

OMB Approval Number #####  
Expiration Date #####

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Risk Management Agency/The Rodale Institute  
Survey

**Baseline Survey/Farmers**

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All information collected in this survey is confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Data will be reported in the aggregate and no individual information will be disclosed.



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## **Invitation for baseline survey/Farmers**

Thank you for registering for the FarmSelect Transition to Organic Course and taking full advantage of the series of tools you can use to track your progress, including the "Building Your Organic Farm Plan" feature.

Before you begin using the FarmSelect tools, we'd like to give you the opportunity to tell us a little more about yourself and your farming experiences.

As a thank you for taking the time to chat with us, you'll receive a \$10 gift certificate to spend however you'd like in our online bookstore. We'll keep your information confidential and will only use the answers you provide to improve our tools and service to you.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort.

The FarmSelect Team

If you experience any problems or difficulties accessing the survey or if you have any questions please contact us at:  
[helpdesk@farmselect.org](mailto:helpdesk@farmselect.org) or at (610) 683-1400.

## Baseline Survey/Farmers

**0. What is your interest in organic farming? [Choose one for each statement]**

	Strongly Agree			Strongly disagree	
The profit potential	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
To take better care of the land	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
To preserve the farm for the next generation	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
A better choice for the environment	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Organic is our lifestyle	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Just curious	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

**0a. What else drives your interest in organic farming? Please share your thoughts.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**1. Is farming your primary occupation? [Choose one]**

- Yes
- No, my primary occupation is \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What percentage of your work time do you devote to farm work? [Enter %] \_\_\_\_\_%**

**3. How many acres do you currently farm? [Enter number of acres for each category]**

- Total number of acres \_\_\_\_\_
- Tillable acres \_\_\_\_\_
- Acres in pasture \_\_\_\_\_
- Acres in forest \_\_\_\_\_
- Acres not currently in production \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Within the past year, were any of the total acres reported above: [Choose all that apply]**

- Covered under a Federal crop insurance policy
- Covered under other crop insurance policy
- Enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)?

**5. Do you own or rent the land that you farm?[Choose one]**

- Own
- Rent
- Both
- I work as a farm manager
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**6. How many years have you been farming — overall and this operation only? [Enter number of years]**

- Number of years farming, overall \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of years farming, this operation only \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which item best describes your farming operation? [Choose one]

- Family or individual operation
- Partnership
- Incorporated under state law
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you produce on your farm? [Choose one for each product]

	Please specify	Is any of the operation under organic management ? (If all No, skip to q. 13)
Crops		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Livestock		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Vegetables		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Dairy		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Poultry		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Haying		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Grazing		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

9. Do you have acreage that is:

[Choose one for each category]

- Certified organic**  Yes, please enter number of acres \_\_\_\_\_  No
- Organic, non-certified**  Yes, please enter number of acres \_\_\_\_\_  No
- In transition to organic**  Yes, please enter number of acres \_\_\_\_\_ (Go to q. 11a)  No

9a. If you have acreage in transition to organic, please specify transition year.

[Choose all that apply]

- First year in transition
- Second year in transition
- Third year in transition

10. Over the last three years, what percentage of your *net farm income* do you attribute to organic farming? [Enter %]

Percentage \_\_\_\_\_

11. Please indicate what sustainable management practices you currently use and their significance to your farming operation : [Choose one for each category]

**For crops**

N/A for my operation

Sustainable Practice	Significance					N/A, do not use
	Not very significant		Somewhat	Very significant		
Crops	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Compost fertilization	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Cover crops	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Crop rotation	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>



Rotation with perennials	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced/No tillage	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Soil testing	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Resting periods in rotation	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Add organic matter to soil	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Other, specify	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>

**For livestock**

N/A for my operation

Sustainable Practice Livestock	Significance					
	Not very significant		Somewhat	Very significant	N/A, do not use	
Intensive pasture management	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Humane treatment standards	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
No antibiotics	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
No growth hormones	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Free range/non-confinement	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Other specify	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>

**12. At this time, do you have any immediate plans to transition to organic all or parts of your operation?**[Choose one]

- Yes
- No

**13. Which statement best describes your future plans?** [Choose one]

- I intend to farm certified organic 100%
- I intend to use mostly organic methods but without certification
- I intend to farm both – certified organic and conventional – with more than half of my operation under certified organic management
- I intend to farm both – certified organic and conventional – with less than half of my operation under certified organic management
- I intend to farm conventionally 100%

**14. What are your three most preferred sources of information about organic agriculture?**

[Choose 3]

- Own family experience
- Other farmers
- Books and magazines
- Association newsletters or other publications
- The Internet
- University Extension and research personnel
- University sponsored events (workshops, tours, conferences)
- Non-university sponsored events (workshops, tours, conferences)
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**15. How often do you use the Internet for agricultural information?** [Choose one]

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly

- Never

**15a. How often do you use the Internet for agricultural education or training?** [Choose one]

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Never

**16. Would you say that you have access to enough information to make a decision about transitioning to organic?** [Choose one]

- Yes
- No
- Not sure, please explain \_\_\_\_\_
- N/A

**17. How would you describe your skills and practical experience in transitioning to organic and organic production methods?**

[Choose one]

- I have no experience
- I have some experience, please describe \_\_\_\_\_
- I have considerable experience, please describe \_\_\_\_\_
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**18. How would you rate your overall knowledge and skills in organic methods?** [Choose one]

- 1 Novice
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Expert
- N/A

**19. How confident do you feel that you can successfully manage a transitioning process at your operation at this time?** [Choose one]

Not confident at all

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Very Confident
- 5
- N/A

**20. How confident do you feel that you can intergate an organic component in your farm plan at this time?**[Choose one]

Not confident at all

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- Very Confident
- 5
- N/A

**21. What are the top three greatest challenges/barriers that influence your decision to transition to organic?**[Choose three]

- Lack of information
- Lack of technical skills and expertise in organic production methods
- Lack of technical support
- Complexity of the certification process
- Financial risks
- Crop insurance costs
- Certification costs
- Management risks
- Unstable markets

- Lack of price information
- Lack of marketing support
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**21a. Please add any additional comments that would best describe what you see as the greatest challenges or barriers that influence your decision to transition to organic?** [Please type your answer in the space provided]

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**22. How do you rate the financial and management risks involved in the transitioning process?**[Choose one for each item]

Item	Risk Assessment				
	Very high	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
Financial	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**23. How influential in making the decision to transition to organic are your concerns over the financial and management risks involved in the transitioning process?** [Choose one for each item]

Item	Influence			
	Very influential	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all
Financial	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**24. How would you rate the overall risk involved in the transitioning process?** [Choose one]

- Very high
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very low

**25. Please show how useful each of the following tools/services would be to help you make a decision to transition to organic.** (Choose one for each tool/service).

Tool/Service	Usefulness					N/A
	Not at all useful					
Online training courses	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Online risk assessment tools	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Online expert technical support	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Online community/discussion forums	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Online farmer network	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Online marketing assistance	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>



**26. What would you say are the greatest risks a farmer takes when starting a transitioning process? [Please type your answer in the space provided]**

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**27. What assistance, services, or tools would reduce the potential risks of the transitioning process? [Please type your answer in the space provided]**

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