



WEST/SOUTHWEST TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

2023 Achievements Summary

Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association, Berkeley Food Institute, California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), Development of Regenerative Yield Co-op, Ecological Farming Association, Farmshare Austin, Hawaii Farmers Union Foundation, MA'O Organic Farms, Organic Agronomy Training Service, Organic Farming Research Foundation, Rodale Institute, ASU Swette Center for Sustainable Food Systems, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, UC Organic Agriculture Institute, Utah State University, Utah State University Student Organic Farm

The Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) is a network assembled by the USDA's National Organic Program to support transitioning and organic producers with mentorship and resources. Six regions work together toward a common goal: to grow the network of organic producers.

The West/Southwest TOPP Region is a coalition of partners led by California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) who are dedicated to providing mentorship, technical assistance, and comprehensive support to both transitioning and existing organic producers. Our partners serve producers in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Texas, and Hawai'i.



Coming out of year one, TOPP programs are gaining momentum with increasing levels of interest across the W/SW region.



In Q1 - Q3, 18 partners hosted 72 events throughout the region and reached more than 6,600 people, of whom approximately 40% were producers and 6% of participants received workforce training. An estimated 42 events were hosted in Q4 (*data not yet available*).



Cross-pollination between W/SW Region partners and within states has facilitated expanded networks and opportunities.

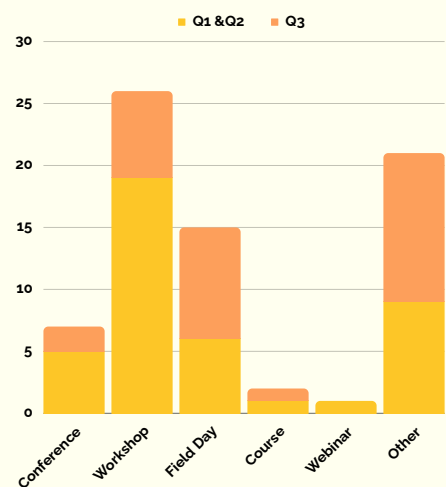


Figure 1: Events Hosted by Type



TOPP partners focused on designing and standing up programmatic support systems like project plans, recruitment and hiring, and outreach materials.



A total of 60 resources were created between Q1 and Q3 2023, with almost half reported as "other". Other resources include forms, media toolkits, flyers, brochures in Spanish, work plans, and program details.

Learn more: [TOPP Resources](#)

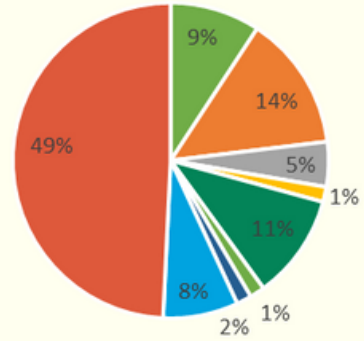


Figure 2: Resources Created by Type

Partner Testimonials

"Event attendees were engaged and excited to be at the farm. Many of them had interesting questions, expressed interest in the cost/benefit analysis of organic agriculture, and voiced their own concerns with organic management based on personal experience gardening or farming. All of our attendees expressed a desire to attend similar events in the future."

- Utah State University Student Organic Farm

Many students did not know that [agricultural] TA was a career area. When asked about learning takeaways, some respondents said: "I learned about the job of Technical Assistance - I had been thinking of what I want to do in the food systems industry but had no name for it - attending the technical assistance part of the event gave me a word for this job that I want to explore!"

- Berkeley Food Institute

The record keeping forms that we've been trialing have made it easier for our farm to keep records in real time as well as being able to train the skill to our students!

- Farmshare Austin



Students participating at Utah State University's Student Organic Farm celebration event
Credit: USU Student Organic Farm



Farmshare Austin Spring 2023 Graduating Class
Credit: Farmshare Austin