

New Jersey

Garden State organic farming leads the Northeast in per-acre value and market access



**NORTHEAST/
MID-ATLANTIC**
TRANSITION TO ORGANIC
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A FARMER'S TOOLKIT
State Module | August 2026

New Jersey ranks 16th nationally with 706 certified organic operations and 3,715 certified acres. New Jersey's organic sector punches well above its acreage weight, generating among the highest per-acre organic sales in the nation thanks to proximity to the New York and Philadelphia metro markets and a strong farm-to-table culture. Organic vegetables, fruits, and specialty crops supply some of the most affluent consumer markets on the East Coast. Rutgers Cooperative Extension and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey provide robust technical and organizational support for the state's organic producers.

706 CERTIFIED OPERATIONS	3,715 CERTIFIED ACRES	\$64M ORGANIC SALES	Top 10 PER-ACRE ORGANIC VALUE
------------------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------	---

STATE PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Certified operations	706 (16th nationally)
Certified organic acres	3,715
Organic sales value	\$64 million
Worker employment vs. conventional	+32%
Split operations	58% of farms

OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop farm-to-institution organic supply chains connecting New Jersey organic producers with New York City and Philadelphia school, hospital, and university buyers.
- Expand organic agritourism and direct-market operations to capture maximum value from New Jersey's dense and affluent consumer population.
- Invest in organic aggregation and cold storage infrastructure to help small NJ organic farms access wholesale and restaurant buyers more efficiently.

TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Vegetables:** South Jersey sandy loams supply NYC, Philly, and NJ markets.
- ▶ **Fruits & Berries:** organic blueberries, peaches, and apples at premium metro prices.
- ▶ **Herbs & Specialty Crops:** urban herb and specialty crop farms serve chefs and natural buyers.
- ▶ **Dairy & Eggs:** organic dairy and eggs supply metro-area natural grocery chains.

BARRIERS

- Extreme land price pressure near New York and Philadelphia metro areas limits farmland access for beginning and expanding organic producers.
- High operating costs including labor, land, and regulatory compliance reduce organic profit margins relative to less expensive agricultural regions.
- Agricultural land loss to development is an ongoing threat to the long-term viability of New Jersey's organic farm base.

KEY TAKEAWAY

New Jersey's extraordinary market access to the New York and Philadelphia metro areas enables its organic farmers to achieve some of the nation's highest per-farm and per-acre organic revenues, making every certified organic acre in the Garden State exceptionally productive economically.

Resources for Farmers

New Jersey organic farmers are supported by the NJ Department of Agriculture, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, the Northeast Organic Farming Association of NJ, and the Northeast TOPP region. These partners deliver certification, research, technical assistance, and market development resources for the state's high-value organic sector.

NJ Department of Agriculture

STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- Jersey Fresh branding program supporting certified organic product promotion
- NRCS New Jersey: EQIP Organic Initiative and Organic Transition Assistance programs
- State agricultural development grants for organic market and infrastructure projects

state.nj.us/agriculture

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic vegetable, fruit, herb, and specialty crop research and extension specialists
- Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station organic systems research programs
- Soil health, integrated pest management, and season extension for organic producers
- 21-county extension network delivering local organic technical assistance across NJ

njaes.rutgers.edu

NOFA-NJ (NE Organic Farming Assoc.)

FARMER ADVOCACY & PEER LEARNING

- New Jersey's primary organic farmer advocacy and education organization
- Annual NOFA-NJ Summer Conference and farm tour programs
- Organic certification guidance, cost-share navigation, and producer support
- Farmer peer learning networks, mentorship, and market development resources

nofanj.org

Northeast TOPP (PCO-led)

MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT (and NJ producers can access resources)
- Paid organic mentor matching for vegetable, fruit, and specialty crop operations
- Workshops on organic transition, Northeast pest management, and certification
- Market access and metro food hub connection resources for NJ organic producers

organictransition.org/region/northeast-mid-atlantic

DID YOU KNOW? NEW JERSEY

New Jersey organic farms generate among the highest per-acre organic sales in the United States, reflecting the extraordinary consumer market density within reach of Garden State producers. With 20 million consumers within 100 miles of the center of New Jersey, organic farmers in the state face virtually unlimited demand for premium local organic products. Rutgers Extension's organic production research and NOFA-NJ's farmer network help producers develop the high-value specialty crop and direct-market capabilities needed to fully capitalize on this unmatched market opportunity.

KEY SOURCES

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2022 Census of Agriculture. USDA NASS, 2024.
New Jersey Department of Agriculture. Organic Agriculture Program. NJDA, 2023.
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Jersey. NOFA-NJ Programs. NOFA-NJ, 2023.
Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Organic Agriculture Research and Extension. Rutgers, 2023.