Learning objectives
At the end of the class, students will be able to answer the following questions:

- What is organic agriculture?
- Where do I go to get certification in organic agriculture?
- How can I get more information about organic agriculture?

Definition of organic agriculture

“An ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity”


What is organic?

- The term “organic” is not synonymous to the terms “natural” or “eco-friendly.”
- The label “natural” on foodstuff does not guarantee complete adherence to organic practices as defined by a law.

Aims of organic agriculture

- Produce food of high quality in sufficient quantity
- Maintain biological diversity within the farming system
- Maintain long-term soil fertility
- Rely on renewable resources in locally organized agricultural systems
- Minimize pollution and protect the environment

What is allowed in organic crop production?

- New varieties of crops and agricultural technologies
- Crop rotations, cover crops and natural-based products that maintain soil fertility
- Biological, cultural and physical methods to limit pest expansion and increase population of beneficial insects
What is not allowed in organic crop production?

- Synthetic fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides and herbicides
- Genetically modified herbicide-resistant seeds, plants
- Genetically modified product ingredients, e.g. GM-lecithin
- “Biosolids” or sewage sludge, due to concerns with bacterial and heavy metal contamination
- Irradiated products also prohibited because irradiated elements do not occur in nature

What is not allowed in organic livestock production?

- Synthetic hormones and antibiotics
- Synthetic parasiticides

What is allowed in organic livestock production?

- Organic livestock must be fed 100% organic food/feed.
- Natural bacteria present in vaccinations are permissible.
- Livestock must be free of parasites and have access to ample pasture, water and nutritional feed.
- Alternative health therapies, such as botanical remedies and manipulation are allowed.

Certification process

- The certification process takes three years.
- Contact local certification agency to make transition to certified organic production.
- Land that has had no synthetic chemicals applied during the last three years can enter certified organic status.
- For the first three-year transition period, records should be kept on all substances applied.

Certification agencies in Iowa

**Organic Crop Improvement Association**
OCIA of Iowa Chapter 1, Inc.
Wilma Miles
6534 220th St
Arthur, IA 51431-8007
Phone: (712) 367-2442
Fax: (712) 367-2342
E-mail: ociaia1@netins.net
Web: [http://www.ocia.org](http://www.ocia.org)
Certification agencies in Iowa (continued)
Organic Crop Improvement Association
OCIA Iowa Chapter 2
Leon Kruse
1011 County Road W 14
Fort Atkinson, IA 52144-7122
Phone: (563) 534-7396
Web: http://www.ocia.org

Certification agencies in Iowa (continued)
Organic Crop Improvement Association
North Iowa Organics Association
Janet Pratt
2410 Asherton Ave
Nashua, IA 50658-9427
Phone: (641) 435-2156
E-mail: janetp@fiai.net
Web: http://www.ocia.org

Certification agencies in Iowa (continued)
Midwest Organic Services Association, Inc. (MOSA)
PO Box 821
122 West Jefferson Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
Phone: (608) 637-2526
Fax: (608) 637-7032
E-mail: mosaa@mosaorganic.org
Web: http://www.mosaorganic.org/

Certification agencies in Iowa (continued)
Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship (IDALS)
Statewide program
Maury Wills
IDALS Organic Program
Phone: (515) 281-5783
E-mail: maury.wills@idals.state.ia.us
Web: www.iowaagriculture.gov/AgDiversification/organicCertification.asp

Domestic sales of organic products, USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total U.S. organic food sales in $</th>
<th>Organic food sales compared to total food sales (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7.8 Billion</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>12 Billion</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>13.83 Billion</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>17 Billion</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. market for organic products
- Annual growth rate for organic food market is 22%.
- Organic products are sold in 20,000 natural food stores.
- 73% of all supermarkets and grocery stores sell organic food.
- Organic products are also directly marketed through increasing number of farmers markets.
More information

Kathleen Delate, Organic Specialist
Iowa State University
http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/organicag/

Fundamentals of organic agriculture
Iowa State University Extension publication PM 1880:
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1880.pdf

Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship (IDALS)
www.iowaagriculture.gov/AgDiversification/organicCertification.asp

More information (continued)

USDA Agricultural Research Service
http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/feb02/amer0202.htm

Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service
http://www.mosesorganic.org/

Rodale Institute
http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/

Organic Farming Research Foundation
http://ofrf.org/index.html

For a summary of research findings
http://www.organicag.org

Scientific Findings About Organic Agriculture

- Summaries of about 100 scientific studies
- Full references/links to original research articles
- Categorized by topic

Project of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture