

# Georgia

*Southeast organic hub expanding through blueberries, vegetables, and Atlanta's growing consumer demand*



**SOUTHEAST**  
TRANSITION TO ORGANIC  
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A FARMER'S TOOLKIT  
State Module | August 2026

**Georgia ranks 21st nationally with 373 certified organic operations and 22,135 certified acres.** Georgia sits at the intersection of Southeast production capacity and Atlanta's rapidly growing organic consumer market. With \$7.9M in OREI/ORG funding and UGA Extension statewide reach, the state is expanding organic blueberry and vegetable supply chains while building the farm-to-institution infrastructure Atlanta's food economy demands.

|                                    |                                  |                                     |                                                 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>373</b><br>CERTIFIED OPERATIONS | <b>22,135</b><br>CERTIFIED ACRES | <b>\$7.9M</b><br>OREI / ORG FUNDING | <b>+24%</b><br>MORE WORKERS VS.<br>CONVENTIONAL |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

## STATE PROFILE

### AT A GLANCE

|                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Certified operations                  | <b>373 (21st nationally)</b> |
| Certified organic acres               | <b>22,135</b>                |
| OREI / ORG funding<br>(cumulative)    | <b>\$7.9M</b>                |
| Worker employment vs.<br>conventional | <b>+24%</b>                  |
| Split operations                      | <b>43% of farms</b>          |

## OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand organic blueberry acreage to capture surging national demand and premium retail pricing.
- Supply Atlanta metro's growing organic consumer base through direct market and regional food hub channels.
- Develop organic pecan supply chains for the premium specialty nut, gifting, and confectionery market.

### TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Blueberries:** Georgia ranks among the top organic blueberry states nationally.
- ▶ **Vegetables:** North Georgia and coastal plain farms supply Atlanta markets.
- ▶ **Pecans:** transitioning pecan orchards as organic premiums rise nationally.
- ▶ **Cattle & Beef:** South Georgia grasslands supply Southeast regional channels.

### BARRIERS

- High heat and humidity elevate pest and disease pressure, complicating organic vegetable certification.
- Limited organic processing and packing infrastructure constrains scale-up beyond direct market channels.
- Land values near Atlanta's northern suburbs limit farm expansion close to the primary consumer market.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Georgia's blueberry dominance, coastal plain acreage, and proximity to Atlanta's booming organic consumer market create a multi-tiered expansion opportunity. Southeast TOPP mentorship and UGA Extension's deep organic research presence are the key infrastructure for capturing it.

## Resources for Farmers

Georgia organic farmers are supported by Georgia Organics, the Georgia Department of Agriculture, UGA Cooperative Extension, and Southeast TOPP. Together they deliver farmer advocacy, certification navigation, technical research, and market access across the state.

### Georgia Organics

#### FARMER ADVOCACY & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Georgia's leading organic farming nonprofit, connecting farms to markets since 1997
- Farm-to-school and farm-to-institution supply chain development programs
- Annual Georgia Organics conference and statewide farm tour network
- Beginning farmer mentorship and organic certification navigation support

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

### Georgia Dept of Agriculture

#### STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

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

[agr.georgia.gov](http://agr.georgia.gov)

### UGA Cooperative Extension

#### RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic blueberry, vegetable, and pecan production specialists
- Coastal plain and Piedmont soil health and cover crop research
- Athens and Griffin research stations for organic systems field trials
- 159-county extension network delivering statewide organic outreach

[extension.uga.edu](http://extension.uga.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 blueberry, vegetable, and cattle farms
- Workshops on organic transition, subtropical pest management, and certification
- Market access and supply chain development for Southeast organic producers

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

#### DID YOU KNOW? GEORGIA

**Georgia is one of the top blueberry-producing states in the nation, and organic blueberries command premiums of 50% or more above conventional prices.** The Southeast's warm climate allows two to three weeks earlier harvest than Northern blueberry states, giving Georgia organic producers a market timing advantage at peak spring demand. Atlanta's population of 6.2 million makes it one of the Southeast's largest organic consumer markets, yet less than 1% of Georgia farmland is certified organic. Georgia Organics and Southeast TOPP are actively building the farmer-to-market connections needed to close that gap.

#### KEY SOURCES

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

Organic Trade Association. "Organic Industry Survey." OTA Market Report, 2025, [ota.com](http://ota.com).

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