

New York

Empire State organic powerhouse: top-five nationally, anchored by dairy, vegetables, and NYC demand



A FARMER'S TOOLKIT
State Module | August 2026

New York ranks 2nd nationally with 2,068 certified organic operations and 985,648 certified acres. New York's organic sector is one of the most robust in the nation, anchored by a world-class organic dairy industry in the North Country and Hudson Valley, intensive organic vegetable production serving New York City's 8 million residents and \$3 billion organic food market, and a growing organic grain sector in the Finger Lakes and western regions. The Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York is the nation's largest and most influential state organic farming organization.

2,068 CERTIFIED OPERATIONS	985,648 CERTIFIED ACRES	\$311M ORGANIC SALES	#5 U.S. ORGANIC RANK
--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------------------------------	--------------------------------

STATE PROFILE

AT A GLANCE

Certified operations	2,068 (2nd nationally)
Certified organic acres	985,648
Organic sales value	\$311 million
Worker employment vs. conventional	+29%
Split operations	54% of farms

OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand organic grain and malt barley production to supply New York's rapidly growing craft beverage and artisan food sectors with certified New York-grown ingredients.
- Develop farm-to-institution organic supply chains connecting Hudson Valley and Finger Lakes producers with New York City school, hospital, and university buyers.
- Grow organic agritourism and direct-market capacity in the Hudson Valley and Catskills to capture maximum value from NYC proximity and tourism.

TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Dairy:** North Country and Hudson Valley supply major organic dairy brands.
- ▶ **Vegetables & Fruits:** Hudson Valley and Long Island farms supply NYC's organic market.
- ▶ **Grains:** Finger Lakes organic grain feeds regional mills and malt houses.
- ▶ **Maple & Specialty:** Adirondacks organic maple, honey, and herbs supply premium buyers.

BARRIERS

- High land values across the state, particularly in the Hudson Valley and downstate regions, create significant barriers for beginning and expanding organic producers.
- Organic dairy processor consolidation has reduced farmgate price stability for smaller organic dairy operations in recent years.
- Cold winters and short growing seasons in northern New York require high tunnel investment and careful variety selection for vegetable producers.

KEY TAKEAWAY

New York's organic sector combines the nation's most powerful urban food market in New York City, a world-class organic dairy industry, exceptional agritourism infrastructure in the Hudson Valley, and the organizational strength of NOFA-NY to make it one of the most complete and influential organic states in the country.

Resources for Farmers

New York organic farmers are supported by the NY Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York, and the Northeast TOPP region. Together they deliver a comprehensive ecosystem of certification, research, technical assistance, and market development resources.

NY Department of Agriculture and Markets

STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- NY Grown and Certified program supporting organic branding and product promotion
- NRCS New York: EQIP Organic Initiative, RCPP, and Transition Assistance programs
- Farmer and Food Producer grants supporting organic market infrastructure and development

agriculture.ny.gov

Cornell Cooperative Extension

RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic dairy, vegetable, grain, fruit, and maple production research and extension
- Cornell Small Farms Program and online organic farm management resources
- Hudson Valley and Finger Lakes organic market garden and grain transition support
- 62-county extension network delivering local organic technical assistance statewide

smallfarms.cornell.edu

NOFA-NY (NE Organic Farming Assoc.)

FARMER ADVOCACY & PEER LEARNING

- Nation's largest and most influential state organic farming organization
- Annual NOFA-NY Winter Conference serving 1,000+ organic farmers and stakeholders
- Organic certification cost-share navigation and producer advocacy programs
- Farmer peer networks, mentorship, and market development across New York state

nofany.org

Northeast TOPP (PCO-led)

MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT
- Paid organic mentor matching for dairy, vegetable, grain, and fruit operations
- Workshops on organic transition, Northeast pest management, and certification
- Market access and NYC food hub connection resources for New York organic producers

organictransition.org/region/northeast-mid-atlantic

DID YOU KNOW? NEW YORK

New York City's organic food market is estimated at over \$3 billion annually, making it the largest single urban organic market in the United States and one of the largest in the world. This extraordinary concentration of organic purchasing power within two hours of the Hudson Valley, Long Island, and Finger Lakes farming regions creates market access conditions unmatched anywhere in American agriculture. Cornell Cooperative Extension's small farms program, NOFA-NY's farmer networks, and Northeast TOPP's mentorship infrastructure are the bridge connecting New York's organic producers to this massive opportunity.

KEY SOURCES

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2022 Census of Agriculture. USDA NASS, 2024.

New York Department of Agriculture and Markets. Organic Agriculture Program. NYDAM, 2023.

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York. NOFA-NY Programs. NOFA-NY, 2023.

Cornell Cooperative Extension. Small Farms Program. Cornell CCE, 2023.