

OFA FACTSHEET

What is Organic?

Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity, and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs that may be harmful to human and environmental health. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation, and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.

ORGANIC IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

OFA endorses the global four Principles of Organic Agriculture: Health, Ecology, Fairness, and Care. Farmers worldwide are adopting organic practices to build healthy communities, healthy food, and healthy land.

WE NEED MORE ORGANIC FARMS

The United States is the world's largest organic market ($71 billion in organic sales in 2024), and 80% of all U.S. households purchase organic products.

Yet we do not meet this demand locally and rely on imported agricultural goods for many products we could produce on our own shores. Only 1% of U.S. farmland is managed organically. We need to support more U.S. farmers in capturing the U.S. domestic market through local production.

ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

In the U.S., the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) develops, implements, and enforces national standards for organic agricultural products. It protects the integrity of the USDA organic seal by accrediting third-party certifiers and ensuring compliance with organic regulations from farm to market.

IS ORGANIC REGENERATIVE?

The term “regenerative” has been widely adopted in agriculture and the food industry, but definitions of the term vary widely and there are no set guidelines to hold producers accountable. When practiced well, regenerative agriculture shares similar principles with organic, such as strengthening and working with ecosystems. Organic agriculture makes the biggest impact.

ORGANIC FARMERS ASSOCIATION

ORGANIC PRINCIPLES

HEALTH

Organic agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human, and planet as one and indivisible.

ECOLOGY

Organic agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them, and help sustain them.

FAIRNESS

Organic ag. should conduct human relationships with fairness to all – farmers, workers, processors, distributors, traders and consumers. Organic should provide everyone involved with a good quality of life, and contribute to food sovereignty and reduction of poverty.

CARE

Organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect health. Decisions should reflect the values and needs of all who might be affected, through transparent and participatory processes.