

August Recess Advocacy Guide



Your Opportunity to Connect with Legislators

Legislators are home in their districts for August Recess, the longest recess of the year. This presents a crucial opportunity to advocate for organic farming priorities ahead of the midterm elections and before the Senate Agriculture Committee reconvenes to vote on their draft Farm Bill. This guide provides the tools and information you need to make your voice heard this month.

2026 Recess Schedule

House of Representatives: July 24 – August 30

Senate: August 10 – September 11

Ways to Take Action

1. **Schedule an in-district legislative visit:** Connect directly with your representative or senator in their home district. A template for outreach emails appears later in this guide.
2. **Attend a town hall or public event:** Engage with your legislators at community gatherings. Sample questions for these events are provided within this guide.

Farm Bill State of Play

The U.S. House of Representatives passed its version of the 2026 Farm Bill—known as the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026 (H.R. 7567)—on April 30, 2026, by a bipartisan vote of 224 to 200.

On August 6th, the Senate Agriculture Committee voted on the latest Senate Farm Bill draft. The bill failed to secure Democratic votes and did not advance due to a disagreement over SNAP rules. Chair Boozman (R-AR) said the committee plans to reconvene and vote again in mid-September after the August recess. A Republican-only bill becomes more likely if Senator McConnell returns from medical leave by September. While the Senate bill improves some components of the House version, it still falls short of fully supporting organic producers.

Wins for Organic Farmers in the Senate Draft

The draft Farm Bill includes some positive provisions for organic farmers:

- **Organic Imports Verification Act:** This language requires USDA testing of high-risk bulk organic feedstuffs for prohibited residues, helping to prevent fraudulent imports from undercutting U.S. organic farmers.
- **Risk-Based Oversight for Integrity Act:** This provision modernizes organic inspections by aligning oversight intensity with actual risk.
- **Conservation Funding:** A slight increase in conservation funding provides expanded access for organic and transitioning producers through an enhanced EQIP set-aside.

- **National Organic Program Funding:** The bill includes small, stable, stair-step budget increases for the National Organic Program.
- **Cost-Share Support:** The bill authorizes an additional \$8 million in discretionary funding annually, supplementing the existing \$8 million mandatory allocation, subject to appropriations.

Missed Opportunities

Despite these wins, the draft Senate Farm Bill misses a critical opportunity to significantly invest in organic agriculture. Without increased funding for existing programs and new policies to expand markets, infrastructure, and research, American producers will remain at a disadvantage as consumer demand for organic products grows. OFA supported several organic-friendly amendments that did not pass, and we will continue advocating for them in September.

Amendments That Would Have Strengthened Organic Agriculture

The following amendments, supported by OFA, were not included in the current Senate draft but remain key priorities:

- Increased stair-stepped funding for the National Organic Program.
- Statutory language for Organic Dairy Data Collection.
- Increased funding and a higher maximum reimbursement rate (\$1,500) for the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program.
- Provisions from the Opportunities in Organic Act.
- Parity for organic producers using EQIP by eliminating the separate, lower payment cap.
- Provisions from the Organic Science and Research Investment Act, including funding for the Organic Agriculture Research Initiative (OREI) and the Research the Transition to Organic Program (RTOP).
- Provisions from the Domestic Organic Investment Act to reduce reliance on foreign supply chains and invest in domestic infrastructure to support thriving organic production and businesses in the U.S.

What Comes Next

If the Farm Bill is voted out of committee in September, it will proceed to a Senate floor vote, where members can introduce further amendments. Following that, it will require reconciliation with the House bill and a final vote in each chamber before being sent to the White House for signature.

Policy Asks and Sample Questions for Town Halls & State Fairs

Engage your legislators on key issues affecting organic farmers. Here are four topic areas and sample questions:

1. Domestic Production & Market Access

- * *Legislation:* Domestic Organic Investment Act; Opportunities in Organic Act
- * *Sample Question:* "What steps can Congress take to ensure we are investing in domestic organic infrastructure and market development to meet growing consumer demand and reduce our reliance on imports?"

2. Import Oversight & Organic Integrity

- * *Legislation:* Organic Import Verification Act; Risk-Based Oversight for Integrity Act
- * *Sample Question:* "How can Congress strengthen oversight of imported organic products to ensure a level playing field for U.S. organic farmers and protect the integrity of the organic seal?"

3. Organic Dairy & Market Data

- * *Legislation:* O DAIRY Act & Organic Dairy Data Collection Act
- * *Sample Question:* "What is being done to ensure fair market conditions and adequate data collection for the organic dairy sector?"

4. Organic Research, Conservation & Risk Protection

- * *Legislation:* Organic Science and Research Investment Act; EQIP Parity
- * *Sample Question:* "How can Congress better support organic farmers through robust research initiatives, accessible conservation programs, and adequate risk protection tools?"

Outreach Templates and Meeting Guide

Finding specific town hall and public event schedules can be challenging. Here's how to stay informed and request meetings:

- **Stay Informed:**
 - Subscribe to your representative's email updates.
 - Follow their official social media channels.
 - Monitor the events section of their official website.
 - Call their district office directly to inquire about their August recess schedule.
- **Find Your Legislators' Email and In-District Office Locations:** Use the Congress.gov 'Find Your Members' tool by entering your ZIP code or address. [Congress.gov/members](https://www.congress.gov/members)
- **Sample Outreach Email:**

Subject: Request for In-District Constituent Meeting - [Your Name/Farm Name]

Body:

Dear Representative/Senator [Legislator's Last Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a constituent and an organic farmer from [Your Town/County]. I am writing to request a brief meeting with you during your upcoming August recess to discuss critical issues facing organic agriculture in our district, particularly [mention 1-2 key policy areas from this guide, e.g., Farm Bill provisions, import integrity].

I understand you will be in the district from [Start Date] to [End Date]. I am available to meet at your convenience and would appreciate the opportunity to share my perspective as an organic producer.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from your office soon.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Farm Name (if applicable)]

[Your Phone Number]

[Your Email Address]

How to Prepare for Events

Before the Event:

- **Research:** Understand your legislator's background, committee assignments, and previous stances on agricultural issues.
- **Prepare Your Question:** Write down one clear, concise question focused on your key policy ask.
- **Arrive Early:** Secure a good spot and have time to observe the event dynamics.

Delivering Your Question:

- **Identify Yourself:** Clearly state your name and that you are a constituent and organic farmer.
- **State the Core Issue:** Briefly explain the problem or policy area.
- **Add Personal Impact:** Share one brief personal fact or a local impact statement to show why the issue matters.
- **Ask for a Commitment:** Frame your question to elicit a specific action or commitment from the legislator.

Best Practices:

- **Be Polite and Respectful:** Maintain a constructive tone.
- **Avoid Yes/No Traps:** Frame questions to encourage discussion.
- **Follow Up:** If possible, introduce yourself to staff after the session. Bring a farm brochure or business card. Share OFA materials if appropriate.
- **Can't Follow Up In Person?** If an in-person follow-up isn't feasible, email Lily at lily@organicfarmersassociation.org for assistance.

Additional Resources

- [OFA Legislative Priorities](#)
- [OFA Marker Bill Tracker](#)
- [You Have Policy Power](#)