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United States Department of Agriculture

USDA's  
93rd  
Annual

# Agricultural Outlook Forum

## A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture

February 23-24, 2017 • Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, Arlington, Virginia

Presentation from the USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum 2017

United States Department of Agriculture  
93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Agricultural Outlook Forum  
“A New Horizon: The Future of Agriculture”

February 23-24, 2017  
Arlington, Virginia



# USDA AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FORUM

NATHANIEL LEWIS Organic Trade Association Farm Policy Director

All Organic Operations 2009



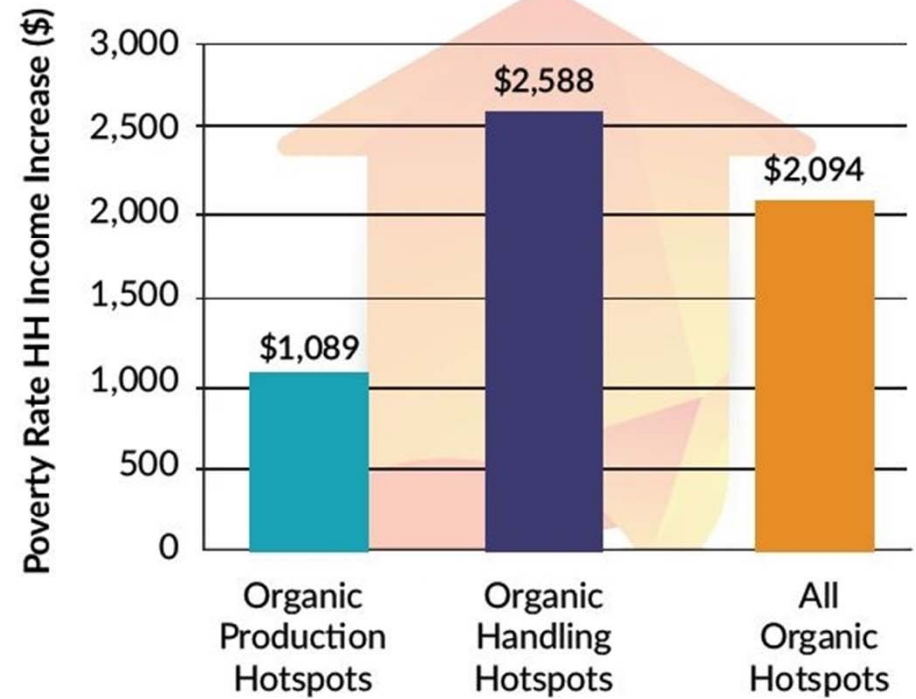
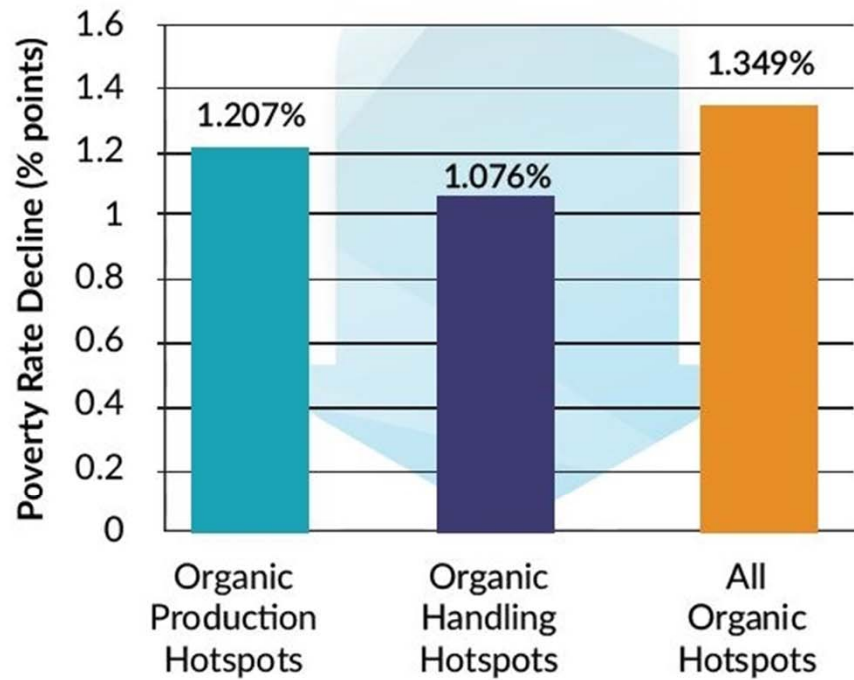
All Organic Operations 2013



● Hotspots ● Coldspots ● Outlier ● Outlier

## WHERE ARE ORGANIC HOTSPOTS?

Organic Hotspots are particularly strong on the West Coast. Smaller hotspots also appear in the northern Midwest, in several parts of New England and the northern Mid-Atlantic states, plus a few additional isolated areas.



## WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM BEING IN AN ORGANIC HOTSPOT?

A county's poverty rate drops by 1.3 percentage points and the median household income increases \$2,094.



## ANIMAL WELFARE

10 years of public stakeholder input

- NOSB recommendation
- Proposed and Final Rule from USDA

Not a new regulation

No increased biosecurity risks

Industry investments accommodated with generous implementation timeline

# ORGANIC CHECK-OFF



Stakeholder outreach and revisions based on feedback. Framework details finalized for proposal. Completed 2012-2015.



Petition USDA with application. Completed May 2015. USDA decides whether to issue a draft proposal and referendum for public comment and vote.



USDA publishes proposed rule for public comment (60 days). Published January 17, 2017. USDA then reviews and analyzes comments and finalizes rule based on public input.



USDA puts out final rule regarding establishment of an Organic Check-off and conducts referendum. TBD. Results tabulated and announced.



An industry-governed Board, appointed by USDA with input from the sector, would direct an Organic Check-off!



## TRANSITIONAL CERTIFICATION

- The Organic Trade Association has a new partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help guide farmers transitioning into certified organic agricultural production.
- Using standards developed by OTA, the National Certified Transitional Program will provide oversight to approved Accredited Organic Certifying Agents offering transitional certification to producers.





  
**OVER 500**  
**PARTICIPANTS**

## OTA FARM BILL SURVEY

Production and marketing barriers

Investment barriers

Quality of regulatory system

Research, and extension needs

Evaluation of past Farm Bill program effectiveness

Creative ideas for Farm Bill 2018



## TOP 5 SUGGESTED ORGANIC POLICY ACTIONS >> PRODUCERS

1. Increased public education about the benefits of organic
2. Increased funding for organic production research
3. Access-to-land programs geared towards organic
4. Increased consistency by National Organic Program (NOP) in application of standards across certifiers and operations
5. Programs to improve transparency and tracking of international organic trade



## FARM BILL THEMES

- ✓ Expand the production base
- ✓ Successful Organic Farmers
- ✓ Healthy Markets



SINCE 1985  
*Organic*  
trade association



THANK YOU

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