

Organic Farmers Association Applauds Senate Farm Bill Framework

WASHINGTON, D.C., UNITED STATES, May 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Organic Farmers Association (OFA) praises the inclusion of improved organic agriculture policies in the Senate Farm Bill framework the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee released this week.

“OFA is pleased to see movement on the long-awaited Farm Bill,” said Lily Hawkins, OFA’s Policy Director. “Policies in the framework presented by Chairwoman Stabenow can help move more U.S. agriculture to organic methods and make a positive impact for organic producers who help support rural economic growth, protect the environment, and promote human health.”

The framework, released as the Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act, provides authorization of funding that will allow the National Organic Program (NOP) to keep pace with the growth in the organic sector and will advance OFA’s Farm Bill priorities in numerous ways:

Promoting Organic Integrity

- Directs the National Organic Program to solicit public input on the prioritization of organic regulations to be promulgated or revised
- Directs the Secretary to publish an annual report regarding recommendations received from the National Organic Standards Board, all regulatory and administrative actions taken, and justifications on why actions were or were not taken on those recommendations
- Directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study on the efforts of the NOP to improve organic standards and provide recommendations on how the NOP can ensure that organic program standards evolve in a timely manner to meet consumer expectations and benefit organic producers

Providing Assistance for Organic Dairy Farmers



- Directs the Department of Agriculture to improve collection of organic dairy market data

Improving Climate and Conservation Programs

- Clarifies the calculation of Conservation Stewardship Program payments for income forgone by a producer transitioning to an organic resource-conserving system

Funding Organic Research

- Continues funding for the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative
- Provides enhanced coordination of organic agriculture research within USDA
- Provides mandatory funding for organic production and market data initiatives

Making USDA Programs Work for Organic Farmers

- Provides stable funding for the Certification Cost-Share Program and increases the maximum payment to a producer or handler to \$1,000
- Directs research and development on ways to increase participation of organic producers in Federal crop insurance

Increasing Organic Infrastructure

- Authorizes an Organic Market Development Grant program
- Increases the EQIP payment cap for organic producers, making the organic cap equal to the conventional payment cap

The House Agriculture Committee is expected to unveil their Farm Bill proposal soon after Chair G.T. Thompson holds a markup this month. Once each Agriculture Committee has passed its own version of the bill, leaders from the House and Senate will work to combine the two bills, which will then be voted on by the full chambers.

OFA will continue to advocate for the inclusion of the important policies from the Senate framework and [key marker bills](#) in the final Farm Bill.

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About the Organic Farmers Association

The Organic Farmers Association (OFA) provides a strong and unified national voice for domestic certified organic producers. OFA builds and supports a farmer-led national organic farmer movement and national policy platform by developing and advocating policies that benefit organic farmers; strengthening and supporting the capacity of organic farmers and farm organizations; and supporting collaboration and leadership among state, regional and national organic farmer organizations. [Learn more at OrganicFarmersAssociation.org](http://OrganicFarmersAssociation.org).

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