NOFA-NH & NRCS PRESENT

FUNDING FOR FARMERS
Introduction to Transition to Organic Partnership Program & More

May 31, 2023 | 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

www.nofanh.org/topp
Goals of the Presentation

01 NOFA & TOPP
The Transition to Organic Partnership Program, mentorship and events

02 NRCS & OTI Funding
NRCS Organic Transition Initiative funding and direct farmer assistance

03 FSA & Organic Cost Share
Hear from the Farm Service Agency about the Organic Certification Cost Share Program

04 Get Involved + Q & A
Understand the ways to access farmer centered programs, find resources, and get involved
Mission
The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH) actively promotes organic, regenerative, ecologically sound farming, gardening, eating, and land care practices for healthy communities. We help people build local, just, and sustainable food systems.

Member Based Organization
Over 375 members comprised of farmers, home growers, non-profits, school professionals, community advocates, and eaters. We are one of seven state chapters of NOFA, founded in 1971.
NOFA-NH Programs and Services

Educational Workshops
CRAFT, Organic Gardening Series, webinars, and intensive workshops

Conferences and Events
Winter Conference, farm gatherings, film screenings, and panel discussions

Policy and Advocacy
Listening sessions, calls to action, op eds, advocacy at local, regional & federal levels
Food Security
Farm Share Program, NH Feeding NH and collaborations with NH food organizations

Producer Support
TOPP, Bulk Order and technical assistance programs

Continuing to Grow
Member based organization dedicated to meeting our community’s needs
What is the USDA Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP)?
$100 million national investment over five years to provide technical assistance and wrap-around support for transitioning and existing organic farmers.

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service is building partnership networks in six regions across the United States with trusted organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities.

NOFA-NH is one of the Core Partners in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic TOPP region.
Organic Transition Initiative (OTI)
Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) Regions

This map shows many of the organizations helping to establish the TOPP partnership network (October 2022)
Key TOPP Initiatives

- Organic farmer-to-farmer mentorship
- Community building opportunities
- Technical assistance and training
- Workforce training and development
Mentorship
Farmer-to-Farmer Matches

- Mentors guide and support producers who are transitioning to certified organic production by providing valuable insights, practical advice, and industry best practices
- Mentors will be paired with transitioning farmers with similar farming practices
- Mentors/Mentees will receive on boarding & training, have regular meetings and check ins, and participate in program evaluations
- 45 hours of collaboration expected per year
- Recommended: Attend at least one educational event together during mentorship period
Mentor Responsibilities

TOPP is seeking experienced certified organic producers who are passionate about organic production to share their expertise.

- Mentor at least one producer transitioning to organic for one year, with an option to renew mentorship annually.
- Complete 5 hours of mentor training annually.
  Provide 40 hours of mentorship each year.
- Suggested: Present at or host an educational event at the mentor’s farm/operation.
Qualifications & Benefits
Mentors support the growing network of organic producers

Mentors are owners, managers, employees, or retired producers of certified organic operations with at least 3 years of experience with organic certification.

Strong understanding of the rules, challenges, and benefits of organic production and becoming certified organic.

$3,000 stipend for each mentorship per year.
Applicants with language skills beyond English may be eligible for additional compensation.
Mentees

Requirements & Expectations

Mentees have existing farming operations where they are currently employees, managers, or owners, and at least 2 years experience owning or operating a farm.

Transitioning producers are:
- Planning to transition an existing operation to organic,
- In the process of transitioning an operation to organic,
- Adding new organic acreage,

- Adding new scopes of organic certification, and/or starting a new certified organic operation.

- Mentees must intend to become certified organic.
Mentees

Requirements & Expectations

Participate in two farm visits per year (one at mentee farm, one at mentor farm).

Participate in at least 3 touch points with mentor during growing season.

Commit 45 hours yearly.

Mentee positions are not paid through TOPP. Mentees can access programs and resources from NRCS & FSA to help with their transition.
How to Apply

Applications Available July 2023
Applications Close August 31st
Program Begins November 1st

- For more information about the TOPP program
- To express interest in the mentorship program
- Or to receive updates

- Fill out an interest form at the USDA TOPP website:

www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/topp

Or visit www.nofanh.org/topp
TOMP is Just Beginning

Community Building Events
TOMP aims to leverage and expand existing agricultural networks in each state to provide organic education and farmer networking opportunities.

Sign up for NOFA-NH’s mailing list and/or Core Partner organizations mailing lists in your state for information about upcoming events in NH and beyond.

Technical Assistance
TOMP and Core Partners are working to expand the technical assistance opportunities for existing and transitioning organic producers.

Workforce Development
TOMP partner organizations will engage educational and training institutions on organic workforce training and education.
THANK YOU

Contact Us
Email: info@nofanh.org
Phone: 603-224-5022
www.nofanh.org/topp

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THANK YOU

TOPP Mentorship Program
Applications Open July 2023
Applications Close August 31, 2023
Program Begins: November 1, 2023
www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/topp

NRCS Organic Transition Initiative
Application Deadline: June 15, 2023
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/NewHampshire/ServiceCenters

FSA Program Deadlines
- Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) Application Deadline: October 31, 2023
  (for expenses paid from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023)
- Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP) Application Deadline: July 26, 2023