

Election Season Advocacy Guide 2026

Right now, candidates for Congress and the Senate are campaigning in their home districts. This is a great opportunity to catch them at town halls, state fairs and other campaign events and ask them about their position on key issues in organic.

Sample Questions for Candidates

Domestic Production & Market Access

- *"To meet the growing demand for organic products without relying heavily on imports, domestic growers need better infrastructure. If elected, would you support policy that creates competitive grants for domestic producers to expand their storage, processing, and distribution capacity?"*
- *"Transitioning to organic farming involves upfront financial hurdles. Would you work to help expand certification cost-share funding and lower barriers for underserved producers?"*

Import Oversight & Organic Integrity

- *"Fraudulent foreign imports hurt American organic producers who follow strict standards. Will you support legislation to require residue testing of high-risk bulk organic feedstuff imports?"*
- *"Ensuring organic integrity requires smart enforcement. Do you support the focussing strict inspection resources on high-risk operations while reducing unnecessary administrative burdens for compliant, low-risk farms?"*

Organic Dairy & Market Data

- *"Organic dairy farmers face high feed costs and regional processing shortages. Will you work for better understanding of the challenges organic dairies face by requiring the USDA to collect and publish cost-of-production data for organic milk?"*

Organic Research, Conservation & Risk Protection

- *"Public agricultural research is critical for developing resilient organic farming techniques. Organic technology helps all farmers improve on-farm conservation. Will you work to ensure federal research funding keeps pace with the sector's growth?"*
- *"While progress has been made to increase payment limits for the EQIP Organic Initiative, organic farmers still face lower caps than conventional producers. Will you advocate for full parity in conservation program payment limits?"*

How to Prepare

Before the Event

- **Research your Candidate:** If they've held office previously, look up their past votes, public statements, or stated policies regarding your issue. Use the OFA Marker Bill Tracker as a guide. If they are running for office for the first time, research their background and connections.
- **Write it down:** Draft a single, specific question instead of a long speech.
- **Arrive early:** Sit near the front or close to the designated microphones to secure your spot in line.

Delivering Your Question

- **Identify yourself:** State your name and local neighborhood or city so they know you are a constituent.
- **State the core issue:** Share one brief, personal fact or local impact statement (keep it to one or two minutes).
- **Ask for a commitment:** Conclude by asking where the official stands or whether they will support legislation/policy change that addresses the issue.

Best Practices

- **Keep it polite:** Avoid hostility or insults, which allow the speaker to deflect or dismiss you. Even if they don't agree on this issue, don't burn the bridge!
- **Avoid yes/no traps:** Consider framing inquiries around what steps they plan to take rather than simple agreement.
- **Follow up:** Approach staff members after the session for additional details or documentation. Give them a farm brochure and/or your business card. You can share OFA materials with them at this time!

Additional Resources

- OFA Legislative Priorities
- OFA Marker Bill Tracker
- You Have Policy Power

How to Find Events

Follow candidates on social media, check campaign websites, or call your local campaign office to find out if there are scheduled appearances coming up.