

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 18, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

As you consider options for addressing the pending expiration of the 2008 Farm Bill at the end of this month, we are writing to draw your attention to the negative consequences for organic agriculture if the Farm Bill is allowed to expire, or is simply extended without Congress taking action to reauthorize and fund the core organic Farm Bill programs at current levels.

With an estimated 527,000 jobs created in 2010 alone, organic is the fastest growing sector of agriculture. The strong growth in demand for organic food and beverages is a hopeful trend for our agricultural economy. But the farm and processing jobs associated with meeting this demand can and should be created here at home, rather than relying on imports.

Though modest, the organic research, data collection, and certification cost share programs funded by the 2008 Farm Bill are of significant importance to the organic sector, and have contributed to its rapid growth. Yet these programs are in great jeopardy if the pending Farm Bill reauthorization falters.


Specifically, the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Program (OREI), the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program (NOCCSP), and the Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives (ODI) are programs that receive mandatory funding in the current Farm Bill, but do not have an on-going baseline. Therefore, funding considerations must be made to assure that these programs are reauthorized and funded at current levels.

We strongly urge you to provide on-going mandatory funding for these core organic programs in any final or short-term Farm Bill action.

Sincerely,



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



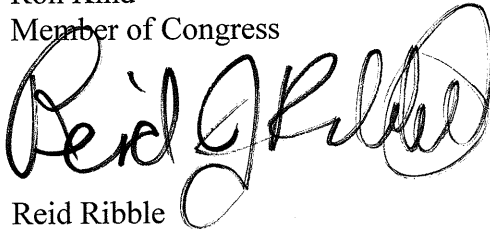
Richard Hanna
Member of Congress




Ron Kind
Member of Congress




Sam Farr
Member of Congress



Reid Ribble
Member of Congress



Chris Gibson
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress

cc

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member, House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20515