

Organic Research

Organic Research: SOAR and OSRI Acts

Investing in organic research has significant benefits that serve more than just organic farmers. Organic research should prioritize helping organic farmers adapt to climate disruption, quantify the multiple benefits of organic production for the environment and public health, develop regionally-appropriate publicly-available seeds and breeds, and address organic production challenges with methods that reduce the need for inputs.

SUPPORT POLICY SOLUTIONS

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act [S. 2317](#)), introduced by Senator Fetterman (PA), and the Strengthening Organic Agriculture Research Act (SOAR Act [H.R. 2720](#)) introduced by Representative Newhouse (WA-04), with Representatives Pingree (ME-01) and Panetta (CA-19) as original cosponsors, will provide continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis in order to increase resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, and improve the ecological vitality of the landscape.

- Bolster funding for the Organic Production and Market Data Initiative (ODI). Providing \$10 million over the life of the Farm Bill, the SOAR Act would double the farm bill funding for this crucial joint-initiative of three USDA Agencies: NASS, Economic Research Service (ERS), and Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). ODI data is essential for risk management products and targeted market development.
- Direct ERS to conduct a full, systematic evaluation of the economic impact organic agriculture has on rural and urban communities, taking into account economic, ecological, and social factors.

FUNDING SOAR AND OSRI ACTS WILL

- Bolster the funding for the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI). This legislation will provide stair-stepped budget increases to OREI, from \$60 million in 2024 to \$100 million in 2028.
- Provide Congressional authorization and direction for the Researching the Transition to Organic Program (RTOP), currently known as the Organic Transition Research Program (ORG), with an authorization for appropriations of \$10 million a year from 2024-2026 and \$20 million from 2027-2028.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Investing in agricultural and economic research is crucial for the US to boost domestic organic production in response to rising demand. Despite organic agriculture comprising over 6% of food sales, NIFA allocates only around 2% of its budget to direct organic research. Programs like OREI and ORG require producer involvement to ensure actionable research outcomes, benefiting both economic profitability and ecological sustainability in farming.