, and resources for a new generation of farmers, and the 2501 program, which provides outreach and assistance to historically underserved and veteran farmers and ranchers
- **Specialty crops:** [Defined by the USDA](#) as “fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)”

Marketplace Fairness: Policies that support market inclusion and success of small and medium farming operations, not just the largest operations

- **Corporate consolidation:** A process by which fewer, larger companies obtain more control over an industry, reduce competition, and reshape supply chains
- **The Packers and Stockyards Act:** A bill enacted in 1921 in response to concerns about meat processing consolidation and anticompetitive practices that had negatively impacted both producers and consumers
 - o Recent rule updates to the Act were introduced to ensure farmers have fair systems and that there are guardrails for large meat companies but have since been delayed.

Climate Change and Environmental Health: Advance climate resiliency and uplift organic and sustainable agriculture as a solution to the climate crisis

- **Healthy soil:** Soil that functions as a vital living ecosystem that regulates water, sustains plant and animal life, filters and buffers pollutants, cycles nutrients, and provides physical stability and support for plants

- [Ohio Soil Health Week](#): Officially signed into law in 2025, this weeklong celebration includes outreach, education opportunities, and events to raise awareness around Ohio's most valuable natural resource: our soil.
- [H2Ohio Program](#): A statewide water quality initiative involving collaboration with Ohio agencies aiming to reduce nutrient runoff, create wetlands, and improve clean water access while supporting sustainable farming practices
- **[Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\)](#)**: A USDA primary lands conservation agency born out of the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s that now offers one-on-one, personalized advice to producers and communities to find the best solutions to meet their unique conservation and business goals
- **Conservation programs**: The [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#) and [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) are popular, proven, voluntary programs that incentivize farmers and landowners for their conservation practices offered through NRCS.
 - These programs are regularly oversubscribed, and in fiscal year 2025, just 24 percent of EQIP applicants and 37 percent of CSP applicants were [awarded contracts](#).
 - Several other conservation programs are administered by NRCS, such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), easement programs, and Conservation Innovation Grants.
- **[National Institute for Food and Agriculture](#)**: A branch of the USDA that advances funding for initiatives that support the long-term viability of agriculture such as the [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education \(SARE\)](#) and the [Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative \(OREI\) Program](#), among others
 - After [35 years of demonstrated success](#) in the SARE program, it has yet to receive its fully authorized funding amount of \$60 billion.
 - For every dollar invested in agricultural research, [\\$20 in economic activity is generated](#).

Organic: Safeguard organic integrity through policies grounded in farmer experience and input that support organic market infrastructure, access to technical assistance, and the successful transition to organic production

- **[National Organic Program \(NOP\)](#)**: A federal regulatory program that sets and enforces national standards around growing, handling, and labeling organic products and works to protect the integrity of the USDA Organic seal
 - In 2025, U.S. sales of organic products reached [\\$76.6 billion](#) with an annual growth rate of 6.8 percent—double that of the comparable marketplace, which grew at 3.4 percent. The U.S. remains a net importer of organic goods.
- In 1981, [OEFFA became one of the first organic certification agencies](#) in the country. Today, we certify 1,120 operations, keeping 185,995 acres of land certified organic.

Please provide your name: Greg Landsman

District or office you are running for: OH-01

Federal Candidate Questions:

1. Do you personally support local farmers and/or contribute to your local food economy? If so, how? Do you have experience working on health, food, farm, and environmental issues?

Every Sunday my family and I visit our local farmer ' s market for our weekly produce. It ' s one of our favorite family activities because it brings the community together, and helps our kids connect with the farmers growing our food and understand where our food is coming from.

In Congress I ' ve worked on the priorities of OEFFA, including working on lowering health care costs, protecting clean air and water, strengthening child nutrition and protecting SNAP. I ' ve also taken on agricultural issues, including introducing the Family Farm Transition Act to help the next generation of farmers get access to land. Our farmers are the backbone of our communities, and they deserve a partner in Congress who will fight for them.

2. For a truly resilient food system, connecting local producers with local consumers is vital. How would you implement policy initiatives to increase local food access for Ohio communities while acknowledging the unique challenges each community faces (transportation, zoning policies, food processing infrastructure, accessibility)?

We need to make it easier for farmers to sell locally and easier for families to buy locally. That means investing in the infrastructure that makes a local food system work, transportation, food hubs, cold storage, processing and packaging facilities, farmers ' markets, and reliable broadband. We also need to recognize the needs of a rural community in Clinton County are different from those of a neighborhood in Cincinnati. Federal policy should give communities the resources and flexibility to build solutions that work for them.

I ' ve already worked to bring federal resources home for community-based projects, including investments that expand access to healthy food in Cincinnati. Going forward, I ' ll continue to prioritize funding that connects Ohio farmers with schools, hospitals, food banks, restaurants, and families in their own communities as well as support the Local Food Purchasing Assistance (LFPA) program.

3. Following cancelled investments in local food procurement, like the [LFPA](#), farmers have felt the impacts on their businesses. How would you shape permanent policy initiatives to support local and regional farms with the economic opportunities that come from procurement for schools, hospitals, and food banks?

We need to make it a permanent part of how we spend federal food dollars. Local food procurement should not depend on whether Congress happens to fund a temporary program. I would support permanent funding for Farm to School and similar programs like the LFPA program, expand opportunities for schools and other institutions to purchase directly from local and regional producers, and invest in the processing, storage and distribution infrastructure that makes those purchases possible.

When a school buys food from an Ohio farmer, we ' re feeding kids, supporting a family farm, creating local jobs, keeping money in the community, and building a more resilient food system. USDA already has tools for local procurement, and we should make them easier for small and midsize farms to use.

4. How will you help ensure that nutrition and food assistance funding, like the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP), are invested in local communities and support direct-to-consumer sales with local farmers?

SNAP is first and foremost about making sure families can afford to put healthy food on the table. We need to do more to connect SNAP dollars to local farmers and local economies by expanding programs that allow SNAP recipients to use their benefits at local markets and supporting incentives for buying fruits and vegetables, making it easier for small farmers to participate.

I also strongly opposed the recent effort to shift costs onto states and undermine SNAP. Those cuts would hurt Ohio families and communities.

5. Farmers and rural families often face challenges when accessing childcare and quality healthcare. How would you prioritize solutions to these issues so that farmers have a viable personal safety net for themselves and their families?

We need to expand affordable health care, including Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act, invest in rural hospitals, and make sure rural communities have the workforce and infrastructure they need.

Child care is just as important. I ' ve worked on legislation to strengthen the Child and Adult Care Food Program and provide additional support to child care providers because we cannot have a strong economy without affordable, reliable child care.

6. While the [median age of farmers is 58](#) and rising, only a small amount (\$50 million) of federal funding is invested in the [Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program](#) (BFRDP) each year. What policy implementations would you propose to lower barriers for farmers entering the sector and support the long-term viability of their careers?

The biggest barrier for many beginning farmers is that they can't afford the land. I introduced the Family Farm Transition Act, which would create a federal pilot program connecting retiring farmers who want to transition their farms with beginning farmers looking for land. It would also create a database to help facilitate those transfers.

We need to build on that by increasing funding for beginning farmer training, expanding access to affordable credit, strengthening technical assistance, and making USDA programs easier for beginning farmers to navigate.

If we want young people to choose farming as a career, we have to make it possible for them to actually own and operate a farm. That means keeping land in the hands of farmers instead of allowing private equity and big corporations to buy it up.

7. [Federal farm payments continue to grow](#), and large-scale conventional farms receive the lion's share of government spending through [farm safety net](#), disaster, and crop insurance programs. How will you support *all* producers, including small and midsize farms (approximately under 2,000 acres) and those growing diversified or [specialty crops](#), in accessing a farm safety net to support their businesses?

Federal farm policy should reward family farmers who are feeding their communities, creating jobs and stewarding the land, not disproportionately benefiting the largest operations. We need to start by amending the application process. A farmer shouldn't need a full-time staff just to figure out how to access the programs they're eligible for.

8. Four corporations control [80-85 percent of the U.S. beef market](#), with similar levels of consolidation across other sectors of the food industry (inputs, retail, equipment, etc.). How would you prioritize policy initiatives (like the [Packers and Stockyards Act](#)) and investments in local food infrastructure (i.e., meat processing and vegetable packaging facilities) in a way that optimizes local food system resilience and job creation?

We need to break up corporate consolidation in the food industry. This is fundamentally an anti-corruption and competition issue. When a handful of corporations control the market, farmers have less bargaining power, consumers pay more, and communities lose local businesses and jobs. That's not a functioning market.

I would strengthen enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act, give the USDA the resources it needs to go after anticompetitive behavior, and prioritize federal support to independent meat processors, vegetable processing and packaging, food hubs and other local infrastructure.

9. Corporate consolidation continues to control our food system by [raising prices for consumers and decreasing farmers' incomes](#). Meanwhile, [farmland acres continue to decrease in Ohio](#) and [across the country](#), which has led to higher land prices and the loss of independent farms. What would you champion in office to combat the increasing corporate control of our food systems and ensure that farmers feeding their communities have fair access to markets and land?

Like I said previously, we have to take on corporate consolidation and protect farmland at the same time.

That means stronger antitrust enforcement, stronger enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act, greater transparency in agricultural markets, and policies that make it harder for private equity and large corporations to drive family farmers off their land. The Family Farm Transition Act is one piece of that work. We need to make it easier for retiring farmers to transfer their land to the next generation rather than selling to the highest corporate bidder. We need to also invest in beginning farmers, affordable credit and local food infrastructure so that owning a farm is once again a viable path for working people.

10. Our food system depends on the health of our environment and soil. What would you do to support and expand programs and practices that build on-farm resilience, such as improving access to [USDA conservation programs](#)?

Farmers understand better than anyone that healthy soil and clean water are economic assets.

I support expanding voluntary, farmer-led conservation programs that improve soil health, reduce erosion, protect water quality and help farms withstand extreme weather. We should make USDA conservation programs easier to access, especially for small and midsize farmers, and make sure technical assistance is available alongside the funding.

Conservation should not be about Washington telling farmers how to run their farms. It should be about giving farmers the tools and resources to make the decisions that work best for their land.

11. On-farm research facilitated by farmers in coordination with organizations and education professionals has been vital for producers as they adapt to extreme weather events and economic obstacles. Agricultural research funding continues to be in demand. Do you see this as a priority for federal funding? If so, how do you plan to make this more of a priority for Congress?

Absolutely. Agricultural research is one of the smartest investments the federal government can make. Farmers are dealing with increasingly unpredictable weather, rising input costs, changing markets and new pests and diseases.

We need to support land-grant universities, USDA research, extension services and farmer-led research partnerships, and make sure research dollars reach small and midsize farms and producers growing diversified and specialty crops.

I would make agricultural research and extension a priority in the federal budget because helping farmers become more productive and resilient strengthens the entire economy.

12. The USDA Organic label [continues to be the most recognized and trusted label](#) amongst consumers. What policy initiatives would you advance or introduce to help organic producers meet growing consumer demand for organic goods?

Organic farmers should have every opportunity to meet growing consumer demand.

I would focus on expanding technical assistance and research for organic and transitioning producers, improving access to USDA conservation programs, expanding markets for organic products, and making it easier for farmers to transition without taking on unsustainable financial risk.

We need to make sure organic farmers aren't disadvantaged by a food system dominated by large corporations. That means more competition, more local processing and distribution capacity, and stronger markets for independent producers.

Ultimately, this comes back to the same principle that guides my work on agriculture: put people ahead of politics and make sure the people doing the work have a fair shot to succeed. Ohio's farmers feed our families, create jobs and take