

# REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE AND THE SOIL CARBON SOLUTION: A BUYER'S GUIDE TO REGENERATIVE FOOD

**Want to learn more about how we can combat the climate crisis through our food? Visit [RodaleInstitute.org/Climate2020](https://RodaleInstitute.org/Climate2020) to download the white paper and additional resources to take climate action now.**

## LABELS

Labels placed on products you buy at the grocery store or online are a quick and easy way to know where your food comes from. Rodale Institute's research has shown that supporting regenerative farms can help combat climate change. But with so many labels out there, how can you know what food was grown regeneratively? Look for these labels next time you're in the grocery aisle:

### ORGANIC LABELS

#### REGENERATIVE ORGANIC CERTIFIED ★★★★★★



Regenerative  
Organic  
Certified™

First launched in 2020, Regenerative Organic Certified is the gold standard for regenerative organic products. Using USDA Certified Organic as a baseline, ROC also incorporates stringent guidelines for animal welfare and social fairness, in addition to soil health. These farms are required to use regenerative practices like reduced tillage, managed grazing, and a living wage for farmworkers. For consumers looking to make the most impact with their dollars, ROC is currently the highest bar of food labeling on the market.

#### REAL ORGANIC PROJECT



The Real Organic Project was created as an add-on label to USDA Certified Organic to provide greater transparency in farming practices. This label includes standards for livestock, soil management, greenhouse production, and more—all building on the baseline of USDA Certified Organic.

#### USDA CERTIFIED ORGANIC



You've probably seen this label before—the little green seal that's been around for the past few decades. Products with this label are regulated by the National Organic Program, contain no GMOs, and have been regularly inspected to ensure that the farms don't use prohibited chemicals or synthetic fertilizers. Many organic farms use regenerative practices like cover cropping, crop rotation, and composting.

### OTHER LABELS

While we encourage you to shop organic, these labels also showcase a commitment to carbon sequestration and mitigating climate change.

#### LAND TO MARKET



LAND to  
MARKET™

Spearheaded by the Savory Institute, the Land to Market certification is a verification of regenerative outcomes, like water infiltration and carbon sequestration, rather than a list of required practices. Look for this certification on regenerative meat, fiber, dairy, leather, and other products coming from animal agriculture.

#### SOIL CARBON INITIATIVE



SOIL  
CARBON  
INITIATIVE

Launched by The Carbon Underground and partners, the Soil Carbon Initiative focuses on the role soil plays in mitigating climate change. An outcome-based standard, products presenting the SCI label have been monitored for their progress in carbon sequestration and soil health.



## QUESTIONS TO ASK

If you get your food at a farmers market, CSA, or other local source, it doesn't always come with labels. That's why it's best to ask your farmer or seller about how the food is produced. Next time you're buying your local summer tomatoes, winter squash, or spring onions, strike up a conversation with the farmer, owner, or team member with these questions:

- 1** Does your farm and/or supplier hold any certifications, like USDA Organic, Regenerative Organic Certified, Land to Market, or others?
- 2** Can you tell me about how this food was grown?
- 3** How do you control pests and weeds on your farm?
- 4** How do you ensure your soil has the nutrients it needs? Do you use fertilizer, cover crops, compost, or something else?
- 5** What do your animals eat, and where do they live?
- 6** How do you protect your farmworkers and field laborers?
- 7** What got you into farming?
- 8** Tell me about your land and why you love it.

**Have other ideas? Contact us at @RodaleInstitute on social media to let us know what regenerative brands and farms you love, and how you vet your purchasing decisions to make sure you're supporting people and the planet.**