

Arkansas

8th nationally for organic animal sales, anchored by eggs, chickens, and sweet potatoes



MIDWEST
TRANSITION TO ORGANIC
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A FARMER'S TOOLKIT
State Module | August 2026

Arkansas ranks **29th nationally with 220 certified organic operations and 21,624 certified acres**. With 179 certified operations across 21,624 acres and a 67% worker employment premium over conventional farms, Arkansas's organic sector punches above its weight in the Midwest.

220 CERTIFIED OPERATIONS	21,624 CERTIFIED ACRES	\$48M ORGANIC ANIMAL SALES	+67% MORE WORKERS VS. CONVENTIONAL
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STATE PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Certified operations	220 (29th nationally)
Certified organic acres	21,624
Organic animal sales (2021)	\$48M (8th nationally)
Household organic adoption	73%
Worker employment vs. conventional	+67%

OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand organic poultry and egg production by transitioning integrator operations with TOPP support.
- Grow organic vegetable production for regional wholesale channels using the long growing season.
- Develop value-added organic processing capacity to capture more farmgate value in-state.
- Increase organic soybean acreage to support in-state organic poultry industry.

TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Eggs:** top state organic commodity; national brands through integrators.
- ▶ **Chickens:** organic poultry leverages integrator infrastructure statewide.
- ▶ **Tomatoes:** warm-season vegetables; organic tomatoes are a growth area.
- ▶ **Specialty crops:** peppers, lettuce, sweet potatoes, blueberries, spring brassicas round out the organic mix.

BARRIERS

- Organic feed grain availability; 75-80% of organic soybeans are imported, pressuring costs.
- Integrator contract structures limit flexibility for transitioning poultry farmers.
- Limited organic certifiers and technical assistance providers across the state's geography.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Arkansas's 8th-place national ranking in organic animal sales, combined with a favorable growing climate and Midwest TOPP mentorship, makes it well-positioned to scale organic poultry production and expand into value-added organic processing.

Resources for Farmers

Arkansas organic farmers are served by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension, Midwest TOPP, Heifer International, and the Arkansas Department of Agriculture. Together they provide technical guidance, certification navigation, and market development statewide.

U of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic agriculture specialist for poultry, vegetables, and row crops
- On-farm research comparing organic and conventional systems
- County-level agent network across all 75 Arkansas counties
- Workshops on organic transition, certification, and markets

uaex.uada.edu

Midwest TOPP (MOSA-led)

MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves AR, IL, IN, IA, KY, MI, MN, MO, OH, TN, WI
- Paid organic mentor matching for transitioning farms
- Field days on agronomy, certification, and business planning
- Marbleseed Farmer-to-Farmer Mentorship Program in AR

organictransition.org/region/midwest

Arkansas Dept of Agriculture

STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- Market Development Division for Arkansas organic products
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher program resources
- Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

agriculture.arkansas.gov

Heifer International

TRAINING, MENTORSHIP & MARKET ACCESS

- Based in Little Rock; organic and sustainable farming programs
- Heifer USA supports farmer cooperatives and market linkages
- Technical assistance for livestock-based organic transitions
- Value chain development and cooperative business training

heifer.org

DID YOU KNOW? ARKANSAS

Arkansas, Indiana, and Kentucky each report \$40M or more in organic animal product sales, collectively anchoring a major regional demand corridor for organic feed grains. Yet the U.S. still imports 75-80% of its organic soybeans annually. Arkansas's grain infrastructure and poultry integrator networks make it strategically positioned to expand domestic organic feed grain supply and reduce national import dependence.

KEY SOURCES

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