



ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Fostering the improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming.

Thank you for your interest in our work advocating for continued public investment in organic agriculture research programs through encouraging cosponsorship of the Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act)! We are so excited to get you involved in making sure this Farm Bill supports farm-centered, action-oriented research programs like the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) and the important long-term research done at the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). This toolkit provides background information and templates you can use to mobilize your organization's members to contact their legislators. These are meant to be starting points. For more significant impact, tailoring the materials using personal stories is an important next step in this work!

In this toolkit:

- [Priorities and Campaign overview](#)
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- [Sample newsletter text](#)
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Priorities and Campaign Overview

The Farm Bill is the most crucial piece of legislation for the food system, but especially for the research agencies. The Farm Bill drafting process has now officially begun. This spring and summer are crucial times to build support for the marker bills the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) has worked with Members of Congress to craft. To do this we are aiming to help you share your stories and communicate the importance of these programs to your communities.

We want to make sure that Members of Congress know about the opportunity to support these vital programs, and to do that we need your help! Here are a few ways you can help us in this work:

- Reach out directly to your Senators to educate them about the OSRI Act, its impact on the state and district, and to ask for cosponsorship.
- If applicable, ask your organization's members or subscribers to directly contact their Senators.
- Author a Letter to the Editor in support of this bill in your local newspaper, and once published, send to your Senators.
- Media attention is a crucial piece of any campaign, we can do this by generating content on social media, in newsletters, and other communications avenues.
- Communicate stories to Congress, but also to us! OFRF wants to help lift up your story as it relates to organic agriculture and the importance of research. [Sharing your story](#), or the story of someone in your network, is an important piece of our strategy.

Building a robust list of cosponsors for this bill is just step one in the process of getting these policies into the Farm Bill! We at OFRF and our partners will be working diligently with Members of Congress. Continuing to communicate the importance of this work is how it goes from Marker Bill text to Farm Bill text.

Approximate timeline:

Month	Farm bill phase	OSRI Act campaign
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Farm Bill has expired- Speaker elections took up a lot of legislative working time on the House side; now focused on avoiding government shutdown by Nov. 17th.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Building support for these marker bills as we enter an extended and uncertain Farm Bill timeline.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Farm Bill has expired- Appropriations or a Continuing Resolution must be passed by Nov. 17th, again taking up most legislative working days- Extension of the Farm Bill is	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Building support for these marker bills as we enter an extended and uncertain Farm Bill timeline.

	being discussed to be possibly passed alongside funding legislation	
December	- The “ Dairy Cliff ” approaches, putting pressure on getting at the very least an extension of the 2018 Farm Bill in place	- Building support for these marker bills as we enter an extended and uncertain Farm Bill timeline. - Revisit campaign depending on results of FB/Approps extensions
2024	- Still part of the 118th Congress, so bills will not require reintroduction. - 2024 is largely unclear, because the schedule will depend on the length and terms of the Farm Bill extensions agreed to later this year	- Building support for these marker bills as we enter an extended and uncertain Farm Bill timeline. - Revisit campaign depending on results of FB/Approps extensions

[OSRI Act Summary, Links, and Talking Points](#)

Here is a section by section summary explaining each of the Bill:

Sec. 1 - Short Title

Provides that this bill’s name is the Organic Science and Research Investment Act.

Sec. 2 - Coordinating and Expanding Organic Research Initiative

Creates an initiative across all USDA-REE agencies that will:

- review ongoing and planned organic agriculture research funded and conducted by USDA and
- submit a report to the Secretary of Agriculture recommending paths forward to coordinate and expand ARS investments into researching organic agriculture topics

Membership of this initiative will be a minimum of ¼ ARS staff, ¼ NIFA staff, and at least one representative from the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Office of the Chief Scientist, ERS, and NASS.

The Secretary must respond to the report submitted by the Initiative in their budget proposal, and explain how they addressed the recommendations made by the Initiative.

Sec. 3 - Increasing Organic Acreage on Agricultural Research Service Stations

Directs the Administrator of the ARS to develop a plan that would increase the share of acres of organically managed land operated at ARS Research Stations to be at least equal to the organic agriculture industry's market share of food sales. Instructs the administrator that this plan shall be submitted to the Committees on Agriculture.

Sec. 4 - Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)

Amends the legislative priorities, adding three new priorities:

- Identify and facilitate the study of Traditional Ecological Knowledge with required free, prior, and informed consent from tribal nations that possess that knowledge, and projects being lead by Tribal Universities;
- develop cultural practices and other allowable alternatives to substances recommended for removal from the National Organic Program's National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substance;
- identifying how organic agriculture can adapt to and mitigate climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building landscape resiliency, and facilitating other related ecosystem services.

Changes the maximum term of an OREI project to 10 years.

Provides incremental increases to OREI's budget, from \$60 million to \$100 million annually by the end of the Farm Bill.

Sec. 5 - Researching the Transition to Organic Program (RTOP)

Provides first-time authorization for a competitive grant program aimed at researching ways to overcome the barriers producers experience in transitioning to organic, as well as the ecological benefits and methods to measure the benefits of transitioning to organic agriculture systems.

Prioritizes research projects that actively partner with producers who conduct on-farm research and 1890 LGUs, 1994 LGUs, and HSIs.

Authorizes \$10 million in discretionary funds from 2024-2026, and \$12 million 2026-2028.

Sec. 6 - Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives

Doubles the funding for this program to \$10 million over the life of the Farm Bill, and the authorized annual appropriations to \$10 million annually.

Directs the Economic Research Service (ERS) to conduct an economic impact analysis of organic agriculture production on rural and urban communities, taking into account economic, ecological, and social factors. ERS must have a plan to conduct this analysis to the House and Senate Agriculture committees within a year, and the analysis itself to the committees within three years of submitting their plan.

Some helpful links:

- [Link to the Bill text](#)
- [Fetterman Press Release](#)
- OFRF and partner Blog Posts:
 - [OFRF Policy Priorities for 2023 Farm Bill & Appropriations](#)
 - [OSRI Act Announcement Blog Post](#)
 - [NSAC Blog post](#)

Helpful talking points:

- General:
 - Investing in organic agriculture research helps our agricultural businesses build resiliency to both climate and supply chain disruption through research that empowers regionally appropriate organic management.
 - Public investment in research has significant benefits to public good, high return on investment. For every dollar invested into agriculture research, \$20 returns to the economy.
 - Demand for organic products continues to grow while domestic production has not kept pace, resulting in consumers purchasing more and more imported organic products. To increase domestic organic production, intentional investment into actionable research for organic producers is essential.
 - Investing in organic agriculture research brings \$\$\$ into rural communities that directly positively impacts the specific community invested in, but also the general rural economy through providing cutting edge research to increase profitability of agricultural operations.
 - Provides producers with the tools and resources necessary to choose and implement the farm practices, systems, and business models that work best for them and the land they farm
 - Benefits go beyond organic management and lessons learned can be used by all types of producers.
- ARS-focused
 - ARS is the sole in-house agricultural research operation, focusing on long-term research projects like cultivar development and IPM strategies.
 - Current market share of organic is >6%, but <1% of ARS' budget goes to organic topics. With USDA working to help transition producers into organic production, there will be an increased need for applicable research to aid in that transition.
- NIFA-focused

- OREI has funded crucial research into persistent production challenges associated with organic management, but is still underfunded to meet the needs of a rapidly growing organic sector.
- Continuing to expand the mandatory funding going to OREI will support the related investments in research infrastructure to match the sector's growth.
- ODI-focused
 - Industry is calling on the USDA to collect more meaningful data that is publicly available and can inform smart policy and business decisions for the growing organic market
 - Organic producers are a boon to local and regional economics; now that the organic market has matured and developed into a long-standing and trusted market, having a detailed financial analysis of those economic benefits quantified by ERS is important to understand how far public dollars go when supporting organic agriculture.

Sample Newsletter Text

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) was recently introduced to congress by Senator Fetterman and provides continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis.

This legislation does four things that would increase the resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, and result in improved ecological vitality of the landscape:

1. Creates the Coordinating and Expanding Organic Research Initiative.
2. Directs the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to develop a plan to increase organically managed acres.
3. Bolsters the organic agriculture programs operated by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).
4. Bolsters funding for the Organic Production and Market Data Initiative (ODI).

All of these policies represent a significant step toward providing needed investments into organic agriculture research, supporting a rapidly-growing and -maturing organic food and agriculture market. The policies in the OSRI Act provide research tools to help farmers thrive. They also signal to researchers that organic agriculture research is a valued and important area of study which incentivizes young researchers to pursue organic agriculture research projects and expertise. Alongside these market-wide benefits, public investments in agricultural research can have significant positive impact on rural communities. You can learn more about the OSRI Act here [link to one-pager, blog post, etc]. The OSRI Act is a marker bill, and the more support it receives, the more likely it is to get incorporated into the Farm Bill this year.

Will you reach out to your representatives and ask them to become a cosponsor? [include link to find your representative & sample script for phone call.]

If you are a farmer or researcher involved in advocacy work, will you share your story with OFRF? Facts, figures, and statistical breakdowns of the effects of increased public investment in agricultural research are important, but the lived experiences and stories of researchers and farmers communicate more than a report ever can. OFRF is collecting and amplifying stories of researchers around the U.S. who have effectively shared their research with decision-makers. Share your story here. [[link to researcher advocacy story intake form](#)]

Template for Congressional Outreach Materials

Initial contact email, asking for cosponsorship

Hello, My name is _____ and I am a constituent living in _____ and working for _____.

I urge Senator _____ to cosponsor the OSRI Act (S2317). As a [researcher/farmer/concerned constituent], it is important to me to have robust public funding of organic agriculture research at the USDA. The OSRI Act will do that by investing in existing organic research programs, as well as provide a road map for the future of organic agriculture.

Please support S 2317 by becoming a cosponsor today!
[name/signature]

Initial contact email, asking for cosponsorship + meeting

Good morning/afternoon [agriculture staffer in Senator's office]

[Introduce yourself, your organization, and your connection with the state/district if this is your first communication with this person]. I am reaching out to ask if [Senator] will support the Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act). The OSRI Act was introduced by Senator Fetterman and provides continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis.

Here is more information on the bill: [provide link to leave behind, maybe attach? TKTK]

If you have any availability, I would appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about this bill, and how it would benefit organic producers in [state]. Would you be able to meet in the next two weeks?

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing back from you,
[name/signature]

Initial contact email, asking for cosponsorship + in-state visit/meeting

Good morning/afternoon [agriculture staffer and scheduler in Senator's office]

[Introduce yourself, your organization, and your connection with the state/district if this is your first communication with this person]. I am reaching out to ask if [Senator] will support the

Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act). The OSRI Act was introduced by Senator Fetterman and provides continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis.

Here is more information on the bill: [provide link to leave behind, maybe attach? TKTK]

Since it's the growing season, it is hard for me to leave the [farm/research station], and would be happy to host an in-state meeting with the Senator to visit our [farm/research station] to get an on-the-ground perspective on the importance of these research investments.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing back from you,
[name/signature]

Template Agenda for meeting to discuss bill

1. Thank you and review time available; brief agenda review
2. Who you are
 - a. Organization, connection to the state and organic agriculture research
3. Share relevant information about the OSRI Act impact on district
 - a. Historical total of OREI/ORG awards in state, examples of the research projects (we can provide this information!)
 - b. ARS station investments, examples of the research projects (we can provide this information!)
 - c. Size of the organic market in state ([NASS 2021 Organic Survey Data](#))
4. Ask: "Will Senator [name] cosponsor the OSRI Act?" Follow-ups:
 - a. What are your hesitations about the bill?
 - b. What additional information or resources would Senator [name] need to make a decision?
5. Thank the staffer again, confirm you will follow up with requested information/materials

Template email thank you/follow-up + in-state visit/meeting

Good morning/afternoon [staffer you met with in Senator's office]

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me and discuss the importance of organic agriculture research and market analysis to [State]. I am following up to send over the requested materials and check if there is anything else that would be helpful to send over.

Here is more information on the bill: [provide link to leave behind, maybe attach? TKTK]

Since it's the growing season, it is hard for me to leave the [farm/research station], and would be happy to host an in-state meeting with the Senator to visit our [farm/research station] to get an on-the-ground perspective on the importance of these research investments.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing back from you,

[name/signature]

Template for a Letter to the Editor

- **First Sentence:** Introduce your topic or yourself
- **First Paragraph:** Get right to the point. Here is where you introduce the specific issue that you are commenting on and the actions of decision makers.
- **Body Paragraph:** List your concerns and provide specific evidence to back up your claims.
- **Concluding Sentence:** Really drive your point home. Choose your words carefully here as you restate your purpose while emphasizing your bottom line.

Sample LTE:

Hello,

My name is [your name here], and I'm [a researcher, farmer, concerned citizen / something to do with organic agriculture or organic research]. I support increased investments into organic agriculture research because... TKTK

First Paragraph Examples:

- Programs like the Organic Research and Extension Initiative help farmers by funding cutting edge research into topics and questions organic producers need answered. Here in [State/community] we have benefitted from this program through the research projects investigating topics like [insert topics here]

Body Paragraph Examples:

- I am calling on [Senator] to continue to support these programs that help farmers in our state be both economically and ecologically sound. [Senator] can do this by joining Senator Fetterman and cosponsor the Organic Science and Research Investment Act, S.R. TKTK.

Investing into organic agriculture research will empower researchers/producers like me to transition into organic and farm the way we want to. TKTK

Thank you,
[your name]

Sample Social Media Posts & Graphics

To tag OFRF:

- [Facebook](#): /OFRF.org
- [Instagram](#): @organicfarmingresearch
- [Twitter](#):@ofrf
- [LinkedIn](#): Organic Farming Research Foundation

Hashtags to use:

#SupportOrganicAgResearch #2023FarmBill #OSRIact #InvestInOrganic

Twitter:

Handles: @SenFettermanPA

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) was recently introduced by @SenFettermanPA. If passed, it will increase US agricultural resilience, create economic opportunity for producers, & improve ecological vitality. Learn more: [insert link here]

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The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) provides continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis. Will you reach out to your representatives and ask them to become a cosponsor? #OSRIact [link to leave behind / blog with scripts]

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@[your Senator]: Support agricultural resilience, economic opportunity, & ecological vitality in [your state] through strategic investment in organic agriculture research - become a cosponsor of the #OSRIact, introduced by @SenFettermanPA!

Instagram:

Handles @senfettermanpa

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) was recently introduced by @senfettermanpa. This legislation provides continued, needed investments into organic agriculture research and market analysis to help farmers thrive. It will increase the resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, & improve ecological vitality. Learn more here: [insert link]

The #OSRIact is a marker bill: the more support it gets, the more likely it will be to get incorporated into the Farm Bill this year. You can help! Will you contact your representative and ask them to cosponsor the OSRI Act?

-

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) does four things that would increase the resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, and result in improved ecological vitality of the landscape:

🥬 Creates the Coordinating and Expanding Organic Research Initiative.

🥬 Directs the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) to develop a plan to increase organically managed acres.

🥬 Bolsters the organic agriculture programs operated by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

 Bolsters funding for the Organic Production and Market Data Initiative (ODI).

These policies are a significant step toward providing needed investments into organic agriculture research, supporting a rapidly-growing organic food and agriculture market, and providing research tools to help farmers thrive. They also show that organic agriculture is a valued and important study area, encouraging young researchers to pursue organic agriculture research projects. Alongside these market-wide benefits, public investments in agricultural research can have tremendous positive impact on rural communities.

Will you tell your representative to join @senfettermanpa to cosponsor the #OSRIact?

-

Farmers and friends: take action for organic agriculture! The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) was just introduced by @SenFettermanPA. It will increase the resilience of US agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, & improve ecological vitality. Ask your Members of Congress to cosponsor the #OSRIact! [insert link??] [other hashtags??]


Facebook:

Handles: @senfettermanpa

The Organic Science and Research Investment Act (OSRI Act) does four things that would increase the resilience of U.S. agriculture, create economic opportunity for producers, and result in improved ecological vitality of the landscape:

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All of these policies represent a significant step toward providing needed investments into organic agriculture research, supporting a rapidly-growing and -maturing organic food and agriculture market. The policies in the OSRI Act provide research tools to help farmers thrive. They also show researchers that organic agriculture is a valued and important study area, encouraging young researchers to pursue organic agriculture research projects and expertise. Alongside these market-wide benefits, public investments in agricultural research can significantly impact rural communities.

Will you tell your representative to join John Fetterman to cosponsor the #OSRIact?

Social Media Graphics

Download full size images here

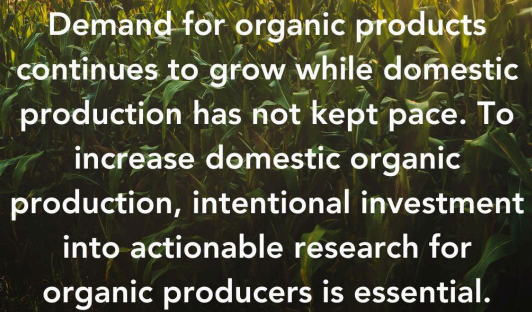
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TzYcW_Ecp1qxYlDibya7UxV642w05_8t?usp=drive_link





The OSRI Act includes:

- Coordinating and Expanding Organic Research Initiative**
- Increasing Organic Acreage at Ag Research Service Stations**
- Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)**
- Researching the Transition to Organic Program (RTOP)**
- Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives**



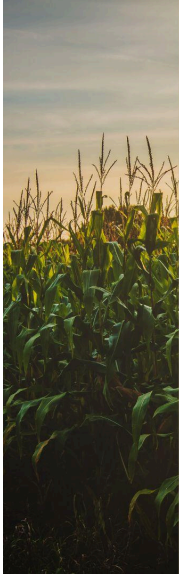
Demand for organic products continues to grow while domestic production has not kept pace. To increase domestic organic production, intentional investment into actionable research for organic producers is essential.



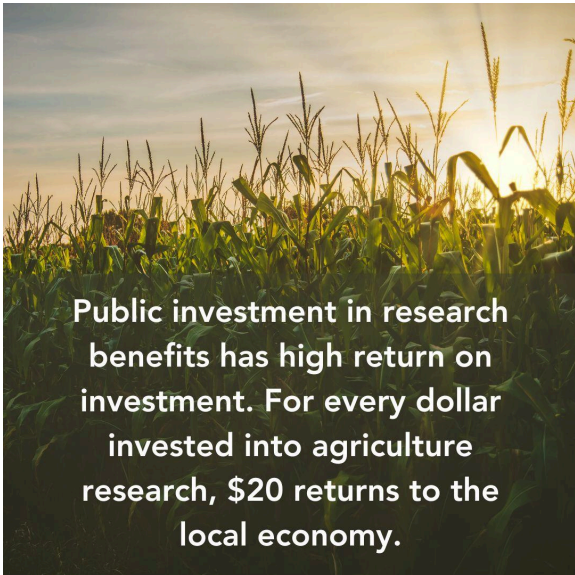
Investing in organic agriculture research helps ag businesses build resiliency to climate and supply chain disruption through research that empowers regionally appropriate organic management.

Investing in organic agriculture research has direct positive benefit by bringing \$ into rural communities. It also positively impacts the rural economy by providing cutting edge research to increase profitability of agricultural operations.



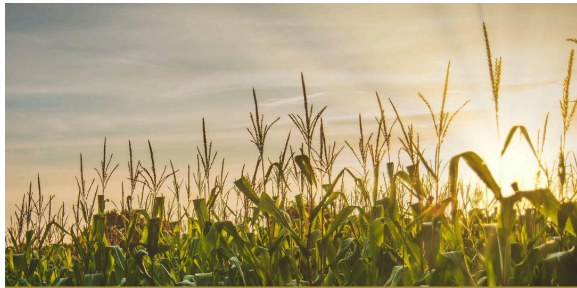


Investing in organic agriculture research provides producers with the tools and resources necessary to choose and implement the farm practices, systems, and business models that work best for them and the land they farm.



Public investment in research benefits has high return on investment. For every dollar invested into agriculture research, \$20 returns to the local economy.

These policies are a big step toward providing needed investments into organic agriculture research, supporting a rapidly-growing organic food and agriculture market, and providing research tools to help farmers thrive.



Will you reach out to your representatives and ask them to become a cosponsor of the OSRI Act in the 2023 Farm Bill?

#InvestInOrganic #OSRIact #2023FarmBill