

# Florida

*Year-round growing season anchors the national organic winter vegetable and tropical fruit supply*



**SOUTHEAST**  
TRANSITION TO ORGANIC  
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A FARMER'S TOOLKIT  
State Module | August 2026

Florida ranks 15th nationally with 750 certified organic operations and 51,998 certified acres. Florida's frost-free growing season makes it the backbone of national organic winter supply, producing leafy greens, bell peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers at commercial scale while rebuilding an organic citrus industry challenged by greening disease. Florida Crystals' 10,000-acre operation is the world's largest regenerative organic farm. With \$11.4M in OREI/ORG funding and UF/IFAS Extension's statewide network, the state is positioned to lead the nation in organic winter produce and specialty crop development.

|                                    |                                  |                                      |                                                 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>750</b><br>CERTIFIED OPERATIONS | <b>51,998</b><br>CERTIFIED ACRES | <b>\$11.4M</b><br>OREI / ORG FUNDING | <b>+23%</b><br>MORE WORKERS VS.<br>CONVENTIONAL |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

## STATE PROFILE AT A GLANCE

|                                    |                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Certified operations               | <b>750 (15th nationally)</b> |
| Certified organic acres            | <b>51,998</b>                |
| OREI / ORG funding (cumulative)    | <b>\$11.4M</b>               |
| Worker employment vs. conventional | <b>+23%</b>                  |
| Split operations                   | <b>46% of farms</b>          |

## OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand organic leafy green, bell pepper, and vegetable acreage to capture national winter demand as Western drought reduces California supply.
- Rebuild organic citrus supply chains leveraging HLB-tolerant rootstock and improved organic management.
- Roughly 100,000 acres of failed citrus farmland along the Highway 27 corridor in Hardee and Highlands Counties is available at a fraction of coastal prices, offering affordable land for organic specialty crop development.

### TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Vegetables:** organic winter vegetables; bell peppers are a major standout crop.
- ▶ **Leafy Greens and herbs:** organic leafy greens and herbs supply east coast markets throughout winter.
- ▶ **Citrus:** organic citrus rebuilding post-HLB with strong premium returns.
- ▶ **Sugarcane:** Florida Crystals is the world's largest regenerative organic farm.

### BARRIERS

- Citrus greening (HLB) has devastated organic citrus acreage and requires intensive, costly management protocols.
- Subtropical heat and humidity elevate pest and disease pressure, increasing organic certification management complexity.
- Coastal farmland costs in counties like Broward and Hillsborough are prohibitively high, limiting organic farm viability near major markets.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Florida anchors the national organic winter supply chain for leafy greens, bell peppers, and vegetables. Florida Crystals' 10,000-acre farm is the world's largest regenerative organic operation. And nearly 100,000 acres of failed citrus land along Highway 27 in Hardee and Highlands Counties offers affordable organic expansion farmland at a fraction of coastal prices.

## Resources for Farmers

Florida organic farmers are supported by Florida Organic Growers, the Florida Department of Agriculture, UF/IFAS Extension, and Southeast TOPP. Together they deliver certification services, technical assistance, transition mentorship, and market access support statewide.

### Florida Organic Growers (FOG)

#### CERTIFICATION & FARMER ADVOCACY

- USDA-accredited organic certifier serving Florida and Southeast producers
- Leads the Southeast TOPP program for farmer mentorship and transition
- Annual Organicfest conference and organic producer networking events
- Market development and supply chain support for Florida organic farms

[foginfo.org](http://foginfo.org)

### Florida Dept of Agriculture (FDACS)

#### STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- Fresh from Florida branding program for state-produced organic products
- NRCS Florida: EQIP Organic Initiative and Transition Assistance programs
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program resources statewide

[fdacs.gov](http://fdacs.gov)

### UF/IFAS Extension

#### RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic vegetable, strawberry, citrus, and tropical fruit specialists
- HLB management and organic citrus recovery research programs
- Soil health, cover crop, and integrated pest management for organic systems
- 67-county extension network delivering organic technical assistance statewide

[ifas.ufl.edu](http://ifas.ufl.edu)

### Southeast TOPP (FOG-led)

#### MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, and Caribbean territories
- Paid organic mentor matching for vegetable, citrus, and specialty crop farms
- Workshops on organic transition, certification, and subtropical pest management
- Beginning farmer organic market access and supply chain development support

[organictransition.org/region/southeast](http://organictransition.org/region/southeast)

#### DID YOU KNOW? FLORIDA

**Florida is the primary source of organic leafy greens and winter vegetables for the entire eastern United States during November through April.** When California slows in winter, Florida supplies the eastern U.S. with organic leafy greens, bell peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Organic premiums can exceed 40% above conventional prices. Florida Crystals' 10,000-acre sugarcane operation is the world's largest regenerative organic farm. Meanwhile, approximately 100,000 acres of failed citrus land along Highway 27 in Hardee and Highlands Counties is available at far below coastal prices, offering a major organic expansion opportunity for the state.

#### KEY SOURCES

Organic Trade Association. "Florida Organic Profile." OTA State Advocacy, 2025, [ota.com](http://ota.com).

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