



Texas TOPP

Welcome!

Shouting from the rooftops at AgriLife Organics **TEXAS TOPP** has officially arrived! Texas TOPP may be a new program at AgriLife, but this train is ready to leave the station. TOPP (Transition to Organic Partnership Program) is designed to connect transitioning farmers with mentors, technical assistance, workforce development, and farm training and education. With that being said let's introduce you to the faces behind Texas TOPP.

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



The Organic Transition Initiative

The Organic Transition Initiative is a new, multi-agency USDA effort aimed to ensure that farmers transitioning to organic have maximum support to navigate organic transition.



TOPP is a program administered by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Through TOPP, CCOF leads the Western Regional Center for Organic Transition working to provide producers in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Texas a foundation for organic farming!

CCOF holds a 5-year cooperative agreement with the USDA NOP to lead the Western Regional Center for Organic Transition. Texas TOPP is a partner with CCOF. Texas TOPP is led by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the overall AgriLife Organic program. Texas TOPP will provide resources to better develop tools organic transition farmers need. Texas TOPP is dedicated and focused to help not only transitioning farmers, but current certified organic farmers and

handlers to know we are serious about organic and developing the future of agriculture in Texas.



Timber Darnell Extension Organic Coordinator

Hi everyone! I'm Timber Darnell, the new Extension Organic Coordinator. I am so excited to start this new journey.

I am a Wyoming native but transplanted myself to Texas shortly after high school to compete on a rodeo scholarship. I received my bachelor's degree studying Animal Science with a minor in Equine Science in 2021. I am a recent graduate from Tarleton State University with a master's in agriculture Consumer Resources with an emphasis in Leadership. Through the Leadership program I helped lead the local and state FFA Dairy Contest. As well as organize my own business and mentorship program called Faster Feet Faster Hands. Teaching ages 7-17 on how to goat tie.

Organics may be a new thing for me to wrangle, but at a young age I learned "a little dirt never hurt" and "hard work goes a long way". So here I am ready to **Grow Organic with you!**

TEXASTOPP.ORG



Texas TOPP



TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

We Are Seeking Mentor's and Mentee's for Our Mentorship Program

Our mentorship program connects producers transitioning to organic with experienced organic farmers who serve as mentors. These mentors will help guide transitioning producers through the certification process and offer insight into their journey of organic farming.

Mentees: Mentees are transitioning producers who are looking to enter the organic farming space. To be eligible you must either own or be employed by an existing agricultural operation. Mentees will receive a \$500 stipend for travel and educational purposes, which can help cover costs associated with learning and travel expenses. To enroll call or email Timber. **Organic Mentors:** Mentors are experienced individuals who will guide and support the transitioning producers on their journey to organic farming. They will provide valuable insights, practical advice, and industry best practices. It's a critical role in helping new organic producers succeed and contribute to the growth of the organic farming movement. Organic Mentors will receive a stipend of \$3,000 for each mentorship year.

Organic Mentors will benefit from professional development opportunities. This includes training in various areas such as professional and interpersonal skills, organic regulations, organic production practices, teaching, and facilitation skills. This training enhances their ability to effectively mentor and support transitioning producers.

Learn more by clicking here
<https://TexasTOPP.org>

We are excited to announce the launch of our

new Texas TOPP website just for you!

I have been working hard the last couple of weeks to create this website for anyone who wants to transition to Texas Organics.



This website is also an excellent resource for farmers who are interested in organic news, upcoming events, and mentorship programs.

The website also provides information on upcoming events. This will keep you up to date on all the latest events such as field days, conferences, meetings in Texas organics and more! It's a great way to stay informed and get connected!

It's More Than a Label – It's the Law!

Did you know that any agricultural product sold, labeled, or advertised as organic in the United States must be produced in compliance under the USDA organic seal. This is the official mark protected by federal regulation and overseen by the National Organic Program (NOP). As of March 19, 2024, Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) will enforce one of the biggest regulation changes requiring any operation that buys, sells, or facilitates the sale of organic goods to be certified.



Come Grow Organic with US!

The organic movement in Texas has been growing at an unprecedented rate, and there's no better time to be a part of it. Whether you're just starting out or well into organic transition, there are a wealth of opportunities for you to **Come Grow Organic with Texas TOPP.**