

Organic Transition Needs Assessment Questionnaire

Q1. To begin, how many years have you been farming?

- ₁ 0 to less than 5 years
- ₂ 5 to less than 10 years
- ₃ 10 to less than 20 years
- ₄ 20 years or more

Q2. Please indicate how many total acres are in production for this farm.

- ₁ 0 to 25 acres
- ₂ 26 to 100 acres
- ₃ 101 to 500 acres
- ₄ 501 to 1,000 acres
- ₅ More than 1,000 acres

Q3. Which best describes your farm production?

- ₁ Vegetables
- ₂ Fruit/Nuts
- ₃ Grain/Legumes
- ₄ Livestock
- ₅ Dairy
- ₆ Other (*please explain* _____)

Q4. Which one of the following best describes this farm?

- ₁ Certified organic: entire farm
- ₂ Split operation: part certified organic, part non-organic
- ₃ Transitioning all or part of farm to certified organic
- ₄ Exempt from organic certification
- ₅ Not pursuing organic farming →

Even if you are no longer pursuing organic farming, your answers to the following questions will help us understand the challenges you faced and what might have helped along the way. Please continue with the questionnaire.

Q5. Consider when you first decided to pursue organic certification for this farm and indicate whether or not each of the following was a motivating factor?

	Motivating factor	Not a motivating factor
Potential increase in profit	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Access to the expanding market for organics	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Specific market opportunity or contract from a buyer	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Concerns about human health	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Concerns about environment	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Potential enhancement of farm sustainability	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Fits my and/or my family's values	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂
Other (<i>please describe</i> _____)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂

Q6. From a cost perspective, please indicate the extent to which each of the following factors has been an obstacle to transitioning your farm to organic.

	A major obstacle	A minor obstacle	Not an obstacle	Not applicable/ Not sure
Cost of organic certification	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Cost of labor	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Cost of organic inputs	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Other cost-related obstacle (<i>describe</i> _____)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄

Q7. From a production perspective, please indicate the extent to which each of the following factors has been an obstacle to transitioning your farm to organic.

	A major obstacle	A minor obstacle	Not an obstacle	Not applicable/ Not sure
Learning process	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Planning crop rotations	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Managing soil fertility	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Pest or disease control	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Weed management	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Livestock health management	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Reduced yields	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Availability of organic livestock feed	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Availability of organic inputs (seed, fertilizer, etc.)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Access to knowledgeable technical expertise on organic production	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Availability of labor	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Recordkeeping requirements of organic certification	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Other production-related obstacle (<i>describe</i> _____)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄

Q8. From a marketing perspective, please indicate the extent to which each of the following factors has been an obstacle to transitioning your farm to organic.

	A major obstacle	A minor obstacle	Not an obstacle	Not applicable/ Not sure
Finding buyers/market for my organic products	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Obtaining organic price information	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Obtaining organic price premiums	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Obtaining adequate prices during transition	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Availability of organic processing facilities	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Other market-related challenges (<i>describe</i> _____)	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄

Q9. Below are some resources that may be of benefit to your farm. Which 5 would you choose as being most beneficial during your transition to organic farming? (Select up to 5)

- ₁ Information on organic crop varieties
- ₂ Information on soil health management for organic farms
- ₃ Information on effective organic crop rotations for your region
- ₄ Information on organic pest, disease, and weed management strategies
- ₅ Information on organic livestock health management
- ₆ Information on organic markets (e.g., trends, opportunities, pricing)
- ₇ Organic and/or transition crop enterprise budget templates
- ₈ Financial planning tools for transitioning farm to organic
- ₉ Certified transition label
- ₁₀ Advance contracts from buyers during transition
- ₁₁ Market development for organic products
- ₁₂ Other resource (*please explain* _____)

Q10. Which 2 of the following types of support would be (or would have been) most useful to you during transition? (Select up to 2)

- ₁ In-person workshops or short courses
- ₂ Online courses or webinars
- ₃ Books or other printed materials
- ₄ One-on-one technical assistance during transition
- ₅ Mentoring from experienced organic farmer(s)
- ₆ Other type of support (*please explain* _____)

Q11. In your own words, what do you think would motivate more farmers to transition to organic?

Q12. Which of the following practices were covered by your Environmental Quality Incentive Program Organic Initiative (EQIP-OI) contract? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Conservation cover | <input type="checkbox"/> ₇ Mulching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ Conservation crop rotation | <input type="checkbox"/> ₈ Nutrient management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ Cover crops | <input type="checkbox"/> ₉ Prescribed grazing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Field borders | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₀ Seasonal high tunnel system |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ Forage and biomass planting | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₁ Irrigation-related |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₆ Hedgerow planting | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁₂ CAP 138 |

Q13. As a result of implementing these practices during your EQIP-OI contract, to what extent has the following improved?

	Greatly improved	Somewhat improved	Not at all improved	Not applicable/ Not sure
Soil health	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Erosion control	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Water quality	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Nutrient management	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Plant/wildlife biodiversity	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Pest control	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Yield	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Recordkeeping	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Preparation for organic certification	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Season extension	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Water conservation	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄
Weed control	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄

Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning the EQIP-OI program?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable/ Not sure
I was able to sign up for the practices I needed.	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄	<input type="radio"/> ₅	<input type="radio"/> ₆
My contract practices fit into my organic system.	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄	<input type="radio"/> ₅	<input type="radio"/> ₆
NRCS staff had expertise relevant to organic systems.	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄	<input type="radio"/> ₅	<input type="radio"/> ₆
NRCS staff provided good customer service.	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄	<input type="radio"/> ₅	<input type="radio"/> ₆
The financial assistance was adequate.	<input type="radio"/> ₁	<input type="radio"/> ₂	<input type="radio"/> ₃	<input type="radio"/> ₄	<input type="radio"/> ₅	<input type="radio"/> ₆

Q15. What else would you like to say about the EQIP-OI program?

Q16. For statistical purposes, please indicate your age.

- ₁ 18 to 25 ₂ 26 to 35 ₃ 36 to 45 ₄ 46 to 55 ₅ 56 to 65 ₆ 66 to 75 ₇ 76 or older

Q17. What else would you like to say about your experience with the transition to organic farming?

Q18. What else would you like to say about this topic in general or about this questionnaire?