

ORGANIC VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Organic vegetable farming is a production system that relies on biological processes and natural materials to manage soil fertility and pest populations and to promote healthy crop growth. With the recent implementation of the federal Organic Foods Production Act, the use of the term 'organic' to describe a food or feed crop in the marketplace is regulated. Vegetables sold as 'organic' must be grown and handled in accordance with the National Organic Rule and any applicable state regulations. The National Organic Rule prohibits the use of most synthetic chemicals (fertilizers, pesticides, etc.) and requires the farmer to write and follow an organic production plan and keep farm and field records. Fields used to grow organic crops may not have had any prohibited material applied to them in the previous 3 years. Operations with more than \$5000 gross annual income from sales of products labeled 'organic' must have their production and handling methods inspected and certified by a USDA-accredited organic certification agent.

Growers interested in transitioning to organic production are advised to educate themselves about practices used in their area and plan carefully. Experience suggests that it can take a number of years for pest populations and soil nutrient cycles to adjust enough for successful organic production. Portions of this Guide related to soil sampling, nutrient availability and crop nutrient requirements include information relevant to organic

production, as do the overviews of "Insect Management Strategies", "Disease Management Strategies", and "Weed Management Strategies." Other sources of published information include: "Organic Vegetable Production", an introductory guide covering basics of soil fertility and pest management, available from www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/; numerous publications from Appropriate Technology for Rural Areas (ATTRA), available from www.attra.org; and the National Organic Program (NOP) Web site at www.ams.usda.gov/nop. A list of materials allowed for use in organic production is available from the NOP Web site. Consult your local Cooperative Extension Service for other resources available in your area.

If organic certification is desired, it is advisable to make contact with a certification agent during the period of transition to organic production. The organizations listed below represent those with mailing addresses in the region served by the Guide that were accredited by USDA as of October 2002. Contact them directly for information about fees and the certification procedure. For a complete list of accredited agents, see the NOP Web site.

For technical information concerning Organic Vegetable production see Purdue Publication ID-316 at www.agcom.purdue.edu/AgCom/Pubs/ID/ID_316.pdf or call 1-888-EXT-INFO.

<p>Indiana Certified Organic, Inc. Val L. Carr 8364 SSR 39 Clayton, IN 46118 317-539-4317 cvof@iquest.net</p> <p>Iowa Dept. of Agr. & Land Stewardship Organic Program Maury Wills 502 East 9th Street Des Moines, IA 50319 515-281-5783 <www.state.ia.us/agriculture> maury.wills@idals.state.ia.us</p> <p>Maharishi Vedic Organic Agr. Inst. John Konhaus 1852 Crystal Springs Lane Maharishi Vedic City, Iowa 52556 641-472-4442 <www.mvoai.org> janaka@maharishi.net</p>	<p>Midwest Organic Services Assoc., Inc. David Engel P.O. Box 344 Viroqua, WI 54665 608-734-3349 dengel@mosaorganic.org</p> <p>Minnesota Crop Improvement Assoc. Brenda Rogers 1900 Hendon Ave. St. Paul, MN 55108 612-625-7766 <www.mncia.org> mncia@t2.net</p> <p>Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Assoc. Stephen F. Sears 9665 Kline Road West Salem, Ohio 44287-9562 419-853-4060 organic@oeffa.com</p>	<p>Organic Forum Intl., Inc. Debra Johnson 37189 532nd Ave. Paynesville, MN 56362 320-276-8760 ojohnson@midstate.tds.net</p> <p>Organic Growers of Michigan Dr. Grey Lorison 1002 Four Mile Road Grand Rapids, MI 49525 616-361-7117 OGM@MichiganOrganic.org</p>
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