KSU Organic Program
2010

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Michael Ward
Kentucky has unrealized potential to meet growing demand for organic food


US Organic Food Sales, 1991-2009

Certified organic farms, by zip code: 10,159

Data from 2007, the most recent agricultural census.
# Organic agriculture benefits farmers, consumers, environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmers</th>
<th>Consumers</th>
<th>Environment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premium prices</td>
<td>Third party certification of growing practices</td>
<td>Greater biodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing demand</td>
<td>Mounting evidence of nutritional benefits (more vitamins, antioxidants)</td>
<td>Reduced fertilizer runoff</td>
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<tr>
<td>No exposure to synthetic pesticides</td>
<td>Reduced pesticide residues</td>
<td>No synthetic pesticides added to air, water, soil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater energy independence</td>
<td>No routine antibiotics or growth hormones</td>
<td>Lower energy use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving soil quality</td>
<td>No genetically modified organisms</td>
<td>Carbon capture and storage in soil</td>
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<td>(greater capacity to hold water and nutrients)</td>
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Organic agriculture benefits farmers, consumers, environment.
Premium prices for organic food

Week of Dec. 3rd 2010, Philadelphia, PA
Potential to use organic tactics for low-input biofuel feedstock production

“Because of its reduced energy inputs, organic agriculture is the ideal production method for biofuels.”

Ziesemer 2007, UN-FAO
KSU Program

• 11 ac of KSU farm certified organic
  – Vegetables
  – Fruit
  – Grain
  – Soil-building cover crops
  – Bioenergy feedstock crops
  – Winter production in solar heated high tunnel
  – On-farm biofuel processing

KSU Organic Farm Products
Organic Research

• Organic weed management
• Organic insect pest management
• Organic disease management
• Soil building
• On-farm biofuel production
Organic Extension

- Founded Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK), 2010
- Regular workshops on organic agriculture / low-input bioenergy
- Newsletters, pamphlets, websites, blogs, eXtension.org
Impacts

• Number of certified organic farms in Kentucky grows from 12 to 100+ between 2002 and 2010

• Organic Association of Kentucky launches with 91 members in 2010

• Local certified organic products increasingly available to Kentucky consumers

• County extension agents have local source of research-based information on organic agriculture
Kentucky Organic Farms, 2009

Markers show farms and processors certified under:
- USDA National Organic Program (98)
- Certified Naturally Grown Program (17)

“I used to think I was the only one…”

Kentucky organic farmer
Goals

- Continued growth of Kentucky’s organic sector
- Energy independent organic farms meet their own fuel needs to supply local food
- Conventional producers increasingly adopt elements of organic agriculture to enhance sustainability