



Opportunities in Organic Act of 2026

Led in the Senate by: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Michael Bennet (D-Colo.); Cory Booker (D-N.J.); John Fetterman (D-Pa.); Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.); Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.); Angus King (I-Maine); Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.); Chris Murphy (D-Conn.); Alex Padilla (D-Calif.); Adam Schiff (D-Calif.); Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.); Tina Smith (D-Minn.)

Introduced in the House by: Reps. Alma Adams (D-NC-12); Jimmy Panetta (D-CA-19)

Background: Organic agriculture has a wide array of environmental and health benefits, including enhancing soil fertility and structure, which can boost crop yield and help reduce the concentration of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. By reducing the use of fossil fuel-based fertilizers and toxic pesticides, organic farms further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the health of farmers, farmworkers, and consumers who might otherwise be exposed to dangerous pesticides.

Organic practices also make farms more resilient to extreme weather patterns and climate change, helping farms to simultaneously fight future climate change and increase their own resilience to the climate impacts we are already experiencing. However, farmers often face steep barriers to enter the industry, including high certification costs and insufficient technical assistance from existing United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs.

Legislation: The *Opportunities in Organic Act of 2026* is designed to help farmers and other agricultural producers transition to organic practices and build successful and sustainable businesses. The bill would help mitigate challenges farmers and producers face when transitioning to organic agriculture by modernizing USDA's reimbursements for organic certification and expanding the department's available expertise for organic agriculture.

Specifically, the bill would expand the existing National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program into a comprehensive Opportunities in Organic Program by:

- Increasing USDA's technical assistance for producers to advance organic practices;
- Making organic practices more accessible for agricultural producers from socially disadvantaged groups and underserved regions by increasing cost-share payments for organic certification and granting USDA flexibility to exceed current cost-share caps; and
- Providing additional support for non-governmental organizations working to help producers transition to organic practices.

Endorsing Organizations: The *Opportunities in Organic Act of 2026* is endorsed by over 35 agricultural and advocacy organizations, including the National Organic Coalition; Northeast Organic Farming Association of NY (NOFA-NY); Northeast Organic Farming Association of VT (NOFA-VT); Northeast Organic Farming Association - Interstate Council; Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance; National Resources Defense Council (NRDC); Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association; Organic Farming Research Foundation; Organic Seed Alliance; and the Organic Trade Association. Read the full list [here](#).