

U.S. Rep. Kind: Highlights that USDA is now accepting applications to help cover costs of organic, transitioning producers

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Washington, DC – Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** is highlighting that agricultural producers and handlers who are certified organic, along with producers and handlers who are transitioning to organic production, can now apply for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Organic and Transitional Education Certification Program](#) (OTECP) and [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP).

These programs are aimed at helping producers and handlers cover the cost of organic certification, along with other related expenses. Applications for OTECP and OCCSP are both due October 31, 2022.

“Our organic producers and handlers play a critical role in our local communities and economies, and we need to continue to make sure they have the tools to innovate and succeed for generations to come,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “I encourage all interested producers to reach out to the Farm Service Agency at their local USDA Service Center in order to get more information or apply.”

OTECP covers:

- Certification costs for organic producers and handlers (25% up to \$250 per category).
- Eligible expenses for transitional producers, including fees for pre-certification

- inspections and development of an organic system plan (75% up to \$750).
- Registration fees for educational events (75% up to \$200).
- Soil testing (75% up to \$100).

Meanwhile, OCCSP covers 50% or up to \$500 per category of certification costs in 2022.

This cost share for certification is available for each of these categories: crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling and State organic program fees. Producers can receive cost share through both OTECP and OCCSP. Both OTECP and OCCSP cover costs incurred from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. Producers have until October 31, 2022 to file applications, and FSA will make payments as applications are received.

To apply, producers and handlers should contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) at their local USDA Service Center. Organic producers and handlers may also apply for OCCSP through participating State agencies. Additional details can be found on the [OTECP](#) and [OCCSP](#) webpages.

Rep. Kind serves as co-chair of the bipartisan House Organic Caucus.