

# Washington

*Evergreen State organic leader: top-five nationally in apples, hops, berries, and dairy*



A FARMER'S TOOLKIT  
State Module | August 2026

Washington ranks 5th nationally with 1,223 certified organic operations and 109,802 certified acres. Washington is one of the premier organic states in the nation, anchored by the Yakima Valley's extraordinary organic tree fruit and hop production, the Palouse's organic wheat and pulse crops, western Washington's organic dairy and vegetable sectors, and the booming Seattle metro's exceptional organic consumer demand. Washington State University's organic research programs and the Washington State Department of Agriculture provide world-class technical and regulatory infrastructure for one of the most economically significant organic sectors in the country.

|                                      |                                   |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>1,223</b><br>CERTIFIED OPERATIONS | <b>109,802</b><br>CERTIFIED ACRES | <b>\$402M</b><br>ORGANIC SALES | <b>#4</b><br>U.S. ORGANIC RANK |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|

## STATE PROFILE AT A GLANCE

|                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Certified operations               | <b>1,223 (5th nationally)</b> |
| Certified organic acres            | <b>109,802</b>                |
| Organic sales value                | <b>\$402 million</b>          |
| Worker employment vs. conventional | <b>+28%</b>                   |
| Split operations                   | <b>53% of farms</b>           |

## OPPORTUNITIES & BARRIERS

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand organic hop acreage to meet surging demand from U.S. craft breweries committed to organic ingredient sourcing, where Washington supply currently falls short of demand.
- Develop Palouse organic grain value-added processing capacity to supply Pacific Northwest artisan bakers, pasta makers, and natural food manufacturers with Washington-grown certified grain.
- Leverage Seattle's extraordinary organic consumer market to support farm-to-institution and food hub supply chains connecting western WA organic producers with urban buyers.

### TOP ORGANIC COMMODITIES

- ▶ **Apples & Tree Fruit:** Yakima Valley and Wenatchee supply national organic apple retail.
- ▶ **Hops:** Yakima Valley certified organic hops supply craft brewing industry.
- ▶ **Wheat & Pulses:** Palouse organic wheat, lentils, and peas supply national mills.
- ▶ **Dairy & Vegetables:** Skagit Valley organic vegetables and western dairy supply Seattle.

### BARRIERS

- High land values across the Yakima Valley and western Washington limit farmland access for beginning organic tree fruit and vegetable producers.
- Labor availability and cost for harvest-intensive organic tree fruit, hop, and vegetable operations create significant ongoing operational challenges.
- Eastern Washington's remote geography and cold-storage infrastructure gaps increase distribution costs for Palouse organic grain and pulse producers.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Washington's organic sector is a national model of commercial scale and market integration, with \$402 million in organic sales anchored by world-class organic apple and hop production, a vibrant Palouse grain belt, and the extraordinary market access of the Seattle metro consumer economy.

## Resources for Farmers

Washington organic farmers are supported by the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State University Extension, the Washington State Farmers Market Association, and the Northwest TOPP region. Together they deliver a comprehensive ecosystem of certification, research, technical assistance, and market development resources.

### Washington State Department of Agriculture

#### STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS

- Organic Certification Cost Share: federal pass-through, up to \$750/yr
- WSDA Organic Program: one of the most rigorous accredited state certifiers nationally
- NRCS Washington: EQIP Organic Initiative, RCPP, and Organic Transition Assistance
- Washington agricultural development grants for organic processing and market projects

[agr.wa.gov/organic](http://agr.wa.gov/organic)

### Washington State University Extension

#### RESEARCH, EXTENSION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Organic apple, hop, grain, pulse, dairy, and vegetable research and extension specialists
- WSU organic systems research including the acclaimed Farming Systems Project
- Integrated pest management, soil health, and organic transition resources statewide
- 39-county extension network delivering local organic technical assistance across WA

[extension.wsu.edu](http://extension.wsu.edu)

### Tilth Alliance

#### FARMER ADVOCACY & PEER LEARNING

- Washington's premier organic and sustainable agriculture advocacy and education organization
- Annual Tilth Alliance Conference and farm tour programs in the Pacific Northwest
- Organic certification guidance, cost-share navigation, and producer support
- Farmer peer learning networks, mentorship, and market development in Washington state

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

### Northwest TOPP (OTCO-led)

#### MENTORSHIP & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Serves AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY
- Paid organic mentor matching for apple, hop, grain, dairy, and vegetable operations
- Workshops on organic transition, Pacific Northwest pest management, and certification
- Market access and Seattle food hub connections for Washington organic producers

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

#### DID YOU KNOW? WASHINGTON

Washington's Yakima Valley produces the majority of all organic hops grown in the United States, making it the essential supply source for the nation's rapidly growing organic craft brewing industry. With the U.S. craft beer market generating over \$28 billion annually and growing numbers of craft breweries seeking certified organic ingredients, Yakima Valley organic hop farmers are positioned at the supply end of one of American agriculture's most dynamic premium markets. WSU Extension's hop research program and Northwest TOPP's mentorship network are supporting Yakima Valley producers in converting conventional hop yards to certified organic production.

#### KEY SOURCES

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

Washington State Department of Agriculture. Organic Program. WSDA, 2023.

Tilth Alliance. Programs and Resources. Tilth Alliance, 2023.

Washington State University Extension. Organic Agriculture Research. WSU Extension, 2023.