

# **NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

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# **RAFI-USA**

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## **DRAFT NCSA ORGANIC COMMITTEE** **2007 FARM BILL FOR ORGANIC**

February 20, 2006

### **I. CERTIFICATION COST SHARE RE-AUTHORIZATION:**

- Fund at a mandatory \$2M per year
- Standardized reporting requirement for Agency and States

### **II. SEEDS AND BREEDS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY -- Initiative To Re-Invigorate Public Plant And Animal Breeding Capacity And Development**

- Research dollars to classical plant breeders, NGO's and farmers to support the development of new public varieties that meet the needs of organic and sustainable agriculture.
- Minimum of \$5M per year

### **III. COMPETITIVE MARKETS IN ORGANIC**

- Amend Agricultural Fair Practices Act of 1967 to require good faith bargaining with associations of producers

### **IV. RESEARCH TITLE**

Organic Research programs at USDA should receive a share of USDA resources that reflects the growth and opportunities of the organic sector.

- **USDA ARS**

In 2004, USDA- ARS spent about \$3.5 million on organic-specific projects, or about 0.35% of ARS annual expenditures. A framework of "fair share" funding of organic agricultural research, based on the organic share of U.S. retail food sales, calls for at least a 5-fold increase in USDA-ARS resources explicitly allocated to organic. ARS should be directing devoting at least a 2% "fair share" (based on the organic share of US food markets) of their total resources to organic research, equivalent to approximately \$20 M per year.

- **USDA CSREES**

- **Integrated Organic Program (IOP)** The Integrated Organic Program is a production based competitive grants program managed under the CSREES Plant and Animals Systems division. The IOP, which is comprised of the Organic Research and Extension Initiative and the Organic Transitions Program, has been extremely successful. Funding for the IOP should be increased to \$10 M mandatory per year. Expansion of this program should focus on a higher number of smaller grants. Also, it is important that this program keeps its own identity and not be incorporated into the National Research Initiative.
- **IPM Centers-** The USDA CSREES Integrated Pest Management Centers should have a role in expanding the USDA organic portfolio. The development of "Strategic Plans for Organic Best Management Practices" is a potential way these centers could better serve the organic sector.
- **National Research Initiative (NRI)-** Organic plant and animal breeding should become a priority area within existing NRI germplasm programs

- **EXTENSION**

- **USDA CSREES Integrated Organic Program:** The extension component of the Integrated Organic Program should be refined and strengthened
- **Cooperative Extension System:** Amendments to the Smith-Lever Act to direct the Cooperative

Extension to spend an increased percentage of agriculture extension dollars on organic should be considered.

- **USDA National Agriculture Library:** Fund the USDA National Agriculture Library's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) to manage the [www.organicinfo.org/](http://www.organicinfo.org/) website as a publicly available online database of research and extension information specific to organic production and marketing.
- **USDA Current Research Information System (CRIS):** Create organic as an activity code within the USDA CRIS system. This will allow increased access and search-ability of organic research.

- **DATA COLLECTION:**

The **Organic Production and Marketing Data Initiatives (Sec. 7404 in the 2002 Farm Bill)** This initiative from the 2002 Farm bill should be reauthorized and should receive mandatory funding.. Specifically:

- **Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)-** Within the USDA Fruit and Vegetable Market News provide regular nationwide reporting of organic prices. Currently, such information is only gathered regularly at the San Francisco and Boston wholesale markets. Price reporting- \$2 M/year.
- **Economic Research Service (ERS)-** The USDA ERS has efforts of collecting data on the organic sector (including farm financial indicators and market trends among handlers and processors of organic products,) should be continued and expanded. \$3 M/yr is needed to continue and expand collection of farm financial indicators for the organic sector.
- **National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS)-** Authorization for specific surveys and data sets for the organic sector, including census (or census-type) data and farm gate price reporting are needed.
- **International Organic Research Collaboration (Sec. 7408 in the 2002 Farm Bill)-** This should be authorized at \$5m.

## V. GMO

- Liability legislation – farmer crop protection
- Protection of seed sources

## VI. CONSERVATION TITLE

- Conservation Security Program (CSP)
  - Fully funded as an Entitlement program
    - Not limited to specific watersheds
  - Corrections to Rules, including:
    - Basic organic practices should be prioritized
    - Organic Farm plans should be accepted for Tier III

## VII. ORGANIC TRANSITION PROGRAM

- Define a National Organic Transition Program
- EQIP Practice-- make organic transition a priority area at NRCS such as is being administered in Minnesota
- Credit
- Cost-Share – see above

## VIII. RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY/CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM

- Organic farmers should not have to pay the 5% additional fee surcharge they currently must pay to be covered by a crop insurance program.
- When an organic producer incurs a loss they should be reimbursed at the price their organic product would have received.
- The Adjusted Gross Revenue program should be expanded to be offered nationally.

### For More Information Contact:

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