

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

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

**Beta Test OTSM Survey**

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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.

The  
RODALE  INSTITUTE

**RMA**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this collection is #####. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, searching existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected.

## Cover Letter Beta Test Users

*Date, 2006*

Dear Beta Test Team member,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our Beta test program for the *OTSM Farm Select tool and online course*. As a Beta tester, you will receive **\$\$\$\$** compensation for your time testing the products and submitting the requested feedback to our project team. When you have submitted the requested feedback, we will immediately send you the payment.

Our goal at the Rodale Institute is to provide users with the knowledge and tools to effectively transition from conventional to organic farming systems. To that extent, we need your objective feedback on how well we are meeting those objectives. Please be as open and honest as possible in how well these products are meeting that objective. Enclosed you will find additional information and instructions for completing the testing. If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions, please feel to contact us at 610-683-1400. If you any questions or experience any problems during the testing stage, please contact us at: [helpdesk@farmselect.org](mailto:helpdesk@farmselect.org) or at (610) 683-1400.

Your participation in this effort is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

The Rodale Institute Project Team

## Beta Test OTSM

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete the questions in the table below using the 5-point scale. Enter your comments in the space provided.**

Item	Assessment						Comments
	Strongly Agree	2	3	4	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
<b>Overall: The FarmSelect™ calculator...</b>							
Is useful to me now, or it will be in the near future	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Provides the resources I need	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Is relevant to what I want to learn	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Is easy to apply to my specific situation	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Requires manageable technical (data entry) effort	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Provides information relevant to what farmers need to know	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Will help farmers better assess and manage the risks of transitioning to organic	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Will motivate farmers to consider transitioning to organic	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
The purpose of the tool is clear	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Overall impression of the tool is good	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Overall value to farmers is high	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
<b>Technical Content</b>							
Has a sound research foundation	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Uses credible data	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Data is up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Uses proper terminology	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Performs calculations accurately	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Has appropriate toolbars, menus, commands and options	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Uses accurate labels	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Uses the right amount of information	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Uses terms that are easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Data formats are useful	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
I entered my own data and received the expected results	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Boundary values (largest and smallest expected values) are handled correctly	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
<b>Software Operation</b>							
Operates trouble-free	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Easy to navigate	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Consistent and logical flow in using the tool	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Easy to find what you are looking for	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Software works as expected (uses standard user interface features)	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Clear graphical presentation	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Files import and export smoothly	1	2	3	4	5	DK	
Prints properly to a printer	1	2	3	4	5	DK	

<b>Documentation</b>								
Clearly describes software purpose	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Organization is clear and logical	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Examples show how to use the main features	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Tables, graphs & figures provide sufficient guidance through software options	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Error messages are clear	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
On-line help is sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Technical support information is available	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
<b>Appearance</b>								
Colors, symbols, and graphics are legible and pleasing	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Looks professional	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Correct spelling & grammar	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Application windows have consistent look and feel	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
<b>Features</b>								
	<b>Very Important – Not Important at all</b>					<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
Automatic display of real, current prices	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Ability to add my own numbers	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Ability to compare organic with conventional	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Automatic county yield data based on Zip code	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Ability to edit my farm budget numbers	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Pop-up boxes that tell where the data come from	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Ability to calculate sales as a % organic	1	2	3	4	5	DK		
Ability to compare two organic systems	1	2	3	4	5	DK		

Please answer the following questions.

Note: If, based on your experience and qualification, you feel that you cannot make a statement about the value, usefulness, and credibility of the tool for any of the specific group of users identified in a.-e. , please mark N/A in the space provided and respond to the remaining questions.

Please respond to items a. through e. separately for each question.

1. Please comment on the value of each of the features of Farm Select™ for:
2. Please comment on the usefulness of each of the features of Farm Select for:
3. Please comment on the credibility of each of the features of Farm Select for:

a. Conventional farmers interested to learn more about organic farm economics and management

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Organic farmers interested to learn more about organic farm economics and management

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Extension specialist advising farmers on transitioning to organic management

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Agriculture educators teaching courses on organic farm economics and management

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Agriculture professionals researching topics in organic farm economics and management

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your recommendations about improving FarmSelect™ to make it more:

4a. credible

\_\_\_\_\_

4b. user-friendly

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What do you like the most about FarmSelect?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you like the least about FarmSelect?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you think is the **most valuable feature** of FarmSelect for:

a. Conventional farmers

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Organic farmers

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Extension specialist

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Agricultural educators

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Agricultural researchers

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Overall recommendations for *improving* the tool. Please be specific.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Any other comments or suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_

## E-mail survey reminder

Recently you received an invitation to complete a survey about your experiences using the FarmSelect calculator and online course. It was an e-mail that included a link to a web survey on the FarmSelect website.

If you have already completed the survey and submitted your responses, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, we hope you will do so today. The survey was sent exclusively to registered users of the FarmSelect tools and it is extremely important that your responses be included if the results are to be valid and informative.

For your convenience we are including a link to the survey in this e-mail. If you have any problems accessing the survey or if you have any questions about this research please e-mail us at [helpdesk@farmselect.org](mailto:helpdesk@farmselect.org) or feel free to call us at (610) 683-1400.

Thank you in advance for your help!

The FarmSelect team