



ORGANIC FARMERS ASSOCIATION

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2020 POLICY PLATFORM

Passed by national OFA Farm Member vote. June 2020

Each year, Organic Farmers Association solicits input on policy priorities and policy positions from all U.S. certified organic farmers and organic farm organizations, which we did in December 2019. The OFA Policy Committee reviewed the results, identified the top priorities, and drafted policy statements from this broad-based solicitation to submit to OFA members for comment, which was completed in April 2020. In May, farm members of Organic Farmers Association voted on these policy positions.

For a position to become adopted as OFA policy, it must have 60% of the popular national vote and 60% popular support in at least two-thirds of the regions. Each year, new adopted policies will become part of the Organic Farmers Association Policy Platform.

In 2020, all proposed policy positions were passed by the Organic Farmers Association Farm Members. All proposed positions received more than 60% of the popular national vote and more than 60% popular support from at least 2/3 of the six regions.

ORGANIC INTEGRITY POLICIES

- 1. OFA SUPPORTS strict consequences for Accredited Certifying Agencies (ACA) implicated in domestic or foreign fraud and significant non-compliance including: immediate significant monetary fine, required three years of expanded training and audits, three-year suspension of any new clients, and notification to their existing clients and to the public.**
- 2. OFA SUPPORTS NOP implementing, with input from the community, the use of transaction certificates to verify the organic integrity of product sales by producers, handlers, and brokers.**
- 3. OFA SUPPORTS strengthening the requirements to increase the days on pasture and percentage of pasture required, except in cases of weather disaster.**
- 4. OFA supports strengthening integrity throughout the organic supply chain by increasing the NOP budget and holding the NOP accountable to do the following:**
 - improve inspection, review, and testing protocols using existing USDA inspection and auditing entities,
 - develop new unique-to-organic strategies including spot reviews of high-risk operations, and
 - improve the Organic Integrity Database for greater transparency of acreage, production records and transaction records.

GENETIC ENGINEERING / CONTAMINATION

5. OFA SUPPORTS the NOP formally accepting and implementing the National Organic Standards Board's (NOSB) excluded methods determination and technology framework as well as the continuing work of the NOSB in these determinations.

CLIMATE CHANGE

6. OFA SUPPORTS providing targeted support to organic farmers for soil organic matter/carbon sequestration, soil health and other ecosystem services.
7. OFA SUPPORTS the NOSB recommendation to eliminate the incentive to convert native ecosystems to organic production and urges the NOP to take immediate action to implement this regulatory change and guidance to protect the biodiversity and essential environmental services offered by these unique lands.

BEGINNING FARMER & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

8. OFA SUPPORTS a robust nationwide farmer-driven program that offers technical, financial and marketing assistance to help existing organic, conventional, beginning, and underserved farmers expand and/or convert to organic production, and provide continuing education on the benefits of organic farming systems.
9. OFA SUPPORTS the USDA prioritizing technical and financial assistance for the use of organic soil-based strategies in urban agriculture, including through the NRCS Office of Urban Agriculture and NRCS EQIP Organic Initiative.

SEEDS & BREEDS

10. OFA SUPPORTS dismantling the current concentration and consolidation in the breeding of seed and livestock genetics, to protect farmers' access to reliable crops and livestock adapted to their situations.
11. OFA SUPPORTS NOP adopting the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) recommendations on organic seeds and developing a plan to eliminate the use of non-organic seeds in the production of organic crops by 2030. This will require uniform enforcement by Accredited Certifying Agencies (ACAs) of the requirement to use organic seed and adequate oversight of certifiers by USDA.
12. OFA SUPPORTS amending NOP Rule §205.204(a)(1) to add "and microgreens" after "edible sprouts".

HYDROPONICS / CONTAINER GROWING

13. OFA SUPPORTS the NOP requiring a three year transition period after the use of prohibited substances on any part of a location that will produce certified organic crops or livestock, including the land under containers, inside greenhouses, or inside other structures.

CROP INSURANCE

14. OFA SUPPORTS allowing organic farmers to use organic prices for all federal farmer support programs.

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

- 15. OFA SUPPORTS implementation of a simpler mechanism for organic farmers to avoid paying into federal and state commodity checkoff.**