

Texas

Lone Star organic expansion spans cotton transition, diverse specialty crops, and booming Austin market



WEST/SOUTHWEST
TRANSITION TO ORGANIC
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A FARMER'S TOOLKIT
State Module | August 2026

Texas ranks 6th nationally with 1,071 certified organic operations and 568,678 certified acres. Texas's organic sector is vast and growing, spanning organic cotton and grain on the High Plains, diverse vegetables and specialty crops in the Rio Grande Valley and Hill Country, and intensive organic market farms near Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio. The state's exceptional organic market depth, with over 30 million residents, creates extraordinary consumer demand. Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provide the primary technical and organizational backbone for the state's organic producers.

1,071 CERTIFIED OPERATIONS	568,678 CERTIFIED ACRES	\$94M ORGANIC SALES	Top 15 U.S. ORGANIC STATE
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STATE PROFILE AT A GLANCE

Certified operations	1,071 (6th nationally)
Certified organic acres	568,678
Organic sales value	\$94 million
Worker employment vs. conventional	+23%
Split operations	46% of farms

OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop certified organic cotton supply chains to directly link Texas High Plains organic cotton growers with national organic apparel and personal care brands.
- Expand organic vegetable and fruit production capacity near Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio to supply Texas's massive and growing urban organic consumer base.
- Build organic processing and aggregation infrastructure along the I-35 corridor to serve Texas organic producers selling into the state's major metropolitan markets.

TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Cotton:** Texas is the top U.S. organic cotton state for apparel markets.
- ▶ **Vegetables & Fruits:** Rio Grande Valley and Hill Country organic crops for TX metros.
- ▶ **Beef Cattle:** organic grass-fed beef on Texas rangelands for premium retailers.
- ▶ **Pecans:** Texas organic pecans supply premium nut and confectionery markets.

BARRIERS

- Extreme heat, drought, and weather variability across Texas's diverse climatic zones create significant production risk during the organic transition period.
- Large conventional farm scale in major commodity sectors creates economic inertia against organic transition for High Plains grain and cotton operations.
- Geographic size of Texas means distribution costs are high and organic producer networks are geographically fragmented across multiple distant regions.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Texas's organic sector is uniquely positioned by its combination of the nation's largest organic cotton acreage, four major metro organic consumer markets, vast rangeland for organic beef, and a diverse agricultural geography that supports organic production from the Gulf Coast to the Panhandle.

Resources for Farmers

Texas organic farmers are supported by the Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, the Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, and the Southwest TOPP region. These organizations deliver certification, research, technical assistance, and market development resources across the state.

Texas Department of Agriculture

STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- GO TEXAN branding and marketing support for certified organic Texas products
- NRCS Texas: EQIP Organic Initiative and Organic Transition Assistance programs
- Texas agricultural development grants for organic processing and market infrastructure

texasagriculture.gov

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic cotton, vegetable, beef, pecan, and specialty crop research and extension
- Texas A&M organic systems research and on-farm demonstration programs statewide
- Soil health, dryland management, and integrated pest management for organic transition
- 254-county extension network delivering local organic technical assistance statewide

agrilifeextension.tamu.edu

Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Assoc.

FARMER ADVOCACY & PEER LEARNING

- Texas's primary organic farmer and gardener advocacy and education organization
- Annual TOFGA Conference connecting Texas organic producers, buyers, and advocates
- Organic certification guidance and cost-share navigation for new applicants
- Farmer peer learning networks, mentorship, and market development statewide

tofga.org

Southwest TOPP (CCOF-led)

MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves AZ, CA, HI, NM, NV, TX, UT
- Paid organic mentor matching for cotton, vegetable, beef, and pecan operations
- Workshops on organic transition, dryland management, and certification in Texas
- Market access and organic buyer connections for Texas organic producers

organictransition.org/region/west-southwest

DID YOU KNOW? TEXAS

Texas produces more certified organic cotton than any other state in the United States, making it the foundation of the U.S. domestic organic fiber supply for apparel, home goods, and personal care products. With global demand for certified organic cotton growing as major brands commit to organic fiber sourcing, Texas High Plains organic cotton farmers are positioned at the supply end of one of the fastest-growing segments of the organic market. Texas A&M AgriLife's cotton research program and Southwest TOPP's mentorship network are helping Texas producers transition conventional cotton acres to certified organic and access the premium markets that come with certification.

KEY SOURCES

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

Texas Department of Agriculture. GO TEXAN and Organic Program. TDA, 2023.

Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. TOFGA Programs. TOFGA, 2023.

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