

July 12, 2017

The Honorable Secretary Perdue
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing as farms, businesses, research centers and organizations representing a broad spectrum of perspectives about food and agriculture to express our strong, shared support for the USDA organic label and the federal marketing, research and data collection programs that support the label.

With the establishment of the National Organic Program in 2001, consistent national standards were created to govern the labeling of organic food and the use of the USDA organic seal. Consumer confidence in the integrity of the USDA organic seal has been a driving factor in the exponential growth in the organic sector. In 2000, organic sales of products labeled under various conflicting state and private organic labels totaled only \$6 billion. Today, as a result of the establishment of the consistent federal organic standards, total sales of organic food and beverages are nearly \$50 billion. Domestically, the organic sector is home to nearly 24,000 certified organic family farms and other businesses.

Organic farmers are required to use farming practices that preserve and enhance natural resources, and organic processors are required to use ingredients that have passed strict environmental and human health reviews. Consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products that meet these higher standards. As a result, organic farmers and processors enjoy a higher price to reward them for their extra costs and efforts. Organic regulations are voluntary, or opt-in, in the sense that farmers decide whether they want to participate in the National Organic Program. Similarly, consumers voluntarily decide whether to buy organic food. House Speaker Ryan has used the USDA organic standards as an example of a "better way" to approach federal regulations to foster a stronger U.S. economy using a voluntary approach to regulations.

The economic success of the organic sector also depends on strong enforcement by USDA and USDA-accredited organic certifier organizations domestically and internationally. It is the job of the certifiers to ensure that all organic operations meet the strict production, processing and handling standards established by USDA through an open and transparent public process. It is the job of USDA to use its accreditation and oversight functions to ensure that certifiers are enforcing the standards in an effective and uniform manner for all organic operations. Consumers depend on the integrity of the USDA organic seal, and expect uniform enforcement of the standards.

Despite the success and growth of the organic industry, the U.S. organic sector faces significant challenges. While organic sales are growing at a double-digit pace each year, domestic organic production is struggling to keep pace with that growth with an increased reliance on imports to meet the demand.

In the spirit of the public-private partnership that underlies the success of the organic sector, it is critical that your agency continue to support the work of the National Organic Program, as well as the research and data collection programs that will help ensure that U.S. organic farmers can meet growing consumer demand for their products. It is our firm belief that jobs associated with organic agriculture can and should be kept here in the United States, without having to rely on increased imports to meet demand for products we can produce here.

In that regard, we look forward to working with you to support the key marketing, research and data collection programs, as well as the strong standards enforcement procedures that are critical to the U.S. organic sector.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

CC

Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader

Chuck Schumer, Senate Minority Leader

Kevin McCarthy, House Majority Leader

Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader

Pat Roberts, Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee

Debbie Stabenow, Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture Committee

K. Michael Conaway, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee

Glenn 'GT' Thompson, Vice Chairman, House Agriculture Committee

Collin C. Peterson, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee

Thad Cochran, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee

Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee

Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee

Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee

Business	Adams Farm Slaughterhouse	MA
Business	Albert Lea Seed	MN
Business	Alder Wood Bistro	WA
Business	AlphaSource	NY
Business	Barefoot Edible Landscape & Permaculture	NY
Business	Belcain Concerns	OR
Business	BJE Poultry	PA
Business	Blue River Organic Seeds	IA
Business	Bowman Andros	VA
Business	Cafe Juanita	WA
Business	Central Maryland Beekeepers Association	MD
Business	Chimacum Corner Farmstand	WA
Business	Clarkson Grain Co., Inc.	IL
Business	Clif Bar & Company	CA
Business	Diane's Market Kitchen	WA
Business	Dirty Girl Coffee LLC	OH
Business	Dr. Bronner's	CA
Business	Duna Fisheries, LLC	WA
Business	Eat From Farms	NY
Business	Eden Foods	CA
Business	Fabulous Ferments, LTD.	OH
Business	Field & Fire Cafe	MI
Business	Flying Fish Company LLC	OR
Business	Foodwaze LLC	VA
Business	Frankferd Farms Foods, Inc.	PA
Business	Global Culture	CA
Business	Global Organic Alliance, Inc	OH
Business	Going Green Services, LLC	OH
Business	Great Roots Ohio	OH
Business	I Am Clean Energy LLC	OH
Business	JJKD, Inc Restaurants	WA
Business	Johnny's Selected Seeds	ME
Business	Kamut International	MT
Business	Kovar Organic Equipment	PA
Business	Krazy Kraut Fermented Foods	OH
Business	Luc / Loulay	WA
Business	Lundberg Family Farms	CA
Business	MOM's Organic Market	MD
Business	National Co+op Grocers	IA
Business	Natural Contents	NY
Business	Natural Grocers NYSE:NGVC	CO
Business	Nature's Path Foods USA Inc.	WA
Business	OFARM	MN
Business	Ohio earth food	OH
Business	Orcas Food Co-op	WA
Business	Organic Advocacy	CA
Business	Organic Valley - CROPP Cooperative	WI

Business	Organically Grown Company	OR
Business	Patagonia	CA
Business	PCC Natural Markets	WA
Business	Sea Cliff Farmers Market	NY
Business	Shagbark Seed & Mill	OH
Business	Snowville Creamery, LLC	OH
Business	Southern Exposure Seed Exchange	VA
Business	Straus Family Creamery	CA
Business	Sunshine Seasons	OH
Business	Sustane Natural Fertilizer	OH
Business	The Gardenkeeper	NY
Business	United Natural Foods, Inc	RI
Business	Vermont Organic Farmers, LLC	VT
Business	Vet Farms and Conservancy	NY
Business	Village Bakery & Cafe	OH
Business	Vitalis Organic Seeds	CA
Farm	Adaptive Seeds	OR
Farm	Amity Highland Ranch	NY
Farm	Anderson Farms	IL
Farm	Andrea Jacobson	MA
Farm	Avoca Seed	OR
Farm	Beach Road Farm	HI
Farm	Beau Chemin Preservation Farm	ME
Farm	Belt Farm	MO
Farm	Big Duck Land & Cattle Co., Inc.	CO
Farm	Blue Fruit Farm	MN
Farm	Blueberry Bottom	IA
Farm	Bow Hill Blueberries	WA
Farm	Bramblestone Farm	OH
Farm	BrightBerry Farm	ME
Farm	Burr Farms Inc	OH
Farm	Buttercup Farms	CA
Farm	Button Acres	NY
Farm	Casey Brooks	OH
Farm	Casper's Farm	NY
Farm	Cedar Grove Farm	NY
Farm	Christopher Farm	IN
Farm	Clear Rock Farm	NY
Farm	Clearview farm	OH
Farm	Cowbells & Horsetails LLC	MI
Farm	Coyote Ridge Farm	NY
Farm	Crow Pond Farm	OH
Farm	Dailys Thistle Rock Farm	IN
Farm	Deep Meadow Farm	VT
Farm	DenMelin Dairy	OH
Farm	Dick's Organics	IN
Farm	Double J Farm	OH

Farm	DoubleDale Farm	PA
Farm	Drumlins End Farms	NY
Farm	Earth's Harvest Farm	NY
Farm	Elderberry Pond Farm	NY
Farm	Elmer Farm	VT
Farm	Emma Huntress	NY
Farm	Falb Family Farm	OH
Farm	Farm of Mary Boîte and Tom Hoag	NY
Farm	Farmer Johns	CO
Farm	Frosty Morning Farm	NY
Farm	Full Circle Farms	PA
Farm	Goldmine Farms	IL
Farm	Goodell Family Farm	OH
Farm	Goodhay Farms	NY
Farm	Graciem Organics	MI
Farm	Green Edge Organic Gardens	OH
Farm	Groveside Naturals	NY
Farm	Hammerle Hill Hops	NY
Farm	Hardy Seeds	OR
Farm	Harmonious Homestead	OH
Farm	Harvest Basket Herbs	NY
Farm	Hawkeye Pro-Power	SD
Farm	Heilman Hogwash Farm	PA
Farm	Hi Dew Meadow Farm	OH
Farm	High Lonesome Farm	NY
Farm	Hollow Brook Dairy	MS
Farm	Honeyhill Farm	NY
Farm	Hooting Hills Farm	OH
Farm	Hughes Dairy	CA
Farm	Hygieia Homestead	MI
Farm	Jonathan Gingerich	OH
Farm	Joy of the Journey Farm, LLC	NY
Farm	Kanalani Ohana Farm	HI
Farm	Katchkie Farm	NY
Farm	Kingbird Farm	NY
Farm	Kings River Produce, Inc.	CA
Farm	Ladybug farm	PA
Farm	Land's End Farm	MD
Farm	Lani's Farm Inc.	NJ
Farm	LaRocca Vineyards	CA
Farm	Lebanon Cedar Organic farm	OH
Farm	letterbox farm	NY
Farm	Little Paradise Farm	CA
Farm	Little Riley Creek Farm LLC	OH
Farm	Long Life Farm	MA
Farm	Maidstone Farm	NY
Farm	Maple Lane Farm of Greenfield, LLC	OH

Farm	Maple Wind Farm	VT
Farm	Mark D. Jones Organic Farm	CO
Farm	Marshy Meadows Farm	OH
Farm	Martin Hollow Heritage Farm, LLC	OH
Farm	Mavourneen Farm	IN
Farm	Morning Glory Farm	WI
Farm	Mount Misery Farms	NY
Farm	Mt. Folly Farm	KY
Farm	Mushroom Harvest Produce, LLC	OH
Farm	Neshanic Pastures	NJ
Farm	newleaf organics,llc	VT
Farm	Nick's Organic Farm	MD
Farm	Northland Sheep Dairy	NY
Farm	Oak View Market Garden	OR
Farm	Okoboji Organics	IA
Farm	Old Path Farm	NY
Farm	Old Solar Farm	CT
Farm	Peacework Organic CSA	NY
Farm	Peach Crest Ranch	OK
Farm	Peach Mountain Organic	OH
Farm	Perry-dice farm	NY
Farm	Pete and Gerry's Organics, LLC	NH
Farm	Plymouth Orchards	MI
Farm	Potenza organic Produce	NY
Farm	Preservation Farm	OR
Farm	Roaring Brook Farm	OH
Farm	Robert Kleinberg	NY
Farm	Rocky Acres Farm	WI
Farm	Romero Farms	NM
Farm	Ryan Gansz	NY
Farm	Second Wind CSA	NY
Farm	Shady Lane Farm	NY
Farm	Shaker View Farm	NY
Farm	Shared Roots Farm, LLC.	NY
Farm	Sherman's Mountain View Farm	VT
Farm	Shinn Estate Vineyards	NY
Farm	Short Fork Farm	OH
Farm	Silacci Dairy	CA
Farm	Skoog Farm	NY
Farm	Skyhollow FArm	PA
Farm	South FarmLLC	NY
Farm	SpringRain Farm & Orchard	WA
Farm	Squill Hill Farm	NY
Farm	Stephens Land & Cattle	KS
Farm	Still Point Community Farm, LLC	NY
Farm	Stone Coop Farm	MI
Farm	Stonewood Farm	NY

Farm	Swallowdale Farm	VT
Farm	Sweet Grass Organics	CA
Farm	Sweet Morning Farm	MA
Farm	Terrapin Farm	MT
Farm	That Guys Family Farm	OH
Farm	The Hamlet Organic Garden	NY
Farm	The Kale Yard	OH
Farm	Thirteen Mile Lamb & Wool Company	MT
Farm	Thorpes Organic Family Farm	NY
Farm	Three Springs Farm	OK
Farm	Toad Hollow Farm	NY
Farm	Topp Fruits	CO
Farm	Twin Oaks Dairy LLC	NY
Farm	Twin Ponds Farm	NY
Farm	Valley Dream Farm LLC	VT
Farm	Valley Malt	MA
Farm	Village Acres Farm & FoodShed	PA
Farm	Watercolor Dairy	NY
Farm	Waterville Farm	NY
Farm	Weatherbury Farm	PA
Farm	Whitehouse Specialty Crops	OH
Farm	Wild Hill Organics	VT
Farm	Willow Hill Farm	NY
Farm	Windstone Farm	VT
Farm	Wood Prarie Family Farm	ME
Farm	Yankee Street Farm	OH
Farm	Yonderview Farm House	NY
Organization	Accredited Certifiers Association	NY
Organization	American Farmland Trust	WA
Organization	Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions	OH
Organization	Baruch Farm Growing Ministries	NY
Organization	Carolina Farm Stewardship Association	NC
Organization	CCOF	CA
Organization	Center for Environmental Health	CA
Organization	Center for Rural Affairs	NE
Organization	Church Women United in New York State	NY
Organization	Common Wealth Food Hub	OH
Organization	Consumer Federation of America	DC
Organization	Cuatro Puertas	NM
Organization	Environmental Working Group	DC
Organization	Food & Water Watch	WA
Organization	Food Action	WA
Organization	Friends of the Earth	DC
Organization	Georgia Organics	GA
Organization	GMO Free PA	PA
Organization	Green Beacon Coalition	NY
Organization	Grow NYC	NY

Organization	GrowNYC	NY
Organization	Heroic Food, Farmer Training for Veterans	NY
Organization	Hudson Valley Biofuel	NY
Organization	Hudson Valley Seed	NY
Organization	Illinois Organic Growers Association	IL
Organization	International Organic Inspectors Assoc.	MN
Organization	Iowa Organic Association	IA
Organization	Islandwood	WA
Organization	L.A. Kitchen	CA
Organization	Lehigh Valley Food Policy Council	PA
Organization	Long Island Nature Organization	NY
Organization	Maine Farm Bureau Association	ME
Organization	Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Assoc	ME
Organization	Michael Field Agricultural Institute	WI
Organization	Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance	MI
Organization	Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service	WI
Organization	Missouri Farmers Union	MS
Organization	MOSA Certified Organic	ME
Organization	National Farmers Union	DC
Organization	National Organic Coalition	MA
Organization	National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition	DC
Organization	National Young Farmers Coalition	WA
Organization	New England Farmers Union	MA
Organization	NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC	NY
Organization	Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance	MA
Organization	NE Organic Farming Assoc Interstate Council	NY, NJ, NH, VT, RI, MA, CT
Organization	Northeast Organic Farming Association of VT	VT
Organization	Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association	OH
Organization	Ohio Food Policy Network	OH
Organization	Ohio Sustainable Business Council	OH
Organization	OK River Valley Chapter of OEFFA	OH
Organization	Oregon Tilth	OR
Organization	Organic Farmers Association	PA
Organization	Organic Farming Research Foundation	CA
Organization	Organic Seed Alliance	WA
Organization	Organic Seed Growers & Trade Association	ME
Organization	Otsego 2000	NY
Organization	PA Assoc for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)	PA
Organization	Partnership for Community Development	NY
Organization	Propolis Project's Food Forest	OH
Organization	Rural Advancement Fund International	NC
Organization	Regional Farm and Food Project	NY
Organization	Rocky Mountain Farmers Union	CO, WY, NM
Organization	Rodale Institute	NY
Organization	Southern Oregon Seed Growers Association	OR
Organization	The Cornucopia Institute	WI
Organization	The Farmers Guild & CAFF	CA

Organization	Transition Troy	NY
Organization	Turtle Tree Biodynamic Seed Initiative	NY
Organization	Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance	PA
University	Berkeley Food Institute	CA
University	Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture	MN
University	MSU Center for Regional Food Systems	MI
University	OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems	OR
University	Organic Dairy Education & Research Program	CA
University	WSU Jefferson County Extension	WA