Opportunities in Organic and Sustainable Crop Production and Consulting

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Definitions of Organic Agriculture

“Organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony.”

“‘Organic’ is a labeling term that denotes products produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act. The principal guidelines for organic production are to use materials and practices that enhance the ecological balance of natural systems and that integrate the parts of the farming system into an ecological whole.”
U.S. Organic Production Not Meeting Demand

<1% of Row Cropland is Organic

Foreign Supplies Filling Gap


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Landscape: Demand for Organic Grains

9.4% 5yr CAGR total value

Jan. 2011: the U.S. Dept. of Commerce added codes for selected organic products to the U.S. trade code system
2013: U.S. Organic Corn Data unavailable
% change of certified organic farms from 2011 to 2016
Do you have clients requesting information about opportunities in organic agriculture, transitioning to organic pr...nic agronomy, or other organics topics?

228 responses

- Yes: 62.3%
- No: 37.7%
How confident are you in your skills and knowledge to support clients inquiring about organic grain production?

228 responses
Barriers to Transition

• Financial
• Agronomic
• Transition
• Regulatory
• Markets
• Social
Why transition to organic?

- Diversity
- Resilience
- Profitability
- Market demand
- Farm transfer
- Safety
- Collateral benefits
What are you transitioning?
A new toolbox

- Certification
- Crop Rotation
- Fertility
- Weed Control
- Investments
Add organic consulting as part of your portfolio

- Transitioning farmers are looking assistance
- Learning organic practices helps with conventional customers
Demand for Organic Agronomy

• 3-7 new clients every year- more recently with low crop prices

• 4 organic consultants in IL

• Organic consulting and sale of organic product represent 30% of my gross sales
Summary

• New markets
• Assist current customers
• Have fun
Places to Learn More

• SARE
• Rodale Institute
• OGRAIN
• IDEA Farm Network
• Practical Farmers of Iowa

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Organic Agronomy Training Series

SAVE THE DATE

OATS East ♦ Crawfordsville, IN
July 24-25, 2019

OATS Central ♦ La Crosse, WI
August 14-15, 2019

For agronomists, crop consultants, and technical service providers seeking to advise transitioning and certified organic grain farmers.

Information & registration details at organicagronomy.com

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