



July 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

Organic Promotion, Research, and Information Order;  
Room 3071-S, STOP 0201;  
Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA;  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.;  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0201;  
Telephone number: (202) 720-5115.

Submitted by email: [amsadministratoroffice@ams.usda.gov](mailto:amsadministratoroffice@ams.usda.gov)

Please accept this partial proposal on a new industry-funded promotion, research and information order for organic products, which would be developed under the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (1996 Act).

I am submitting this proposal on behalf of NODPA which is the largest organic dairy producer organization in the country with a membership of eight hundred and thirty six organic dairy producers in the Eastern USA. NODPA's mission is to **“enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well-being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.”** NODPA is not aligned with any one processor or cooperative and therefore is able to represent the views and needs of many different farmers.

Our farmer-members do not think that a mandatory USDA checkoff program is the correct vehicle to address the needed organic marketing, research, nor support for increased domestic organic production. While our members feel all of these areas are important for the future of a strong organic agriculture in the USA, a USDA Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic would not be the vehicle of choice. That being said, because the Organic Trade Association (OTA) has applied to establish such a program, albeit falsely claiming broad farmer support, we would like to outline the areas of the proposal that would need to be addressed to fairly propose such an idea to the organic agricultural community.

We believe that it is a fundamentally democratic right that all organic certificate holders have a vote as to whether a Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic is established. A federally mandated program is designed to affect every level of the organic marketplace and every certificate holder should have the right to vote on establishing one and letting one continue. Our partial proposal outlines an assessment where small entities will be assessed at rates low enough not to cause financial hardship.

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Steve Morrison, Secretary, ME  
George Wright, Treasurer, NY  
Henry Perkins, Past President ME

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**Executive Director**

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**Media Editor, Membership and  
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**NODPA's Mission**

*To enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well-being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.*

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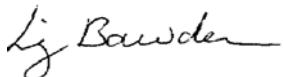
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As an organization of organic producers we tried and failed to become involved with the Organic Trade Association's committee to investigate and develop a proposal to make certified organic production which is a production system into a commodity. When it was obvious that this committee was more interested in scripted town meetings and webinars where it was impossible to comment on the proposal, we decided to stop any involvement as we became part of the numbers game that OTA could quote as being involved in their proposal. We therefore thank the administrator for allowing the opportunity for those groups not aligned with the trade association for the "organic commodity" to put forward their ideas on the best way to develop the certified organic production to the benefit of all stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact Ed Maltby if you require any more information.

Sincerely



NODPA Board Chair and New York organic dairy farmer



NODPA Executive Director

## **R&P Program Partial Proposal Application**

### **Industry Overview**

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Association (NODPA) hereby submits this partial proposal for the Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic (“GRO Organic”) pursuant to the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996.

#### **I. Industry Analysis**

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) did a fine job of providing the USDA with a comprehensive history of the organic agricultural movement and market growth. One area that was minimized in their summary was an emphasis on the intention and meaning of organic agriculture and the organic label. Organic agriculture was created in this country by small to mid-scale family farmers who wanted to create a farming system and market based on production values that embraces the environment, social justice, and economic viability. Small to mid-size family farmers built the organic label in this country at a grassroots level, and the current success of the organic market has them to thank for this. Currently the majority of organic operations in the US are independent farmers and the OTA outlines that over 60% are small farmers, grossing less than \$250,000 per year.

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Association (NODPA) is the largest organic dairy producer organization in the country with a membership of eight hundred and thirty six organic dairy producers in the Eastern US. NODPA’s mission is to “enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well-being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.” NODPA is not aligned with any one processor or cooperative and therefore is able to represent the views and needs of many different farmers. **Our farmer-members do not think a mandatory USDA checkoff program is the correct vehicle to address the needed organic marketing, research, nor support for increased domestic organic production. While our members feel all of these areas are important for the future of a strong organic agriculture in the US, a USDA Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic would not be the vehicle of choice. That being said, because the OTA has applied to establish such a program, albeit falsely claiming broad farmer support, we would like to outline the areas of the proposal that would need to be addressed to fairly propose such an idea to the organic agricultural community.**

#### **II. Program Justification**

##### **a. What research and marketing problems exist?**

The rapid growth of the U.S. organic industry has given rise to unique challenges that need to be addressed in order for the industry to sustain and continue its current growth. The overarching purpose of a Generic Research and Marketing Program is defined by USDA as to increase demand without placing one sector at a competitive disadvantage and as such any program dollars cannot be spent only to promote domestic organic production. NODPA believes that in order to address the lack of supply to meet the rapid increase in US demand, we need a program that will support the growth of US supply by encouraging non-organic growers to transition more acres to organic, certified organic producers to expand their certified organic acreage, a fair, equitable, and profitable farm gate price for all segments of organic production, and new farmers to begin farming using certified organic methods.

There is a three year transition period to convert non-organic farmland into organic farmland and the transition period can be challenging because the farm internalizes the increased production cost of an organic farm without receiving the price premium and, depending of the size and existing practices of the farm, may need to make dramatic changes to farming techniques. While current USDA programs do exist to help some farmers through this process, most farmers are utilizing and seeking out programs offered by non-profit farmer-based organizations like NODPA, the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA), Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Services (MOSES), Florida Organic Growers (FOG), Oregon Tilth, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM), Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA), etc. These organizations provide the on-farm technical assistance to farmers during the transition process in a way that is best tailored to help them through a successful transition in their particular market and region. Furthermore, these organizations emphasize farmer-to-farmer information exchange as the best technique to educate farmers, as much research has proven that farmers learn best from other farmers. Their ability to do more technical assistance to farmers is often limited by the capital needed to provide those services.

### **III. Program Objectives**

Because the organic market has grown so quickly in the United States with market demand for organic products far outreaching the domestic supply, the program objectives should first and foremost focus on bringing new farmers into organic production through information and technical assistance. The secondary program objective should support farm-gate production research to ensure that organic farmers maintain a competitive edge among a growing international organic market. Once domestic organic supply catches up with our domestic demand, the program should also focus on broader marketing and promotion goals such as educating consumers about what organic is and its benefits and distinguishing organic from other claims and unregulated seals like "natural." Our recommended outline of priority program objectives is rooted in decades of direct independent farmer representation, and would most address the current needs of the majority of organic certificate holders (small to mid-size independent producers). For a more detailed account of the program objectives addressed by this proposal see Section II(a).

### **IV. Impact on Small Business**

NODPA feels strongly that an organic research and promotion order should not impose arduous compliance requirements on small businesses: that any assessments are progressive, having a greater impact on those entities that have a higher gross organic income and that assessment be paid by first handlers and producer handlers not producers as prescribed by the 1996 Act . In order to prevent any burden, our proposal does not propose to assess certified entities on net producer income nor do we propose to exclude a significant portion of the organic community (See Section 12XX.52 Assessments). Our partial proposal recommends that all organic certificate holders should be assessed; thus, all organic certification holders should be included in the GRO Organic Program decisions, referendums, and leadership. There are various problems with excluding organic producers, producer-handlers, handlers, product processors, and importers with Gross Organic Revenue of less than \$250,000 in the last fiscal year and giving them the option to voluntarily be assessed and then pay into the program for seven years. At the onset of the program, those who do qualify for assessment are not locked into being assessed for the next seven years, even if their gross revenue dips below \$250,000 the year following the referendum. Likewise, if a certificate holder is excluded at the onset of the program and thus does not get a vote in the initial referendum but then reaches the gross sales threshold the following year, they will be paying

into a program which they were not entitled to vote on. Furthermore, a plan for assessment must be fair across commodities. Dairy farmers have a high gross sales number, but typically low net profit, while other commodities like high-value fruits and vegetables typically have a lower gross sales but higher net profit. It is estimated from our membership that most small dairies would meet the gross organic sales level of \$250,000.

Because of the disparities present in an assessment based on excluding producers grossing under \$250,000, we feel strongly that all organic certificate holders should be assessed and that the assessment should be made on Gross Organic Sales, rather than net profit as net profit is complex for small businesses that typically produce all their own farm inputs. Small to mid-size producers may rent or own more acreage to grow their own organic inputs, a strategy necessary in many parts of the country to maintain access to these organic inputs. Furthermore, small to mid-size organic farms have high labor costs, an expense typical of farms who have not reached the scale requiring more mechanization--these costs would not be included in the some definitions of net organic sales. Generating net profit numbers for the purposes of the GRO Organic Program will be overly onerous for small businesses and expose them to increased risk for financial audits by the Board. The fairest method for assessment and to measure everyone's interest in a GRO Organic Program is to equally assess small businesses (producers and producer-handlers) at an assessment of one-hundredth of one percent of their Gross Organic Sales (.001%) and organic handlers, product processors, and organic importers at a progressive assessment of reflecting their ability to pay, which will allow all certificate holders the right to vote in any program referendums. Our producer members and producers who have been polled tell us that this level of assessment would not be burdensome.

We anticipate that the GRO Organic Program will impact small businesses with annual receipts less than \$750,000. We do not know how many organic producers, producer-handlers, handlers, product processors, and importers meet the regulatory threshold as set forth by the SBA and are subject to assessment, however we do know that a majority of organic certificate holders are small to mid-size organic producers that would likely qualify under this definition. Requiring quarterly assessment reports is overly onerous as it is unlikely that many small to mid-size farms have bookkeeping employees or "staff to operate and manage their computer system." Assessing producers, producer-handlers, handlers, and product processors on their Gross Organic Sales would make the assessment reports straight forward, equitable across different types of certificate holders, and less complicated, and would reduce the need for bookkeeping staff or specialized contract labor to meet the assessment requirements. We estimate that this method could be completed by the accounting staff or farmer in one hour of work or none if the assessment is taken out by the first handler.

## **V. Industry Support**

The Organic Trade Association and the GRO Organic Core Committee facilitated preliminary discussions in the organic sector to determine whether there is a need for an organic promotion and research order as outlined in their proposal, but they *did not* accurately reflect the farmer feedback from those discussions. From member participation and attendance in the majority of the OTA town halls and webinars, we can attest that there was much farmer opposition to the proposed OTA and GRO Organic Committee's proposal of an organic checkoff program. Because of this disparity, we recommend that the USDA offer a Comment Period of Inquiry, similarly as it did for the recent beef checkoff proposal, before publishing any proposal to the federal register for comment to first measure whether there is industry support for a Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic. Alternatively or in addition to a comment period of inquiry, the USDA National Organic Program should host an independent outside survey of all organic certificate holders to obtain objective and neutral third-party data on whether a Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic program is supported by the

organic industry. The 'Organic commodity' is unique in so far as the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service has a database of all those that are within the commodity and could use that to measure support for the proposed program. Our membership and the farmer-membership of many other organic-farming based organizations strongly demonstrate producer opposition to any organic checkoff proposal (see [www.noorganiccheckoff.com](http://www.noorganiccheckoff.com) where testimonials from hundreds of organic producers and consumers oppose an organic checkoff and over 680 people have signed a petition to end the checkoff proposal (See Attachment 1).

## VI. Text of the Proposal

PART 12XX— Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic  
Subpart A— Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic

From **Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013:**

SEC. 10012. ORGANIC PRODUCT PROMOTION ORDERS.

(b) Organic Commodity Promotion Order- Section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401) (as amended by subsection (a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

(f) Organic Commodity Promotion Order-

(1) DEFINITIONS- In this subsection:

(A) CERTIFIED ORGANIC FARM- The term 'certified organic farm' has the meaning given the term in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502).

**(B) COVERED PERSON- The term 'covered person' means a producer, handler, marketer, or importer of an organic agricultural commodity.'**

### DEFINITIONS

Our partial proposal does not require definitions for the following because they are obsolete in our partial proposal:

- §12XX.4 Certificate of exemption.
- §12XX.13 Net organic sales.
- §12XX.23 Producer net profit.
- §12XX.33 Voluntarily assessed entity.

Subpart A— Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic

### DEFINITIONS

§12XX.22 Person.

Person means any individual, group of individuals, partnership, corporation, association, cooperative, or any other legal entity.

§12XX.15 Organic certificate holder.

Organic certificate holder means a person who is not exempt or excluded from certification pursuant to 7 CFR 205.101 and who holds a valid organic certificate pursuant to 7 CFR 205.400 through 7 CFR 205.406.

§12XX.16 Organic handler.

Organic handler means a person who is handling certified organic products in accordance with the requirements specified in 7 CFR 205.101 or 7 CFR 205.270 through 7 CFR 205.272 and all other applicable requirements of this part 205 and receives, sell, consign, deliver, or transport certified organic products into the current of commerce in the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any territory or possession of the United States.

§12XX.17 Organic importer.

Organic importer means any organic producer, organic producer-handler, organic handler with gross organic revenue person who imports certified organic products from outside the United States for sale in the United States.

§12XX.18 Organic producer.

Organic producer means a person who has produced certified organic products in accordance with the requirements specified in 7 CFR 205.101 or 7 CFR 205.202 through 7 CFR 205.207 or 7 CFR 205.236 through 7 CFR 205.240 and all other applicable requirements of part 205.

*NODPA recommends including a definition of organic producer-handler under the proposed generic research and promotion program that defines the small- to mid-size producer who markets organic products directly to the consumer. This type of handler operates at a much smaller scale than the typical handler, which is often a large processing facility marketing at the wholesale level. Our proposed definition for Organic Producer-Handler is as follows:*

§12XX.19 Organic producer-handler.

Organic producer-handler means a person who is an organic producer who markets organic products direct to the consumer.

§12XX.20 Organic product processor.

Organic product processor means a person who has cooked, baked, heated, dried, mixed, and grinded, churned, separated, extracted, cut, fermented, eviscerated, preserved, dehydrated, frozen, or otherwise manufactured organic products, and includes the packaging, canning, jarring, or otherwise enclosing organic food in a container.

§12XX.21 Organic products.

Organic products means products produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501-6522), and any amendments thereto.

*NODPA recommends a definition of organic research under the proposed generic research and promotion program that focuses on the real research needs of independent producers which would help to close the gap between national supply and demand as well as keep US producers competitive with a growing international organic market. Our proposed definition for §12XX.27 Research is as follows:*

§12XX.27 Research.

*Research* means any type of investigation, study, evaluation, or analysis (including related education, extension, and outreach activities) designed to improve organic farm production systems and practices, increase farm profitability and productivity, expand organic farming opportunities, and enhance quality of life for farm families and their communities; enhance plant and animal breeding and varietal development for organic systems and improve the availability of other production inputs; optimize natural resource conservation, biodiversity, and environmental outcomes of organic agriculture; advance organic farm and food safety objectives; enhance or increase the consumption, image, desirability, use, marketability, or production of organic products; or to do studies on nutrition, market data, processing, environmental and human health benefits, quality of organic products, including research directed to organic product characteristics and product development, including new uses of existing organic products, new organic products or improved technology in the production, processing and packaging of organic products.

GENERIC RESEARCH AND PROMOTION ORDER FOR ORGANIC BOARD

§12XX.40 Establishment and membership.

- (a) Establishment of the Board. There is hereby established a Generic Research and Promotion Program for Organic Board to administer the terms and provisions of this Order. Seats on the Board shall be apportioned as set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. There shall be no alternate Board members.
- (b) The Board shall be composed of 25 members and shall be established as follows:
  - (1) Sixteen organic producers representing equitable diversity in geography, commodity, and size of operation. None of these producer members may hold additional organic certificates (no producer-handlers, organic handlers or product processors).
  - (2) Two organic producer-handler members;
  - (3) Three organic handler members;
  - (4) Two organic product processor members;
  - (5) One organic importer member; and,
  - (6) One at-large public member, who shall be a non-voting member.
- (c) Any changes in Board composition shall be implemented by the Secretary through rulemaking.
- (d) At least once in every five-year period, but not more frequently than once in every three-year period, the Board will review the geographical distribution, commodity representation, and sizes of operations of certified organic operations in the United States with respect to the organic producer Board members to ensure that equitable representation is achieved. The review will be conducted using the NOP's list of certified organic operations and, if available, other reliable reports from the industry. If warranted, the Board will recommend to the Secretary that certain factors be prioritized to achieve greater



representation in future producer board member seats. Any changes in Board composition shall be implemented by the Secretary through rulemaking.

#### §12XX.41 Nominations and appointments.

(a) Nominees must be organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors, or organic importers who produce, handle or import organic products in the marketing year.

(b) Initial nominations shall be submitted to the Secretary. Before considering any nominations, the Secretary shall publicize the nomination process, using trade press or other means deemed appropriate, and shall conduct outreach to all known organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors, and organic importers to generate nominees that reflect the range of operations within the organic industry. The Department may use local, state, or regional entities, mail or other methods to elicit potential nominees. The Department shall ensure that all eligible candidates are aware of the opportunity to serve on the Board. The Secretary shall select the members of the Board from the nominations submitted.

(c) Subsequent nominations shall be conducted as follows:

(1) The Board shall conduct outreach to all known organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors and organic importers by mailings to all certified entities on the USDA AMS list; by requesting that certifiers send information to all their certified entities; by using all the resources available to USDA including the Organic Insider and by any other means it seems appropriate. Organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors, organic importers, and non-voting at large candidates may submit nominations to the Secretary;

(2) Organic producer, organic producer-handler, organic handler, organic importer, organic product processor, and non-voting at large nominees shall provide the Secretary with a short background statement outlining their qualifications to serve on the Board. For the organic producer Board seats, nominees must specify where they farm, acreage farmed, gross organic sales, and the commodities grown on their farm;

(3) Nominees for organic producer seats may not hold multiple organic certificates (for handling and/or importing). Organic producer-handler, organic handler, organic importer, organic product processor, and non-voting at large nominees may hold multiple organic certificates (for production, handling, and/or importing) and may seek nomination to the Board for any non-producer seat for which they are qualified;

(5) For the Board seats allocated to organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors, the organic importer, and the non-voting at-large, nominees will submit applications directly to the Secretary;

(6) Any person nominated to serve on the Board shall file with the Secretary at the time of the nomination a background questionnaire;

(7) From the nominations made pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall appoint the members of the Board on the basis of representation provided in §12XX.40;

(8) No two members of the Board shall be employed by a single corporation, company, partnership or any other legal entity;

(9) The Board may recommend to the Secretary modifications to its nomination procedures as it deems appropriate. Any such modifications shall be implemented through rulemaking by the Secretary; and,

(10) The Board shall strive for diversity in its membership. This includes diversity that meets Equal Employment Opportunity requirements, as well as diversity among organic products based on the proportions of assessments paid, diversity among crop type, diversity among geographic regions, diversity among the segments represented in the supply chain, diversity in the size of operations, diversity in marketing expertise, and diversity in research experience.

#### §12XX.44 Procedure.

(a) A majority of the Board members shall constitute a quorum as long as at least 12 producer members are present.

(b) Each voting member of the Board shall be entitled to one vote on any matter put to the Board and the motion will carry only if supported by a majority of Board members, except for recommendations to change the assessment rate, change the Board composition, or to adopt a budget, both of which require affirmation by two-thirds of the total number of voting Board members.

(c) At an assembled meeting, all votes shall be cast in person.

(d) In lieu of voting at an assembled meeting and, when in the opinion of the chairperson of the Board such action is considered necessary, the Board may take action only if supported by a majority of members (unless two-thirds is required under the Order) by mail, telephone, electronic mail, facsimile, or any other means of communication. In that event, all members must be notified and provided the opportunity to vote. Any action so taken shall have the same force and effect as though such action had been taken at an assembled meeting. All votes shall be recorded in Board minutes.

(e) There shall be no proxy voting.

(f) Board meetings and any sub-committee meetings will be open to the public and all minutes from the meetings will be posted on the web within 15 business days. All Board meeting will have time allowed for public comment.

#### §12XX.45 Reimbursement and attendance.

Board members shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses, which may include a per diem allowance or actual subsistence allowance while working for the Board away from their homes or regular places of business as approved by the Board, which they incur when performing

Board business. For producer members, reimbursed reasonable travel expenses will include compensation for the hiring of temporary help to cover their work on the farm when performing Board business.

## EXPENSES AND ASSESSMENTS

### §12XX.50 Budget and expenses.

(a) At least 60 calendar days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, and as may be necessary thereafter, the Board shall prepare and submit to the Department a budget for the fiscal year covering its anticipated expenses and disbursements in administering this part. The budget for research, promotion or information may not be implemented prior to approval by the Secretary. Each such budget shall include:

- (1) A statement of objectives and strategy for each program, plan or project;
- (2) A summary of anticipated revenue, with comparative data for at least one preceding fiscal year, which shall not include the initial budget;
- (3) A summary of proposed expenditures for each program, plan or project. This shall include the following allocation of expenditures:
  - (i) The funds shall be allocated as follows: 65 percent for research, 20 percent for information, 10 percent for promotion, and 5 percent for discretionary funds; and
  - (ii) Of the funds allocated to research, no less than half shall be allocated to producer/farmer/ranchers who want to carryout organic research, demonstration, and education projects on their farms either individually or in groups. This research should take into account regional differences and priorities for producer-oriented research. Funds should be allocated equitably to reflect regional producer research needs.
  - (iii) Any expenditures designated for the categories set forth in (i) and (ii) of this section that are not spent in a fiscal year shall carry over for the same category for the following fiscal year.

(4) Staff and administrative expense breakdowns, with comparative data for at least one preceding fiscal year, except for the initial budget.

(a) Each budget shall provide adequate funds to defray its proposed expenditures and to provide for a reserve as set forth in this Order.

(b) Subject to this section, any amendment or addition to an approved budget must be approved by the Department, including shifting funds from one program, plan or project to another. Shifts of funds that do not result in an increase in the Board's approved budget and are consistent with governing bylaws need not have prior approval by the Department.

(c) The Board is authorized to incur such expenses, including provision for a reserve, as the Secretary finds reasonable and likely to be incurred by the Board for its maintenance and functioning, and to

enable it to exercise its powers and perform its duties in accordance with the provisions of this subpart. Such expenses shall be paid from funds received by the Board.

(d) With approval of the Department, the Board may borrow money for the payment of startup expenses subject to the same fiscal, budget, and audit controls as other funds of the Board. Any funds borrowed shall be expended only for startup costs and capital outlays and are limited to the first year of operation by the Board.

**(e) The Board will not accept voluntary contributions.**

**(f) The Board may also receive other funds provided through the Department with the approval of the Secretary, for authorized activities.**

(g) The Board shall reimburse the Secretary for all expenses incurred by the Secretary in the implementation, administration, enforcement and supervision of the Order, including all referendum costs in connection with the Order.

(h) For fiscal years beginning three years after the date of the establishment of the Board, the Board may not expend for administration, maintenance, and the functioning of the Board an amount **that is greater than 10 percent** of the assessment and other income received by and available to the Board for the fiscal year. For purposes of this limitation, reimbursements to the Secretary shall not be considered administrative costs.

(i) Any program, plan or project receiving funds under this section shall not expend for administration an amount that is **greater than 10 percent** of the total funds allocated to the program, plan or project.

(j) The Board may establish an operating monetary reserve and may carry over to subsequent fiscal years excess funds in any reserve so established: Provided, that, the funds in the reserve do not exceed one fiscal year's budget of expenses. Subject to approval by the Secretary, such reserve funds may be used to defray any expenses authorized under this subpart.

(k) Pending disbursement of assessments and all other revenue under a budget approved by the Secretary, the Board may invest assessments and all other revenues collected under this part in:

- (1) Obligations of the United States or any agency of the United States;
- (2) General obligations of any State or any political subdivision of a State;
- (3) Interest bearing accounts or certificates of deposit of financial institutions that are members of the Federal Reserve System;
- (4) Obligations fully guaranteed as to principal interest by the United States; or
- (5) Other investments as authorized by the Secretary.

#### §12XX.52 Assessments.

(a) The Board's programs and expenses shall be paid by assessments on assessed entities, other income of the Board, and other funds available to the Board.

(b) Subject to the offset specified in §12XX.54 each organic producer, organic producer-handler, organic handler and organic importer with gross organic revenue shall pay the following assessments to the Board. For organic producers that assessment will be paid by the organic handler from information they have on the Gross Organic Sales of the producer as prescribed in the 1996 Act:

(1) Organic producers and organic producer-handlers shall pay one-hundredth of one percent (.001%) of Gross Organic Sales.

(2) Organic handlers and product processors, shall pay an assessment starting at 0.01 % for those companies under \$1 million in gross organic sales, 0.1% for those companies between \$1-5 million, 1% for those between \$10 to 20 million and increasing to two percent (2%) for those over \$20 million in Gross Organic Sales of products that are certified to the “100% organic” or “organic” standard pursuant to 7 CFR § 205.301(a) and (b). Organic handlers and product processors shall pay an assessment of 70% of two percent (2%) of Gross Organic Sales of products that are certified to the “made with organic” standard pursuant to CFR § 205.301(c).

(3) Organic importers shall pay an assessment to the Board through Customs on organic products imported for marketing in the United States. Organic importers shall pay an assessment of two percent (2%) of Gross Organic Sales of products that are certified to the “100% organic” or “organic” standard pursuant to 7 CFR § 205.301(a) and (b). Organic importers shall pay an assessment of 70% of two percent (2%) of Gross Organic Sales of products that are certified to the “made with organic” standard pursuant to 7 CFR § 205.301(c). If Customs does not collect an assessment for the organic product from an organic importer, the organic importer is responsible for paying the assessment directly to the Board within 90 calendar days after the end of the quarter in which the organic products were imported.

OR (note two options for importers, subject to determination in consultation with Customs)

(3) Each importer of organic products shall pay through Customs to the Board an assessment of two percent (2%) of Gross Organic Sales on the organic product imported into the United States identified in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) numbers. The HTS is updated biannually and any updates published by the U.S. International Trade Commission will be considered effective immediately upon publication. Organic importers shall pay an assessment of 70% of two percent (2%) of Gross Organic Sales of products that are certified to the “made with organic” standard pursuant to 7 CFR § 205.301(c). The assessment on imported organic products shall be paid by the organic importer to Customs at the time of entry into the United States and shall be remitted by Customs to the Board. Importation occurs when organic products originating outside the United States are released from custody of Customs and introduced into the stream of commerce within the United States. Organic importers include persons who hold title to foreign organic products immediately upon release by Customs, as well as any persons who act on behalf of others, as agents, brokers, or consignees, to secure the release of organic product from Customs and the introduction of the released organic products into the current of commerce. If Customs does not collect an assessment from an organic importer, the organic importer is responsible for paying the assessment directly to the Board within 90 calendar days after the end of the quarter in which the organic products were imported.

(c) Each organic producer-handler, organic handler, and organic product processor shall remit to the Board the amount due no later than 60 days following the end of the year in which the organic product was produced or handled. Quarterly payments may be accepted.

(d) At least 24 months after the Order becomes effective and periodically thereafter, the Board shall review and may recommend to the Secretary, upon an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members of the Board, a change in the assessment rate. A change in the assessment rate is subject to rulemaking by the Secretary.

(e) When an organic producer-handler, organic handler, organic product processor or organic importer fails to pay the assessment within 60 calendar days of the date it is due, the Board may impose a late payment charge and interest. The late payment charge and rate of interest shall be prescribed in regulations issued by the Secretary. All late assessments shall be subject to the specified late payment charge and interest. Persons failing to remit total assessments due in a timely manner may also be subject to actions under federal debt collection procedures.

(f) The Board may accept advance payment of assessments from any organic producer-handler, organic handler, organic product processor or organic importer that will be credited toward any amount for which that person may become liable. The Board may not pay interest on any advance payment.

(g) If the Board is not in place by the date the first assessments are to be collected, the Secretary shall receive assessments and shall pay such assessments and any interest earned to the Board when it is formed.

§12XX.53 Voluntarily assessed entities.

*We propose to eliminate voluntarily assessed entities. Every organic certificate holder should have the right to and be required to participate in and have representation in a mandatory research and promotion order. A federally mandated program is designed to affect every level of the organic marketplace and every certificate holder should have the right to vote on establishing one and letting one continue. Our partial proposal outlines an assessment where small entities will be assessed at rates low enough not to cause financial hardship. Basing every assessment on Gross Organic Sales, reduces the administrative time and expertise required to meet the research and promotion order reporting requirements.*

## REPORTS, BOOKS, AND RECORDS

§12XX.70 Reports.

(a) Organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors and organic importers will be required to provide periodically to the Board such information as the Board, with the approval of the Secretary, may require. Such information will include:

- (1) For organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, and organic product processors:
  - (i) The name, address and telephone number of the assessed organic producer and/or producer-handler and/or organic handler and/or organic product processor and
  - (ii) The value of Gross Organic Sales of the organic products.

- (2) For organic importers:

- (i) The name, address and telephone number of the organic importer;
- (ii) The value of the gross organic sales of the organic products imported by type; and
- (iii) The country/countries of export.

(b) For organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, and organic product processors, such information shall be reported to the Board no later than 60 days following the end of the calendar year.

(c) For organic importers who pay their assessments directly to the Board, such information shall accompany the payment of collected assessments within 60 calendar days after the end of the year or the end of the quarter in which the organic product was imported specified in §12XX.XX.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### §12XX.80 Right of the Secretary.

All fiscal matters, programs, plans or projects, contracts, rules or regulations, reports, or other substantive actions proposed and prepared by the Board shall be submitted to the Secretary for approval.

### §12XX.81 Referenda.

(a) Initial referendum. The Order shall not become effective unless the Order is approved by a majority of eligible voters voting in the referendum. A single eligible voter may cast one vote in the referendum. Bloc voting shall be prohibited.

(b) Subsequent referenda. Every seven years, the Department shall hold a referendum to determine whether assessed entities favor the continuation, suspension, or termination of the Order. The Order shall continue if it is favored by a majority of the assessed entities voting. The Department will also conduct a referendum if 10 percent or more of all assessed entities request the Department to hold a referendum. Bloc voting shall be prohibited.

## Subpart B—Referendum Procedures

### §12XX.100 General.

Referenda to determine whether eligible organic producers, organic producer-handlers, organic handlers, organic product processors and organic importers favor the issuance, continuance, amendment, suspension, or termination of the Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic shall be conducted in accordance with this subpart.

### §12XX.101 Definitions.

For the purposes of this subpart:

(a) Administrator means the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, with power to delegate, or any officer or employee of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to whom authority has been delegated or may hereafter be delegated to act in the Administrator's stead.

(b) Organic product means any product produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501-6522), and any amendments thereto.

(c) Customs or CBP means the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, an agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

(d) Department means the U.S. Department of Agriculture or any officer or employee of the Department to whom authority has heretofore been delegated, or to whom authority may hereafter be delegated, to act in the Secretary's stead.

(e) Eligible voter means any person who is currently (i) an organic producer, organic producer-handler, organic handler, organic product processor, or organic importer that either has gross organic revenue in organic products during the representative period. Any person that holds multiple organic certificates (i.e. for both production and handling) will be allowed only one vote.

(f) Eligible importer means any person who is currently an organic importer with gross organic revenue of organic products during the representative period as a principal or as an agent, broker, or consignee of any person who produced or handled organic products outside of the United States for sale in the United States, and who is listed as the importer of record for such organic products. Importation occurs when organic products outside of the United States is released from custody by Customs and introduced into the stream of commerce in the United States. Included are persons who hold title to foreign-manufactured organic products immediately upon release by Customs, as well as any persons who act on behalf of others, as agents or brokers, to secure the release of organic products from Customs when such organic products is entered or withdrawn for use in the United States.

(g) Order means the Generic Research and Promotion Order for Organic.

(h) Person means any individual, group of individuals, partnership, corporation, association, cooperative, or any other legal entity. For the purpose of this definition, the term "partnership" includes, but is not limited to:

(1) A husband and a wife who have title to, or leasehold interest in organic production, organic handling or organic import entity as tenants in common, joint tenants, tenants by the entirety, or, under community property laws, as community property; and

(2) So called "joint ventures" wherein one or more parties to an agreement, informal or otherwise, contributed land, facilities, capital, labor, management, equipment, or other services, or any variation of such contributions by two or more parties, so that it results in the production, handling or importation of organic products and the authority to transfer title to the organic products.

(i) Referendum agent or agent means the individual or individuals designated by the Secretary to conduct the referendum.



(j) Representative period means the period designated by the Department.

(k) United States means collectively the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States.

§12XX.102 Voting.

**(a) The Department will use the USDA AMS National Organic Program database of organic certificate holders and mail a ballot to each certificate holder with a stamped return address envelope. The Department will instruct certifiers to mail a ballot to all the entities it certifies. All ballots will be cast by mail directly to the Department. Voter will be instructed to fill out the ballot and place the finished ballot in an envelope with the word “Ballot” on it. That envelope with the word Ballot on it will be placed into a stamped addressed envelope that contains the returned mailing address of the voter and who they are certified by and mailed to the Department.**

(b) Proxy voting is not authorized, but an officer or employee of an eligible voter, or an administrator, executor, or trustee of an eligible voter may cast a ballot on behalf of such entity. Any individual so voting in a referendum shall certify that such individual is an officer or employee of the eligible voter, or an administrator, executive, or trustee of an eligible entity and that such individual has the authority to take such action. Upon request of the referendum agent, the individual shall submit adequate evidence of such authority.

(c) A single eligible voter may cast one vote in the referendum.

**(d) All ballots are to be cast by mail and will be anonymous, as instructed by the Department.**

§12XX.103 Instructions.

The referendum agent shall conduct the referendum, in the manner provided in this subpart, under the supervision of the Administrator. The Administrator may prescribe additional instructions, consistent with the provisions of this subpart, to govern the procedure to be followed by the referendum agent. Such agent shall:

(a) Determine the period during which ballots may be cast;

**(b) Provide ballots and related material to be used in the referendum. The related material will at least include information from those proposing the referendum and those opposing it to ensure that the vote has all the information in one mailing.**

(c) Give reasonable public notice of the referendum:

**(1) By using available media or public information sources, including paid advertising. Such sources of publicity may include, but are not limited to, print and radio; and**

**(2) By such other means as the agent may deem advisable, including holding outreach educational meeting on the proposal to be voted on in different parts of the country, especially in those rural areas that lack internet connectivity.**

(d) The Secretary must provide public notice of instructions on voting and a summary of the terms and conditions of the proposed Order. All eligible voters will receive by mail a ballot. No person who claims to be eligible to vote shall be refused a ballot;

(e) At the end of the voting period, collect, open, number, and review the ballots and tabulate the results in the presence of an agent of a third party authorized to monitor the referendum process. In opening the envelopes the outside mailing envelope will be checked first to ensure that it has been mailed by an eligible voter and the envelope with the ballot in will be placed in a separate pile and opened by someone different from who opened the mailing envelope to ensure that all votes cast are anonymous;

(f) Prepare a report on the referendum; and

(g) Announce the results to the public within 60 days of the end of the voting period.

(h) The Secretary must implement the decision of the referendum within 60 days of declaring the result of the referendum

#### §12XX.105 Ballots.

The referendum agent and subagents shall accept all ballots cast. However, if an agent or subagent deems that a ballot should be challenged for any reason, the agent or subagent shall endorse above their signature, on the ballot, a statement to the effect that such ballot was challenged, by whom challenged, the reasons therefore, the results of any investigations made with respect thereto, and the disposition thereof. Ballots invalid under this subpart shall not be counted unless the result will be impacted by these ballots.

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
1	2013-08-04	1 Edward	Maltby	MA	01342	Yes	WE neither want nor need a federally mandated organic check-off As far as I am concerned the conventional check-off put small family farms out of business. We don't need a catchy slogan like "GOT ORGANIC MILK"!!!!!! The research will more than likely lead to organic GMO's??????
2	2013-08-05	2 George	Wright jr.	NY	13652	Yes	
3	2013-08-05	2 Liz	Bawden	NY	13646	Yes	
4	2013-08-05	2 Cindy-Lou	Amey	NH	03592	Yes	Please understand that this is a serious issue for us and we will not let it go.
5	2013-08-10	1 Janet a	baker	WA	98022	Yes	I want to emphasize that the Organic Trade Association does not represent my views. I resent the fact that they claim to represent organic farmers, when it is processors that they really represent.
6	2013-08-10	1 Klaas	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
7	2013-08-16	1 Lia	Babitch	NY	12516	Yes	
8	2013-08-16	1 Jerry	Snyder	NY	14803	Yes	
9	2013-08-16	1 Fred	Griffen	NY	13040	Yes	
10	2013-08-16	1 Kerry	Planck-Beiter	NY	14139	Yes	
11	2013-08-16	1 Louis	Lego	NY	13021	Yes	We are a part of a check-off program like this with the Apple Association, and it is a disaster that is costing us business as well as the collection fees. Please do not do this to us!
12	2013-08-16	1 John	Stoltzfus	ny	14897	Yes	I ship to organic valley and I do not want them to put a yes vote in for our farm Check-offs don't work period. The only research ever done by conventional check-offs only benefitted the Family Factory farms. Little farms were forced out of business. George Wright
13	2013-08-16	1 George	Wright jr.	NY	13652	Yes	
14	2013-08-16	1 Deborah	Muntner	NY	14527	No	Though I am not a certified organic farmer, I am a small scale farmer practicing sustainable organic management of my vegetable and laying hen operation. I do not think the organic check-off program would benefit me nor any of the small scale organic farmers in my region.
15	2013-08-16	1 Lyman	hill	NY	14477	Yes	
16	2013-08-16	1 Shannon	Ratcliff	NY	14891	Yes	
17	2013-08-16	1 Robert	VanWuyckhuys	NY	14477	Yes	I already am coaxed into the Beef Check Off program. I am a small farm and these programs seem to lean to support the larger farms and not so with small family farms. I am against it.. I advertise for me. I am responsible for me. Kind of like throwing good money into the wind .... I would rather I do my own shouting. The beef check off is always calling and reminding me to send them money and I'm like "What have they done for me, Directly for me?" Us small farms need to stick together, not link up with a large corporation type outfit. Keep it Local - Buy Local - Spend Local Our family farm has been certified for twenty years. This is not something along with our certification fees, the time to keep an audit trail, and the paperwork records we keep already that needs to be added on to our burden. Nor should it be added on to our customer costs that already pay a premium for our product and we are not subsidized.
18	2013-08-16	1 Michael	Makinajian	NY	11743	Yes	
19	2013-08-16	1 Kurt	Forman	NY	14522	Yes	

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
20	2013-08-16 1	Nicholas	Martielli	NY	11743	Yes	
							i grew potatoes for 40 years and paid an assesment to the national potato promotion board. the only ones that benefited were thoes working for the board, wrote the aids, or got free trips to the conventions. it did not help the price at all. just check last years whole sale potato prices. they were the same as they were in 1975,here on long island!
21	2013-08-16 1	david	wines	n y	11901	Yes	
22	2013-08-16 2	matthias	reisen	NY	14809	Yes	
23	2013-08-17 0	Lawrie	Nickerson	NY	12090	Yes	
24	2013-08-17 1	John	Shaw	NY	13081	Yes	
							We are already in a deficit situation for most larger-scale organic crops in the United States. An organic checkoff program that includes ANY money spent on promotion will only serve to increase organic imports. Therefore, organic imports alone should be assessed through a checkoff, and American organic farmers should not be penalized with additional taxation.
25	2013-08-17 1	Mary-Howell	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
26	2013-08-17 1	Klaas	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
27	2013-08-17 1	Peter	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
28	2013-08-18 0	Diane	Kistler	NY	13637	Yes	NO Check OFF!
29	2013-08-18 0	Jonathan	Kistler	NY	13637	Yes	Keep out of our milk Checks!
							Whether certified or not, farmers who farm with organic methods and practices represent the antithesis of an economy that centralizes production and distribution, and dilutes the little profits that come to farmers by giving it away to others who do not produce the food. My neighbors are largely dairy farmers (some of them organic), and they struggle with the system to stay in business. Keep the "system" out of organics. Organics will become meaningless if it goes corporate.
30	2013-08-18 0	Daniel	Sullivan	NY	13439	Yes	
31	2013-08-18 1	Nora	Owens	MA	01342	Yes	
32	2013-08-18 1	Amigo	Cantisano	CA	95960	Yes	
33	2013-08-18 1	john	toltzfu	ny	14897	Yes	never have this
34	2013-08-18 1	Duane	Hoeft	MN	55936	No	I do not know if I want to go into organic farming if have do this. Duane olymiss farm.
35	2013-08-18 1	Wade	Bulman	WI	54747	Yes	
36	2013-08-18 2	William	Larchar	NY	13411	Yes	
37	2013-08-18 2	Kathie	Arnold	NY	13158	Yes	
38	2013-08-18 2	Andy	Smith	ME	04358	Yes	
39	2013-08-18 2	lydia	vorsteveld	vt	05734	Yes	
40	2013-08-18 2	Chris	Dunham	Ca	92673	No	
41	2013-08-19 0	Jackelyn	Worden	NY	13865	Yes	
42	2013-08-19 0	Sue	Rau	NY	13662	Yes	

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
43	2013-08-19 0	Rita	LaBarge	NY	13612	Yes	I must say that the only people who will benefit from this program are the Advertising Agencies and the large companies that sell organic. I thought that our government was trying to encourage small business and locally grown food. Let the local farmers do their own marketing!
44	2013-08-19 0	Jeanine	Huber	NY	14883	Yes	
45	2013-08-19 1	James & Pat	Sharpless	NY	14489	Yes	
46	2013-08-19 1	Diana	Saxton	NY	14775	Yes	I do NOT support an organic check off!! I think it is just a way to snatch our hard earned dollars. The potential for misuse of funds and more corporate involvement/corruption/control in our government is too great with this type of program.
47	2013-08-20 0	Susan	Yerry	NY	12871	Yes	
48	2013-08-20 1	julia	widdowson	NY	12545	Yes	
49	2013-08-20 1	doug	dittman	NE	68428	Yes	I'm a certified organic dairy farmer from NE and it's frustrating to see how we family farmers pay into checkoffs with the result of systematic loss of market share. I am opposed to the organic checkoff.
50	2013-08-21 1	Katy	Green	ME	04915	Yes	
51	2013-08-22 1	John	Nord	MD	21842	No	I am looking for land to be an organic farmer. It would be nice if the word identifier, "Organic", could be commonly understood to be of great value to the eating public and to the global method of production of food stuffs. And any and all efforts to diminish the weight and meaning of said word would be abolished. We the people deserve as much. Wheather one identifies himself as being religious or not, the truth of this holy word is self evident. The word's value and practical usage goes way beyond the evil manipulations of the old crowd to dilute and diminish its God given worth to better mankind and to enhance this good earth.
52	2013-08-24 1	Terry	Shistar	KS	66047	No	
53	2013-08-25 2	Jessica	Runge	NY	14723	Yes	
54	2013-08-27 1	John	Accornero	IL	62294-3	Yes	
55	2013-08-27 1	Janet	Morse	IL	61560	Yes	
56	2013-08-27 1	Jeff	Glazik	IL	60957	Yes	
57	2013-08-27 1	Rita	Glazik	IL	60057	Yes	
58	2013-08-27 1	Steve	Shank	IL	62246	No	
59	2013-08-27 1	Jack	Erisman	IL	62557	Yes	
60	2013-08-27 1	Tim	Clay	IL	61018	Yes	We do not want a check-off!!!!!!!
61	2013-08-27 1	Molly	Breslin	IL	61350	Yes	
62	2013-08-27 1	Theodore	Weydert	IL	60151	Yes	OTA does not represent me. This is their scheme to tax farmers without our voice. Leave the farmer out of this.
63	2013-08-27 1	John	Downey	Ill.	61231	Yes	
64	2013-08-27 2	Carmen	Fernholz	MN	56256	Yes	

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
65	2013-08-27 2	Darrell	Parks	KS	66502	Yes	
66	2013-08-27 2	Charles	Lambert	Il.	60914	Yes	I agree with the a above petition. I am involved also with a conventional non gmo farm and I find that most checkoffs are a manipulated waste of hard earned money
67	2013-08-28 1	Lou	Stephenson	IN	46947	Yes	My view is the money will go to support research and marketing for big corporations and not to benefit the farmer.
68	2013-08-28 2	Jim	Christensen	Wi.	53549	Yes	
69	2013-08-29 0	James	Quick	WI	54941	Yes	
70	2013-08-29 0	Lewis	Prow	IN	47320	Yes	
71	2013-08-29 1	Paul	Olson	WI	54659	Yes	Organic farming is the only way we want to farm. It is alot of work and time consuming paperwork and trails. It was our decision to go organic and we have enough fees to pay--we don't need or want another mandated checkoff!
72	2013-08-29 1	Richard	Wiegand	IL	61739	Yes	I do agree with the above information.
73	2013-08-29 2	charles	rinehart	IN	47882	Yes	
74	2013-08-30 0	Clayton	McAlpine	MT	59486	Yes	
75	2013-08-30 1	Randall	Willrett	IL	60150	Yes	Until we have FAIR representation on the NOP board, (some current board members have corporate interests influencing their decisions), will I support a checkoff.
76	2013-08-30 1	james	chalmers	pa	16922	Yes	
77	2013-08-30 1	Daniel	Coehoorn	WI	54974	Yes	Organic is a production method, not a commodity . Please don't force organic producers into this system. I believe that organic is a production method and I don't want it to become another commodity without adequate returns to the producer. OTA is representing the processing industry on this issue, they have left the best interests of the organic producer in the dust. Processors already get a make allowance, let them advertise the end product, we produce a raw material.
78	2013-08-30 1	Darlene	Coehoorn	WI	54974	Yes	
79	2013-08-31 1	Bill	Jessup	CA	92274	Yes	
80	2013-08-31 1	Paul	Cultrera	CA	95818	No	
81	2013-08-31 1	Qayyum	Johnson	CA	94965	Yes	I am strongly opposed to further taxation measures aimed at exploiting organic farmers. I do not trust the USDA to further sustainable agriculture in this country, no do I find their advertising campaigns to be a beneficial use of farmers' money. The evidence does not point to the effectiveness nor sincerity of these kinds of Check-Off programs & it is clear that small & medium-sized producers will be the most affected & least benefited by the program.
82	2013-08-31 1	Frank	Morton	OR	97370	Yes	I don't need or want an organic promotional program, and I don't want to pay for one.
83	2013-08-31 1	Floyd	Johnson	IL	62560	Yes	
84	2013-08-31 1	Anne	Schwartz	WA	98283	Yes	I have witnessed how marketing orders in WA state have been hurting farmers for decades. I have watched national businesses assume most of the control of OTA, their efforts to grow organics will pad their pockets. there is no proof these programs help farmers. I am opposed to an organic marketing order.

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
85	2013-08-31 2	Sara	Tashker	CA	9465	Yes	
86	2013-09-01 0	alex	dragovich	OH	44662	Yes	No more extra taxation of organic farmers: we already have to pay for the costs of annual certification, fees based on our gross sales, in our case CCOF and fees to the State of California for being organic! Organic farmers, the group that is farming in a more environmentally friendly manner has to pay more? for the privilege not to spray conventional pesticides or use conventional fertilizers? The existing fees and taxation to be organic are no way to encourage more organic farming. another tax to be organic is perverse! This is a cleverly conceived campaign to squeeze more money out of organic farmers for the corporations that see organic as a good marketing ploy.
87	2013-09-01 1	dale	coke	CA	95045	Yes	
88	2013-09-01 1	Michael	Braga	CA	93637	Yes	
89	2013-09-01 1	Peter	Eichorn	CA	93923	Yes	
90	2013-09-02 0	MIKE	JERKOVICH	CA	93630	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•As an organic farmer I do NOT want to be further taxed with an Organic Check-Off Program.</li> <li>•I do NOT support a federally mandated Organic Check-Off program</li> <li>•I do not want my pay check cut either directly from paying into an Organic Check-Off or indirectly because my customer/buyer has to pay into one.</li> <li>•I do not want to be forced to pay into a federally mandated check-off program.</li> <li>•I want to have the freedom to decide how I spend my hard earned dollars.</li> <li>•I oppose an organic check-off because I do not trust the USDA Federal Research and Promotion Programs due to problems in oversight and because money is spent on programs that do not benefit on-farm research or improving my bottom line. In fact, the history of Federal Research and Promotion Programs shows that they have actually worked to reduce farmers' profitability.</li> <li>•Check-off funds are used to pay for marketing campaigns such as the "Got Milk?" and "Pork, The Other White Meat" or "The Incredible Edible Egg." This advertising primarily benefits processors, marketers and retailers, not the farmers—but we farmers are stuck paying the bills!</li> <li>•The Organic Trade Association does not represent me on this issue.</li> <li>•I DO want farmers to be able to continue to be exempt from paying into conventional programs and I DO want that exemption to be extended to all operations that are organically certified.</li> </ul>
91	2013-09-02 0	susan	pelican	CA	95695	Yes	Susan Pelican, Woodland, CA

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•As an organic farmer I do NOT want to be further taxed with an Organic Check-Off Program.</li> <li>•I do NOT support a federally mandated Organic Check-Off program</li> <li>•I do not want my pay check cut either directly from paying into an Organic Check-Off or indirectly because my customer/buyer has to pay into one.</li> <li>•I do not want to be forced to pay into a federally mandated check-off program.</li> <li>•I want to have the freedom to decide how I spend my hard earned dollars.</li> <li>•I oppose an organic check-off because I do not trust the USDA Federal Research and Promotion Programs due to problems in oversight and because money is spent on programs that do not benefit on-farm research or improving my bottom line. In fact, the history of Federal Research and Promotion Programs shows that they have actually worked to reduce farmers' profitability.</li> <li>•Check-off funds are used to pay for marketing campaigns such as the "Got Milk?" and "Pork, The Other White Meat" or "The Incredible Edible Egg." This advertising primarily benefits processors, marketers and retailers, not the farmers—but we farmers are stuck paying the bills!</li> <li>•The Organic Trade Association does not represent me on this issue.</li> <li>•I DO want farmers to be able to continue to be exempt from paying into conventional programs and I DO want that exemption to be extended to all operations that are organically certified.</li> </ul>
92	2013-09-02 0	Howard	beeman	CA	95949	Yes	
93	2013-09-02 0	Jim	Eldon	CA	95606	Yes	
94	2013-09-02 1	Chris	Hay	CA	95695	Yes	
95	2013-09-02 1	Dan	Gannon	CA	95818	Yes	
96	2013-09-02 1	Steve	Peters	CA	94402	Yes	
97	2013-09-02 1	warren	weber	CA	94924	Yes	
98	2013-09-02 1	Rachel	Petitt	ca	95616	Yes	
99	2013-09-02 1	Lily	Schneider	CA	94534	Yes	
100	2013-09-02 1	Ken	Ratzlaff	Ca	95472	No	<p>I am an organic processor and can not afford to pay more to do organic juice and it is not fare to the customer to have to pay so much more. We do not need more taxes. The money should go back to the farmers to help them not to big business.</p> <p>We do not need the government to charge us for marketing that does not help the local small farmer directly.</p>
101	2013-09-02 1	Bennett	Lyons	CA	95688	Yes	
102	2013-09-02 1	john	teixeira	CA	93622	Yes	
103	2013-09-02 2	Emma	Torbert	CA	95616	Yes	<p>Please do not pass this bill!</p> <p>These attempts to garner funds and to out-regulate organics is an attempt to force organic producers out of the market place.</p>
104	2013-09-02 2	Ruthanne	jahoda	CA	95603	Yes	
105	2013-09-02 2	Katie	Koch	CA	95616	No	
106	2013-09-03 0	Daniel	Paduano	CA	95033	Yes	<p>This is a raw deal for small farmers. Our markets are hyper-local and in no way would benefit from a national campaign. How about working on less government overhead (specifically the completely bogus tax we pay to "register" each year with CDFA on top of paying CCOF for Organic Certification), rather than adding another level of nonsense? Thank you for your consideration,</p> <p>Daniel</p>



Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
107	2013-09-03 1	Erika	Janik	WI	53092	No	
108	2013-09-03 1	PETE	WOLF	CA	93630	Yes	
109	2013-09-03 1	clifford	fong	ca	95695	Yes	
110	2013-09-03 2	Robert	Keatley	WI	54022	Yes	Our cost of production is high enough with out adding a check off tax. I am adamantly opposed to this. Nothing in this proposal will help the small farmer struggling to survive.
111	2013-09-04 1	Pat	Herbert	CA	95023	Yes	
112	2013-09-04 1	Patti	Herbert	CA	95023	Yes	
113	2013-09-06 1	Tamara	Hicks	Ca	94971	Yes	
114	2013-09-06 1	Susan	Young	CA	94945	No	
115	2013-09-06 1	David	Minar	mn	56071	Yes	
116	2013-09-06 1	Melya	Stylos	CA	94901	Yes	
117	2013-09-06 1	Jennifer	Jorgensen	CA	94920	No	
118	2013-09-06 1	Maryann	Nardo	CA	94901	No	
119	2013-09-06 1	Bea	Agins	CA	94960	No	
120	2013-09-06 1	Trinka	Marris	CA	94956	No	I have a small organic garden, but rely for food mostly on the local, organic farmers that live in my area. I encourage policies that help the small farmer...not hinder them.
121	2013-09-06 1	Chris	Ducey	CA	94973	Yes	We should be supporting organic farming with as much effort as we have been agribusiness interests for decades. It's time to replenish a safer, more locally available, sustainable farming model Which is better for our land and people.
122	2013-09-06 1	Malcolm	Booth	CA	95472	No	As a consumer of organic produce this program will increase cost and provide no benefit. I'm against it and urge you not to institute it.
123	2013-09-06 1	Angela	KEARY	CA	94915	No	I oppose the organic check off system proposed by the USDA
124	2013-09-06 1	AMy	Weber	CA	94924	Yes	
125	2013-09-06 1	Monique	Tse	CA	94960	No	
126	2013-09-06 1	Elizabeth	Fenwick	CA	94937	No	The farmers do not benefit from this I oppose it
127	2013-09-06 1	judy	north	CA	94963	Yes	
128	2013-09-06 1	annika	miller	ca	94941	No	
129	2013-09-06 1	Sarah	Koenig	CA	94901	No	

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							What a bad idea to tax real farming that sustains the soil and ecosystem, nurtures community and genetic diversity and brings fresh local, healthy food to families. Organic farmers already bear the economic burden of certification... Which I do not do, though I have shunned pesticides and herbicides, clear my land with goats, and am bio dynamically trained. Please don't put one more burden on organic growers. Who asked organic farmers if they want this additional tax? It will make organic food even less affordable in the US. Given the lack of any farm bill support for organic farming this year, this smacks of extermination of competition. Industrial, corporate agribusiness has already forced thru laws which banned farmers from saving their own seeds even in Europe and now are doing this in Puerto Rico, Argentina, Colombia. There are demonstrations worldwide asking that even small farms retain any sovereign food rights. There is an appalling tyranny of people's rights to grow their own food and share it within their communities, worldwide. Please don't pound one more nail in the coffin of organic farming and folks rights to grow and share their own food. Stop this tax.
130	2013-09-06 1	Jessica	Denning	CA	95608	Yes	
131	2013-09-06 1	Tracey	Van Hooser	CA	94920	No	
132	2013-09-06 1	Susan	Zelinsky	Ca	94901	No	I buy from local farmers and choose to support their efforts in growing foods safe from pesticides. Please support them, too. Sincerely, Susan Zelinsky
133	2013-09-06 1	francesca	kennedy	ca	94901	No	
134	2013-09-06 1	Chris	Borjian	CA	94930	No	
135	2013-09-06 1	Melinda	Suelflow	MN	55603	No	As an organic consumer and gardener, I value deeply the organic farmers that grow the food that I eat. I do not believe that a federal check-off program paid for with increased taxes will benefit organic growers. And I definitely don't trust the USDA Federal Research and Promotions Program to spend such funds wisely.
136	2013-09-06 1	Eleanor	Lyman	CA	94924	Yes	
137	2013-09-06 1	Mary	Osier	CA	94960	No	
138	2013-09-06 1	Nina	Katz	CA	94960	No	
139	2013-09-06 1	Christine	Edmond	CA	94901	Yes	I am a back-yard farmer, but I support my local Farmer's Market providers, most of whom provide Organically grown produce.
140	2013-09-06 1	david	bernard	ca	94963	Yes	
141	2013-09-06 1	Brooke	Barnhart	CA	94118	No	
142	2013-09-06 1	Framcesca	Fifis	CA	95476	No	This legislation endangers our health by making organic food less accessible to people who need it most.
143	2013-09-06 1	Janet	Sluis	Ca	94705	No	
144	2013-09-06 1	Louise	Hassan	CA	95476	No	I purchase organic produce at our local Farmer's Market each week. This would be an unnecessary burden on our local farmers.
145	2013-09-06 1	Erika	Hoytt	CA	94947	No	I volunteer locally with several organic ag non-profit organizations. SMALL local ag is very important to me, my children, and my grandchildren.
146	2013-09-06 1	Mindy	Marin	CA	94924	No	

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147	2013-09-06 1	Sarah	Kaplan	CA	94920	No	
148	2013-09-06 1	Kyle	Turner	CA	94925	No	
149	2013-09-06 1	Rika	Gopinath	Ca	94903	Yes	
150	2013-09-06 1	Smol	Kristen	Ca	94901	No	As a consumer of organic produce and goods, I say NO to any increased tax on these goods, especially when the check-off tax goes into a general fund with minimal regulation, and which has the commercial- not the organic farmer in mind.
151	2013-09-06 1	Richard	Saxe	CA	95004	No	To saddle organic farmers with supporting this type of program is a very bad idea and hampers small businesses that are the backbone of our local economies. Thank you for your consideration.
152	2013-09-06 1	Pamela	Johnson	CA	94939	Yes	No check-off program!
153	2013-09-06 1	daniel	altman	ca	94941	Yes	
154	2013-09-06 1	Nina	B	CA	94952	No	
155	2013-09-06 1	Mark	Swoiskin	CA	94941	Yes	Organic farmers should not be subject to an additional bureaucratic fee for every product they sell. It is not easy to be an organic farmer and this is a totally unnecessary constraint on them. Also they do not need to be supporting someone else's marketing campaigns. I simply don't trust the USDA on this.
156	2013-09-06 1	Rosemary	De Sanna	CA	94904	No	
157	2013-09-06 1	SHANNON	PIGOTT	CA	94904	No	
158	2013-09-06 1	Andrea	Brodkin	CA	90405	No	
159	2013-09-06 1	Jill	moore	ca	94924	No	
160	2013-09-06 1	sarah	domenico	ca	94612	No	Please stop compromising the integrity of healthful food by succumbing to corporate pressure. Got a conscience?
161	2013-09-06 1	Saskia	Horn	CA	94574	No	
162	2013-09-06 1	Jacque	Bibeau	CA	94960	No	
163	2013-09-06 1	molli	milner	ca	94937	No	How can anyone sleep at night knowing they are making good, safe food harder for more people to get???
164	2013-09-06 1	Alex	Altman	CA	94941	No	
165	2013-09-06 1	John	Levy	CA	94937	No	I am a strong supporter of local organic farmers, whose interests are not furthered by the proposed Federal checkoff. The Organic Trade Association is not a representative of these small organic farmers, or of my interests as an organic produce consumer.
166	2013-09-06 1	Moreva	Selchie	CA	94937	No	
167	2013-09-06 1	Canice	Flanagan	CA	94109	No	
168	2013-09-06 1	Sheryl	Ott	CA	94920	No	
169	2013-09-06 1	Nancy	Pimentel	CA	95345	No	
170	2013-09-06 1	Sigrid	Stroes	CA	94903	No	
171	2013-09-06 1	Erin	Albachten	Ca	94930	No	

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172	2013-09-06	1 Gina	Bradley	CA	91361	No	
173	2013-09-06	1 Deborah	Ziarten	CA	94609	No	
174	2013-09-06	1 DJ	Niccolls	CA	94142	No	
175	2013-09-06	1 Melissa	Baca	CA	92879	No	I am a mother of 4 and do have my own organic garden. I support organic farmers and I do not want to pay into federal programs when I buy organic products.
176	2013-09-06	1 Rose	Dallal	CA	96088	Yes	
177	2013-09-06	1 Linda	Riebel	ca	94549	Yes	
178	2013-09-06	1 Shannon	Bollman	CA	94949	No	
179	2013-09-06	1 Brenda	Balanda	CA	94937	No	
180	2013-09-06	1 nils	langenborg	ca	95409	Yes	This is an absurd program. Please give farmers a voice!!
181	2013-09-06	1 Mark	Dowie	CA	94956	Yes	
182	2013-09-06	1 Pam	Fabry	CA	94924	No	
183	2013-09-06	1 Dexter	Carmichael	CA	94110	No	No taxation of organic farmers without their majority representation on the Organic Trade Organization.
184	2013-09-06	1 Lynn	Gutstadt	ca	90066	No	Stop the march of big farming stomping on the rights and profits of independent organic farmers!
185	2013-09-06	1 Ellen	Obstler	CA	94901	No	I'm an organic farmer consumer and supporter.
186	2013-09-06	1 Julie	Kastrup	CA	94904	No	Organic farmers do not make that much anyway. I do not think it is fair or right for them to be forced to give part of their hard earned income for this program.
187	2013-09-06	1 David	Weckler	CA	94941	Yes	Legitimate organic farmers already spend a lot of money and take a lot of care to grow their crops organically. Don't charge them for marketing they neither want nor need.
188	2013-09-06	1 Elizabeth	DeRuff	CA	94957	Yes	
189	2013-09-06	1 Mary Ann	Petro	CA	94937	No	Small farmers are opressed enough trying to provide good food in their local areas. They should NOT be taxed on the produce they sell. Keep big Brother out of Organic Farming! Mary Ann Petro, Inverness, CA
190	2013-09-06	1 Alan	Martin	CA	94960	No	
191	2013-09-06	1 Janet	Brown	CA	94973	Yes	I oppose the proposed organic check-off program. Please do not further tax organic farmers who are subject to many taxes, fees, inspections, and expenses that other farmers do not have to pay. It's really unfair that the most benign form of agriculture is also the most heavily regulated. I have many friends who are organic farmers. Their efforts to grow healthy food naturally should be rewarded, not taxed for marketing over which they have little or no say. The UNDP's report on Food Security globally says the US should immediately adopt major policies to support the growth of organic foods in our country. It is time to reverse the course of big agriculture's insensitivity to a healthy ecosystem and adopt some sweeping policies to support and reward organic farmers for their contribution to true food security.
192	2013-09-06	1 M.	Baker	VA	22901	No	
193	2013-09-06	1 Linda	Emme	CA	94940	No	

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194	2013-09-06	1. Elizabeth	OHara	CA	95678	No	
195	2013-09-06	1. Joanna	Rosenfeld	CA	94972	No	
196	2013-09-06	1. Christine	Murphy	CA	90046	No	
197	2013-09-06	1. Steve	Woodward	CA	94930	No	
198	2013-09-06	1. kim	janson	ca	94930	Yes	
199	2013-09-06	1. Marjorie	Miller	IN	47037	Yes	Just say NO to the Corporatization of Organic Food. USDA's Organic program caters to General Mills, Kellogg, Kraft, ConAgra, Dean, Danone, Smuckers, Coke, Pepsi, and Mars--NOT the small, sustainable Organic farmer or the Local Distribution systems.
200	2013-09-06	1. Jenni	Anselment	MN	55614	No	
201	2013-09-06	1. Tammy	Sill	PA	19606	No	As a consumer of organic products, this Check Off proposal is completely unwarranted. What the organic industry truly needs to provide more healthy food to all US citizens is an end to the federal subsidy of non-organic corn and soybeans, and support to connect the underserved communities where "food deserts" exist that lack fresh produce with the abundant local organic produce that could nourish these residents.
202	2013-09-06	1. Kim	Baenisch	CA	94901	No	
203	2013-09-06	1. Elena	Freeman	CA	94947	No	Government funding should be supporting, not penalizing organic farmers.
204	2013-09-06	1. Cynthia	Sawtell	CA	94960	No	I am an organic CONSUMER who directly supports her local farmers by buying their meat, produce and dairy products. Big Ag has cornered the market on subsidies and influence. Let's not punish small farmers who dare to farm the old-fashioned, sustainable way.
205	2013-09-06	1. dennis	dierks	ca	94924	Yes	Small organic farmers should not be charged to support large agra business operations.
206	2013-09-06	1. Gerald	Gass	CA	94953	No	
207	2013-09-06	1. CA	Lonergan	CA	94602	No	I buy organic produce EXCLUSIVELY, despite a higher cost, to encourage the industry and to help get prices lowered so more folks can afford to ignore factory farming... You need to broadcast this campaign more extensively than just Marin Organics mailing list! You need to leverage social media right away to get your word out: open a fb page, so everyone can "like" you; open a twitter acct, so folks can "Pssst! Pass it on!" - like ye olde hand-written notes passed around in class, in the olden days. Get young people who understand social media to help you! :-)--Oakland fan of Marin Organic; consumer of Marin Sun Farms products :-)
208	2013-09-06	1. kim	burggraf	ca	94930	No	I'm with you!
209	2013-09-06	1. Helen	Barton	CA	94941	No	
210	2013-09-06	1. kimberly	wheat	CA	94941	No	
211	2013-09-06	1. Marion	Reyes	CA	91307	No	
212	2013-09-06	1. Ellen	Finestone	CA	94903	No	
213	2013-09-06	1. Ronna	Reed	CA	94941	Yes	
214	2013-09-06	1. Danielle	Andrews	ca	94973	No	
215	2013-09-06	1. Lynne	Frame	CA	94941	No	

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216	2013-09-06 1	John	Wick	CA	94301	Yes	
217	2013-09-06 1	annabelle	lenderink	CA	94924	Yes	
218	2013-09-06 1	Leigh	Etheridge	AL	35007	No	
219	2013-09-06 1	wayne	meyer	CA	95991	Yes	Check off \$\$ have never, ever helped farmers. They are collected to help the buyers of my products, not to help me. NO CHECK-OFF!!!!!!!
220	2013-09-06 1	connie	curtis	tx	78758	No	I eat organic.. this doesnt need to be.. the companies can see where it going.. we want organic.. food without chemicals.
221	2013-09-06 1	Barbara	St John	CA	94930	No	I try to buy almost all organic - but local organic. I am not in favor of this program because I fell it penalizes small farmers.
222	2013-09-06 1	Chris	Lyon	CT	06840	No	
223	2013-09-06 1	diane	schultheis	CA	95630	No	I am an "organic only" eater. This program is nonsense. Not going to happen. USDA is on the run. They don't know how to stop the "organic only" eaters.
224	2013-09-06 1	Peter	Ratner	ca	95973	No	
225	2013-09-06 1	Alice	Knutson	CA	94941	No	
226	2013-09-06 1	Margaret	Elliott	CA	94930	Yes	
227	2013-09-06 1	Peggy	Diedrichs	CA	94965	No	I work for an organic farmer, so this is very important to me!!
228	2013-09-06 1	Laura	Wyatt	CA	93108	No	We need to support farmers and not make it more difficult to do this already challenging job.
229	2013-09-06 1	S	Fleming	CA	94925	No	
230	2013-09-06 2	Gina	Inez	CA	94941	No	To whom it may concern, Having spent the better part of the decade of the 1980's involved in organic farming and helping to write the code for sustainable agriculture in California, I know first hand the hard work and integrity that goes into growing and retailing organic food crops. The present federal statute proposed ( the Organic Trade Association Check-off List) would nullify, or at very least undermine, the efforts of both the organic growers and the concerned consumers to sustain a viable organic agriculture in the USA. Please do not make the mistake of undermining the organic food growers and consumers. These people represent a very important thread in American society and stand for the future of a healthier nation.
231	2013-09-06 2	Sharon	Delap	VA	22191	No	I will be soon
232	2013-09-06 2	Nancy	Wiens	CA	94901	No	
233	2013-09-06 2	ben	anderson	ct	06896	Yes	
234	2013-09-07 0	Brooke	Battles	CA	94618	No	
235	2013-09-07 0	Sandra	Bird	Ca	94904	No	Organic farmers have a hard enough time without additional paperwork or expenses
236	2013-09-07 0	mary	Cosgrove	CA	94941	No	
237	2013-09-07 0	Kathryn	Moorehouse	Wa	99203	No	
238	2013-09-07 0	Neva	Alsip	OK	74085	Yes	We strongly oppose the proposed Organic Check-off Program.

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239	2013-09-07 0	Frank	Menhams	CA	95437	No	I buy organic, and keeping the costs down is very important. Please do the right thing, I will track your activities...thank you, Frank Menhams
240	2013-09-07 0	Tom	Willey	CA	93637	Yes	
241	2013-09-07 0	Jan	Dietrick	CA	93001	No	I grow beneficial insects used by organic farmers and my business depends on organic farmers being able to have a level playing field and prove the value of the products in fair trade. This is not fair.
242	2013-09-07 0	Joseph	Coats	CA	93065	No	I'm a organic gardener and Permaculture Designer.
243	2013-09-07 0	Michael	Baird	CA	94002	No	I support the certified organic, local farming movement. I do NOT support reprehensible taxation of sustainable alternative food sources! Tax big ag, those who can afford it!
244	2013-09-07 0	Brad	Hubbell	CA	94941	No	As a purchaser of organically farmed foods and a supporter of the health benefits and diversity that organic farming provides, I strongly support this petition to keep Organic Farmers off of the Organic Check-off program.
245	2013-09-07 0	Louise	Hamm	CA	93446	Yes	
246	2013-09-07 0	Jessica	Cardinal	CT	06811	No	
247	2013-09-07 0	Lucinda	Olney	CA	94708	No	Organic farmers need to be supported, not taxed. They have figured out how to raise food without herbicides and pesticides. Tax the companies that sell herbicides and pesticides, not the organic farmers! Protect our health !! National organizations just by definition are too large to be effective for the small members which is what 'organic' is all about. To co-opt our money to support the large growers is beyond ironic.
248	2013-09-07 1	Margaret	Graham	CA	94971	Yes	
249	2013-09-07 1	Kate	Firestone	CA	94965	No	
250	2013-09-07 1	liz	daniels	ca	94946	Yes	
251	2013-09-07 1	Jill	Barrett	CA	94920	No	
252	2013-09-07 1	karen	preuss	CA	94931	No	Organic farmers receive little benefit from programs such as these from the FDA. These check off programs benefit the corporate marketplace and yet it's the farmers that pay for them. This is incredibly lopsided and unfair to the people who actually grow the food. Farmer's (the actual people who get their hands dirty, not the quasi-farmers who sit in an office somewhere wearing a suit etc ) profits are already very low SO if the manufacturers and retail sellers want the FDA to have the programs that basically benefit them they must be the ones to pay into the 'check off' programs.
253	2013-09-07 1	Shari	W.	CA	94521	No	
254	2013-09-07 1	Mary	Grillo	CA	94947	No	Stop taxing us for every little thing you need to trim your budget! I am not a farmer. BUT on behalf of those farmers whose hard work and perserverance to their trade (and doing it sustainably!) puts organic food on my table, I cannot support this issue. To chance taking away in this manner even a minutiae of the earnings these folks have earned - regardless of whether they gross minor or massive profits on their wares - is wrong. I hope critical thinking and active discussion can be utilized to create a program that makes far more sense than this.
255	2013-09-07 1	annie	b	ca	94526	No	

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256	2013-09-07 1	Vicky	Passmore	GA	30506	No	
257	2013-09-07 1	Devon	Paoli	CA	94901	Yes	
258	2013-09-07 1	Evan	Wiig	CA	95472	Yes	
259	2013-09-07 1	Michael	White	ca	90034	No	IT is clear our government now is owned and operated by corporations and hates family farms. We, the People, are FOR small, family farms and we the people do NOT want OUR government making laws that favor Agribusiness farms and hurt small family farms. Period.
260	2013-09-07 1	Linda	Frender	CA	94939	No	
261	2013-09-07 2	Janet	Daijogo	Ca	94941	No	
262	2013-09-07 2	Judy	Engardio	CA	95457	No	
263	2013-09-07 2	Terry	Allan	Ca	95401	Yes	
264	2013-09-07 2	J.	Huston	CA	94606	No	
265	2013-09-08 0	Sonia	Covey	VA	24161	Yes	
266	2013-09-08 0	Rosemary	Reilly	CA	94501	No	
267	2013-09-08 0	Lisa	Smith	IL	61938	No	
268	2013-09-08 0	Thea	Blair	CA	95959	Yes	
269	2013-09-08 1	Susan	Gertman	CA	94941	No	
270	2013-09-08 1	Michael	Salzman	MO	64111	No	
271	2013-09-08 2	Carrie	Sherriff	ca	94941	No	
272	2013-09-08 2	Robyn	Martin	CA	95960-0	Yes	
273	2013-09-09 0	Liese	Keon	CA	94939	Yes	
274	2013-09-09 0	armida	scopazzi	ca	94901	Yes	
275	2013-09-09 0	Oren	Holle	KS	66412	Yes	
276	2013-09-09 1	Catherine	Bishop	CA	94117	No	we as dairymen have been disenchanting with the check off programs that are national programs. We were led to believe that they would be more efficient than our local programs, but history is not proving this to be true. The current program being offered (pushed) by the Organic Trade Association does not have the support of Organic Producers and would be primarily to the benefit of processors, using organic producers money. Please take this into consideration as to whom is promoting this legislation, using processor money for lobbying. Sincerely Janet A Baker t
277	2013-09-09 1	janet a	baker	WA	98022	Yes	
278	2013-09-09 1	Jessica	Prentice	CA	94804	No	
279	2013-09-09 1	cynthia	douglas	ca	93446	Yes	
280	2013-09-09 1	Barbara	Rothkrug	Ca	94925	No	I support small family farms.
281	2013-09-09 2	Laura	Bohlender	CA	95632	Yes	
282	2013-09-09 2	robin	rust	in	46115	Yes	



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283	2013-09-10 0	Jack	Liebster	Ca	94925	No	
284	2013-09-10 0	Michael	Gurecki	ny	13440	No	
285	2013-09-10 1	Shannon	Wilson	CA	94131	No	
286	2013-09-10 2	Lisa	Krausz	CA	94920	No	
287	2013-09-11 1	Richard	Christianson	MN	55406	No	As an Organic wholesale produce distributor, we work with hundreds of organic farms all across the country. I can say without reservation that the vast majority of organic farms that we have contact with are STRONGLY opposed to an organic checkoff. This is not needed and not welcome. These programs always, Always, ALWAYS end up working against the interests of the farmers they claim to help. This is nothing more than an effort to get us to pay for our own destruction and enslavement. As a direct marketer I'm already paying for these efforts, I need not pay someone else to do it form me and likely in a way that will directly compete with my message and for my consumer dollars.
288	2013-09-11 1	Pete	G	KS	66210	Yes	
289	2013-09-11 1	Dana	Haugli	IA	50423	Yes	I remain as independent as possible from all farm programs, with the exception of NOP certification which is required by law for me to sell certified organic products. I have no desire to participate in a one-size fits all organic checkoff, and I am opposed to all other checkoffs. please stop harassing organic farmers with tactics like this! they do us all a great service ! sincerely cindy kamm
290	2013-09-11 1	cindy	kamm	CA	94941	No	The "check-offs" are a from of taxation on Rural Farm Agriculture to fund the commercial promotion of Corporate Agriculture.
291	2013-09-11 1	Kent	Morris	IA	50022	No	
292	2013-09-11 2	Clarissa	Langley	WA	98264	Yes	• I do NOT support a federally mandated Organic Check-Off program. • I do not want to be forced to pay into a federally mandated check-off program. • I want to have the freedom to decide how I spend my hard earned dollars. • I oppose an organic check-off because I do not trust the USDA Federal Research and Promotion Programs due to problems in oversight and because money is spent on programs that do not benefit on-farm research or improving my bottom line. In fact, the history of Federal Research and Promotion Programs shows that they have actually worked to reduce farmers' profitability. • I DO want farmers to be able to continue to be exempt from paying into conventional programs and I DO want that exemption to be extended to all operations that are organically certified.
293	2013-09-12 0	JOHN	ROSSI	TX	78628	No	
294	2013-09-12 0	Cheryl	Collins	ME	04037	No	I work as a nutritionist with an organic feed mill and this proposal will just drive out more organic family farms that we can't afford to lose.
295	2013-09-12 1	Randy	Rolf	CO	80020	No	
296	2013-09-13 1	Bryce	Loewen	CA	93648	Yes	
297	2013-09-13 1	Miriam	Weinstein	CA	94930	No	Wouldn't it be wonderful when the USDA starts supporting organic farmers, whose food is good for us, and whose processes benefit the planet, instead of being a stooge for industrial agriculture and Monsanto. Wouldn't it be a great day when the USDA does the will of the people instead of corporations?

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
298	2013-09-13 1	Marisa	Hoke	CA	94949	Yes	I grow vegetables organically, (farming), but I do not sell them. However, one day, since I might, this is important to me.
299	2013-09-13 1	susanne	weihl	ca	94925	No	
300	2013-09-13 1	Christine	Farren	CA	94133	No	
301	2013-09-13 1	Jeannie	Hall	CA	94941	No	Please DO NOT let Washington push us around, say NO to Taxing our Organic food!!!
302	2013-09-13 2	William	Larchar	NY	13411	Yes	
303	2013-09-14 0	Sue	Crawford	CA	94920	No	We buy most of our fruits and veggies directly from CSAs through a weekly organic box and directly from Farmer's Markets. The margins for organic farmers are not large and yet the benefits of organic farming are incalculable for the environmental health of the planet and all its inhabitants. It is unhelpful and undemocratic to impose the burden of a generic tax on small scale organic farming operations.
304	2013-09-14 0	dontaye	ball	ca	94124	No	
305	2013-09-14 0	Denni	Adamson	CA	94901	No	I ask you to vote against the Organic Check Off Program to maintain the availability of the highest quality food at an affordable price for families. High quality food which is free of pesticides and herbicides will promote physical and mental health in our communities and help reduce future health care costs. I urge you to vote in accordance with the voters you actually represent and not for corporations. Exercise your conscious. Thank you.
306	2013-09-14 1	Jordan	Thompson	CA	94954	Yes	Please do not make it more difficult for farmers who are choosing to grow organic.
307	2013-09-15 1	Kathy	Cronin	CA	95472	No	
308	2013-09-15 1	Rodney	Graham	NY	14846	Yes	These funds will not be used to promote organic agriculture. Why should I have to fund it? To promote GMO soybeans that I don't agree with?
309	2013-09-15 2	andrea	owen	ca	94925	No	
310	2013-09-16 0	Nancy	Boyce	CA	94901	Yes	
311	2013-09-16 0	Elizabeth	Barnum	ND	58203	No	I do not want the large agribusiness companies in the organic field to further dominate the market. I am in favor of more local, small producers who take care of the land as well as the integrity of their production.
312	2013-09-16 0	Robert	Steininger	PA	19460	No	
313	2013-09-16 0	Kathleen	Mathis	FL	32210	No	The farming I do is personal and organic. The products I purchase I strive to make as organic by health choice. I do not wish my spending dollars to go towards corrupt and worthless campaigns and research that further serves toxic chemical agriculture, corporatized large scale farmers. I believe checkoff fees should be abolished altogether and my tax dollars to no longer go towards subsidies to large agribusiness, or, on another topic towards supporting the advancement of dirty energy. Both are poisoning the people, the environment and destroying the chances of humankind to live on this planet peacefully and healthily. thank you.
314	2013-09-16 0	Sarah	Umberger	WV	24901	Yes	
315	2013-09-16 1	Dena	Haupt	PA	15865	No	The farmers should be able to keep their money! They do not benefit from these Check-Off Programs so why must they be the ones to payroll it?!

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
316	2013-09-16 1	Nora	Handler	IL	60613	No	
317	2013-09-16 1	Heidi	Lawson	CA	95223	No	
318	2013-09-16 1	Rebecca	Breaux	NY	14814	No	
319	2013-09-16 1	Cindy	Scherrer	wa	98640	No	
320	2013-09-16 1	Lynn	Frederiksen	MA	01701	No	I am a concerned citizen and someone who fears that agribusiness has taken us down a deadly path. Our public and environmental health suffer greatly while these corporate behemoths consume profits off the backs of small farmers. These farmers should not have to pay for programs that not only do not benefit them, but instead support the egregious works of huge corporations who would put them out of business.
321	2013-09-16 1	Becky	McColley	CA	92081	No	
322	2013-09-16 1	Jeremy	McLaughlin	TX	7708	No	If these are the issues that we face our own government we have much bigger problems.
323	2013-09-16 1	sandra	mccolley	ca	91763	No	I am an American consumer who is weary of being a victim of congress who are bought and paid for by big business.
324	2013-09-16 1	Sharon	Bodman	OR	97380	No	I grow my own food and use organic methodologies. After seeing the data of the experiences of the beef,pork and current farmers experience I would create my own check-off list under the strict auspices of worldwide organic standards with specific goals and expectations where the monies could go. Otherwise, the system is rigged against organic farmers and they should be exempt from the current check-off list.
325	2013-09-16 1	Patt	Rose	CA	94541	No	Food should not be a political tool. Our farmers need support not more taxes.
326	2013-09-16 1	ross	hunter	ky	42445	Yes	I feel these programs serve only already rich and powerful corperations and individuals. They do nothing more but burden the middle and small operations with another expense in a further attempt to lessen our ability to compete for market share.
327	2013-09-16 1	Cindy	Brown	ca	94903	No	
328	2013-09-16 1	Mary Ann	O'Donnell	IL	60554	No	I am not an organic farmer, but I do buy organic and wish to support organic farmers in any way that benefits them. I do not believe the check-off program will benefit them. Please do not pass an organic check-off program.
329	2013-09-16 1	Margie	Goulden	WA	98372	No	I grow much of my own food organically and I supplement with food grown by organic farmers. I do not agree with a program that harms them in any way.
330	2013-09-16 1	Jeanne	Watts	MA	02169	No	I am not an Organic farmer BUT I am an Organic Gardener and I support the Organic Farmers who are fighting hard to keep our food clean.
331	2013-09-16 1	Deborah	Raley	Ca.	95005	Yes	
332	2013-09-16 1	Diane	Burnett	AZ	85338	No	I am a consumer and as such demand the right to choose food free of chemical engineering and political hype.
333	2013-09-16 1	Chris	Boileau	Nv	89148	No	
334	2013-09-16 1	Lori	Restani	CA	94904	No	
335	2013-09-16 1	Melinda	Pitcher	CA	95124	No	
336	2013-09-16 1	Jane	McCullam	OH	44065-9	No	

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
337	2013-09-16 1	michele	grayndler	sc	29936	No	a very concerned consumer
338	2013-09-16 1	Joan	Basore	CA	94960	Yes	
339	2013-09-16 1	Amigo	Cantisano	CA	95960	Yes	I do not want my money to be used to promote the agendal of large corporate multinational companies who now own the majority of organic processed foods. They will dominate the board of this checkoff and tax me without any benefit to me. Just say NO!
340	2013-09-16 2	Judy	Nelson	MN	55733	No	
341	2013-09-16 2	theresa	bridges	mi	48336	No	
342	2013-09-16 2	Lisa	Butterfield	CA	95501	No	I live in a rural county, and I know many organic farmers personally. I do not trust the USDA to do anything that benefits organic farmers or consumers anymore. I don't need promotional ads telling me what to eat. Because of having eaten "conventional" poisoned GMO foods for many years, I now have many food allergies and inflamed intestines. I don't have the "choice" to eat conventional food anymore, and I don't want to have my farmers further burdened by taking more of their money.
343	2013-09-17 0	Robert	Kuljis	OR	97123	Yes	Small and mid sized farms do not need to pay for industry marketing schemes.
344	2013-09-17 0	jean	molinari	CA	90731	No	What a nightmare.
345	2013-09-17 0	Melissa	Rubano	PA	16669	No	
346	2013-09-17 1	karey	degnan	mn	55746	No	
347	2013-09-17 1	Elsie	Smith	IA	52556	No	
348	2013-09-18 0	Bruce	Scholten	WA	98036	No	I am a dairy geographer at Durham University Geography Dept, UK, with a family and hournalism background in dairy farming.
349	2013-09-18 1	Ryan	Butzow	IL	60955	Yes	
350	2013-09-18 1	dennis	wilt	wa	98629	Yes	
351	2013-09-18 1	Helen	Krayenhoff	CA	94602	Yes	The OTA does not speak for me or hold my interests at heart. Do not add more hardship to struggling family farms!
352	2013-09-18 1	Rita	Pelczar	NC	28753	Yes	
353	2013-09-18 1	Cliff	Francis	OR	97031	Yes	Stop the over regulation of small farms.
354	2013-09-18 1	Chris	Klebaum	WA	98951	Yes	
355	2013-09-18 1	Joshua	Smith	MI	48754	Yes	
356	2013-09-18 1	Ann	Wilson	ME	04438	Yes	
357	2013-09-18 1	Jean	Ratto	OR	97080	Yes	
358	2013-09-18 1	Michael	Potter	MI	48104	No	This is bad for organic family farms. Doing organic is expensive enough. OTA wants money to fund industrialization and commercialization of organic food.
359	2013-09-18 1	Michael	Evenson	CA	95558	Yes	We don't need this to market our products. Why add another layer of bureaucracy, cost and such to the consumer by taking it from the producer. Makes no sense whatsoever.
360	2013-09-18 1	Tom	Denison	OR	97330	Yes	

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361	2013-09-18 1	Kevin	O'Dare	FL	32963	Yes	OTA DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY ORGANIC FARMERS IN FLORIDA. THE PEOPLE WHO SIT ON THE BOARD OF OTA DO NOT CARE ABOUT ORGANIC FARMERS IT IS ALL ABOUT MONEY AGAIN AND AGAIN. THANKS, KO
362	2013-09-18 1	Melvin	Gimbel	SD	57371	Yes	
363	2013-09-18 1	Sally	Harper	NM	88047	Yes	No to a federally mandated Organic Check-Off program. We are already paying thousand of dollars annually in order to farm responsibly and sustainably. This is backwards. The farmer who is using tons of chemicals annually should be taxed for the future costs of long-term results of massive chemicals going into our bodies, land, air, and water supplies.
364	2013-09-18 1	Julie	Sullivan	CO	81149	Yes	
365	2013-09-18 1	Christina	Sirlin	HI	96712	No	
366	2013-09-18 1	Ryan	Rich	CA	93422	Yes	As a farmer check off programs have never benefited me. Only a few large interests. No check off for organic farmers EVER.
367	2013-09-18 1	Caitlin	Couture	CA	93239	Yes	The amount of fees/charges/mandatory pay outs/etc that farmers are expected to foot is absurd. We are already a struggling industry and this program is simply another way to bleed us out. The OTA has unfortunately missed another opportunity to connect with farmers at a grassroots level (something they claim to have a passion for doing) and instead have continued their pandering to DC bigwigs with zero interest in the livelihoods and success of organic farmers.
368	2013-09-18 1	Roger	Wechsler	WA	98232	Yes	In addition to all said above, there is no fee structure that would be fair to all.
369	2013-09-18 1	Daniel	Tollefson	MN	55334	Yes	
370	2013-09-18 1	Jennifer	Tollefson	MN	55334	Yes	
371	2013-09-18 1	Thomas	Bardesson	CA	94558	Yes	
372	2013-09-18 1	Steve	Taylor	ID	83301-0	Yes	The Organic Trade Association does not represent me!!!
373	2013-09-18 1	Dada	Gana	ca	93532	Yes	
374	2013-09-18 1	Kim	Mosel	NE	68766	Yes	
375	2013-09-18 1	David	Rhea	NE	68002	Yes	
376	2013-09-18 1	Ray	Hoppes	OH	43160	Yes	Let us have less bureaucracy rather than more. We do not need or want an organic check-off!
377	2013-09-18 1	susan	pelican	ca	95695	Yes	PLEASE!
378	2013-09-18 1	Julie	Mingo	ID	83271	Yes	
379	2013-09-18 1	John	Whitman	CA	93001	Yes	Organic farming is for the most part small farming. It is difficult enough to make a living without added encumbrances.
380	2013-09-18 1	Madelyn	Jackson	OR	97423	Yes	
381	2013-09-18 1	Carole Anne	Rose	ArKS	72742	Yes	
382	2013-09-18 1	David	Walsh	MN	56308	Yes	
383	2013-09-18 1	Cara	Cordoni	CA	94117	No	Protect our current organic farmers - hear their side, not just the PAID side!
384	2013-09-18 1	Julie	Bosma	WA	98932	Yes	I do not support an organic checkoff program.

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385	2013-09-18 2	Brad	Mallett	SC	29483	No	As a coffee roaster that is required to submit to lengthy and costly measures to insure that what I buy is given out as organic I find it offensive that we have to come to these measures. Please make the playing field fair to all concerned. B
386	2013-09-18 2	Neil	Austin	OR	97381	Yes	
387	2013-09-18 2	william	smith	mo	64641	Yes	
388	2013-09-18 2	Richard	Parker	NC	28125	Yes	I refuse to support any program which doesn't allow organic products to be showcased for the superior products they are.
389	2013-09-18 2	Rebecca	Shirley	CA	94014	Yes	
390	2013-09-18 2	Elmer	Lehmann	KS	66857	Yes	The USDA is not promoting Organic Farming now, so why would I expect that to change if there is an organic check-off fund?
391	2013-09-18 2	Alison	Frost	NY	13158	Yes	
392	2013-09-19 0	John	Saeli	NY	14456	Yes	
393	2013-09-19 0	Amy	Krasne	IA	51503	Yes	
394	2013-09-19 0	ken	crouse	CO	81612	Yes	
395	2013-09-19 0	Douglas	Baty	MT	59831	Yes	
396	2013-09-19 1	Fred	Grice Jr.	MI	49452	Yes	
397	2013-09-19 1	Doug	Beretta	CA	95407	Yes	
398	2013-09-19 1	Jeffrey	Creque	CA	94952	Yes	A mandatory check off is not helpful.
399	2013-09-19 1	Hakon	Torjesen	MN	55946	Yes	
400	2013-09-19 1	Andrea	Aronson	CO	81611	Yes	
401	2013-09-19 1	Gary	McDonald	IL	62704	Yes	
402	2013-09-19 1	Norma	Tofanelli	CA	94515	Yes	Stop trying to kill organic. Consumers want us and we want to farm this sustainable way.
403	2013-09-19 1	Donna	Meyer	Mn	55041	Yes	Why should I support something that I can't advertise my product with?!
404	2013-09-19 1	David	Trumble	NH	03281	Yes	
405	2013-09-19 1	Bettie Ann	Hough	CA	95968	Yes	
406	2013-09-19 1	Dehl	Jossi	OR	97124	Yes	
407	2013-09-19 2	Mark	Wilson	MD	21613	Yes	
408	2013-09-19 2	Elliott	Driscoll	IA	52361	Yes	
409	2013-09-19 2	Craig	Bruns	MN	56534	Yes	
410	2013-09-19 2	Alfred	Farris	TN	37141	Yes	
411	2013-09-20 0	Colleen	Wolfisberg	WA	98247	Yes	
412	2013-09-20 0	Thomas	Green	AR	72823	Yes	Any additional taxation on our business will put us out of business.
413	2013-09-20 0	Heidi	Tafel	NY	13843	Yes	
414	2013-09-20 1	Ron	Parling	MI	48880	Yes	As per reasons cited above check-off programs are ineffective and unfair. We don't need another one!

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415	2013-09-20 1	David	Rottinghaus	IA	50458	Yes	I'm sure big ag companies are pushing the check-off with the politicians because they don't get the money out of the little farmers that don't use their chemicals and non organic inputs.
416	2013-09-20 1	Janet	Muther	CA	94952	No	
417	2013-09-20 2	Pam	Moore	NY	13812	Yes	
418	2013-09-20 2	Rob	Moore	NY	13812	Yes	
419	2013-09-21 1	Tyler	Bolton	PA	19530	Yes	
420	2013-09-22 0	Valerie	Wall	WA	98223	Yes	
421	2013-09-22 1	Kevin	Ryan	IA	50140	Yes	
422	2013-09-22 1	Mark	Sievers	CA	94534	Yes	
423	2013-09-22 2	Donna	Marie	CA	92589	Yes	
424	2013-09-23 0	Lee	Thomas	MN	56560	Yes	Just another tax.
425	2013-09-23 0	John	Knutson	CA	95357	Yes	
426	2013-09-23 1	Dean & Jan	Pigman	WA	98513	Yes	
427	2013-09-24 0	henk	postmus	TX	76446	Yes	
428	2013-09-24 1	David	Via	OR	97461	Yes	OTA does not represent our farm. We prefer to do our own advertizing at our own expense.
429	2013-09-24 1	Mike	Peters	WI	53585	Yes	The comments above on this petition say it all. Amen.
430	2013-09-25 1	Bill	Casey	NY	13020	Yes	
431	2013-09-25 1	Joanne	Casey	NY	13020	Yes	
432	2013-09-26 1	James	Shuler	NY	14048	Yes	
433	2013-09-27 1	Tierra	Cantisano	Ca	94965	No	
434	2013-09-27 2	Paul	Dolan	CA	95482	Yes	
435	2013-09-27 2	Alitza	Blough	IA	52556	No	The USDA will pick something banal to promote such as educating the consumer about the difference between "natural" and "certified organic" instead of something controversial, such as the carbon sequestering power of organic production.
436	2013-09-27 2	Seth	Rosmarin	CA	95960	Yes	I am a farmer, consultant, and inspector and I think this bill is bad for small farms and community based foods causing economic hardships on an already stressed industry.
437	2013-09-27 2	SEan	Coder	ArKS	72701	Yes	This program would not be in organic farmers' best interest, as evidenced by the other commodity programs that don't ultimately benefit farmers. Keep hands off organics!
438	2013-09-28 0	Jan	Dietrick	CA	93001	Yes	People recognize my product and all good organic products by the obvious quality. We don't need this kind of marketing help at all.
439	2013-09-28 0	Elisabeth	Lambert	CA	93704	No	I want to keep small local organic farms viable. No check off program. Keep corporate farms out of the organic farming business because they will irreparably corrupt it.
440	2013-09-28 0	A.	Wolf	CA	92117	No	
441	2013-09-28 0	Lindsey	Larson	Ca	90291	No	
442	2013-09-28 0	Trevor	Estlow	CA	95525	Yes	

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443	2013-09-28 0	Carla	Curle	CA	93955	No	
444	2013-09-28 0	Wendy	Thiessen	TX	77023	No	
445	2013-09-28 0	Bre	Perry	CO	80910	No	I have family and friends who are farmers. We have to make the system better instead of overburdening it with more government fees and paperwork. They need subsidies and tax breaks.
446	2013-09-28 0	Lisa	Henke	CA	92705	No	
447	2013-09-28 0	catherine	callaghan	IL	60008	No	
448	2013-09-28 0	Heather	Dziczek	AZ	85210	No	
449	2013-09-28 0	Jane	Rittenhouse	OR	97405	Yes	I work for an organic farmer.
450	2013-09-28 0	patti	rich	ca	94606	Yes	
451	2013-09-28 0	matt	milller	MO	65201	No	
452	2013-09-28 0	Bridget	O'Brien	WA	98109	No	
453	2013-09-28 0	Velma	Wagatsuma	HI	96734	Yes	
454	2013-09-28 0	Kathleen	McMillan	NY	10003	No	
455	2013-09-28 0	Cindy	Power	WA	98407	No	I support you 100%!
456	2013-09-28 0	Kathy	Lindner	CA	96117	Yes	We are 'organic' in practice, but we do not use that word because we are not certified.
457	2013-09-28 0	phyllis	crawford	MD	21740	No	
458	2013-09-28 0	tamika	phillips	ri	02914	No	I buy organic foods for many reasons even though I'm unable to afford lots. This is the only type of food that is safe for food allergy sufferers
459	2013-09-28 0	Lisa	Esposito	PA	19107	No	
460	2013-09-28 0	Maryanne	Allen	FL	32789	No	
461	2013-09-28 0	Jodi	Brown	LA	70121	No	I do NOT want an Organic check off program.
462	2013-09-28 0	Kyle	Klingman	WI	53704	No	
463	2013-09-28 0	John	McGrath	CA	94580	No	I am a consumer who like to buy organic products, and I am happy without the mandatory programs because we already have enough information to tell the difference between "natural" and "organic". If the small farmers are forced to pay more fines under the new program, it can risk putting the farmers out of business and we the people would have less access to untainted foods.
464	2013-09-28 0	Ashley	Shaloo	NJ	08540	Yes	
465	2013-09-28 1	Amy	Kelley	TX	78734	No	Quality is obvious with organic products. No need to increase their fees!!! Public Awareness is spreading on the many benefits of organic products. Sales will continue to increase and marketing is irrelevant. Word of mouth is much more powerful than marketing tactics.
466	2013-09-28 1	Andrea	Acevedo	Ca	91739	No	
467	2013-09-28 1	Laura	Taylor	Co	81647	No	
468	2013-09-28 1	Sheila	Wyeth	Il	61046	Yes	
469	2013-09-28 1	vicky	passmore	GA	30506	No	



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470	2013-09-28 1	Torrey	Reade	NJ	08079	Yes	
471	2013-09-28 1	Susan	Sauceda	Ca	93727	No	
472	2013-09-28 1	Nikki	Arce	CA	92404	No	
473	2013-09-28 1	christine	baker	MO	65201	No	
474	2013-09-29 0	joseph	dietz	MN	56236	Yes	Stop the check off!!!
475	2013-09-29 0	kristan	floyd	SC	29506	Yes	
476	2013-09-29 0	Paul	Delisle	IA	52556	No	
477	2013-09-29 0	Jean Marie	Hall	IA	52043	No	
478	2013-09-29 0	Myron	McVeigh	IA	52632	No	
479	2013-09-29 1	robert	arbuckle	ia	52240	No	This proposal only supports large producers, not the small producers that purchase from. This proposal will only increase the price I pay for products that I am already committed to.
480	2013-09-29 1	Julia Ahlers	Ness	MN	56218	Yes	
481	2013-09-29 1	Wolfgang	Rougle	CA	96022	Yes	Organic farmers, esp. those of us who market direct to consumers, already do more to promote farming and local (and domestic) food consumption than all the check-off programs in the U.S. combined. There's no way I want to spend ANY of my hard-earned income supporting some marketers, graphic designers, lobbyists and middlemen who aren't even focused on Organic.
482	2013-09-29 1	Jim	Gerritsen	ME	04735	Yes	
483	2013-09-29 1	Kelly	Garner	CA	95821	No	
484	2013-09-29 1	Barbara	Blough	IL	60645	No	I EAT organic foods for the health of my body. I support organic FARMING. I support organic FARMERS. Clean shit belongs on organic farming land. The rest of it requires cleaning - I refer to the stuff shoveled at us from the USDA Federal Research and Promotion Programs.
485	2013-09-29 1	Gwenne	Baile	NJ	08108	No	I am an organic home gardener and on the Executive Committee of an organically-grown Community Garden.
486	2013-09-29 1	steve	mcgowan	ca	94941	Yes	I do not support an Organic Checkoff Program. Signed Sept 29, 2013 Steve McGowan, heirloomketchup@aol.com
487	2013-09-29 1	Susan	Brown	CA	91942	No	I am strongly opposed to the corporate effort for organic farmers to fund their promotion activities. It isn't needed.
488	2013-09-29 1	Dorothy	Drees	IA	52556	No	
489	2013-09-29 1	Diane	Vance	IA	52556	No	I am an organic eater and support my local farmers market that sells organic foods. I also buy organic products at the 2 local grocery stores.
490	2013-09-29 1	Diane	Davis	IA	52556	No	NO to the organic check-off program
491	2013-09-29 1	Marybeth	Gardam	IA	52405	No	Making it harder for organic farmers makes it harder for all of us to eat well and be healthy. Food security is National Security. There's a reason Churchill told people to plant victory gardens. When organic farmers win, we all win!

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492	2013-09-29 2	Kenneth	Langen	CA	92008	No	
493	2013-09-30 0	Brad	Jennings	IA	52556	No	
494	2013-09-30 0	Jack	Erisman	IL	62557	Yes	
495	2013-09-30 2	Cathy	Holden	CA	95865	No	I am an organic gardener and consumer. I want a fair shake for organic producers. Thank you.
496	2013-10-01 1	Dee	LeVan	CA	95959	No	
497	2013-10-01 1	mark	wheeler	OR	97527	Yes	Bad idea!!!! Vote it down. Mark Wheeler Pacific Botanicals
498	2013-10-01 1	Evelyn	Riebe	IL	60929	Yes	No the organic movement will do their own research so as not to be tainted by the commercial pushers of GM grain and chemical fertilizers. People who choose organic already pay more money to make a better food choice. No more cost added to the organic farmers!
499	2013-10-01 2	Lisa	Rowe	CA	95960	No	
500	2013-10-02 1	Hershel	Carmichael	NM	88132	Yes	They have never done one thing for me!!
501	2013-10-05 0	Scott	Paladino	NJ	07461	Yes	
502	2013-10-05 0	Tim	Cutler	NJ	07960	No	Obviously unconstitutional.
503	2013-10-05 0	Fern	Hickey	NJ	08560	Yes	
504	2013-10-05 1	Ashley	Shaloo	NJ	08540	Yes	
505	2013-10-05 1	Diane	Skoss	NJ	07059	Yes	We pay enough in fees to get certified as organic. We do not need further economic burdens. Let organic farmers do their jobs; support and publish their research. Don't charge them for marketing campaigns they don't need and won't do them any good.
506	2013-10-05 1	Al	Esposito	NJ	07865	Yes	
507	2013-10-06 0	Jeff	Moyer	Pa	19534	Yes	Stop this Prgram now
508	2013-10-06 1	Connor	Murphy	CO	80306	Yes	This provision will damage small scale producers and educational non profits like the one that I work for. We are small enough that we've been doing our own educational work for years. If my customers have a question about certification they ask me. This year our organization is struggling to meet our operating budget. We will be negatively impacted by an organic check off program.
509	2013-10-06 1	Judith	Robinson	NJ	08540	No	I am a farmers market manager and have only small farms as members. They need to be supported as a sustainable local supply of food to our community. So helping them to promote and educate the public is essential. Large corporate farms already receive most of the government benefits so make sure that the ones who really need the promotion receive it.
510	2013-10-06 1	Lindsay	Napolitano	NJ	08825	Yes	
511	2013-10-07 0	Orin	Moyer	PA	19547	Yes	Check Off programs are a side arm of corporate Ag giants...lets try to keep them out of organics
512	2013-10-07 1	David	Heiens	KS	67410	Yes	Checkoff invite big corporations that ruin family farms

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
513	2013-10-07 1	TG	Mueller	NJ	08005	Yes	The original Organic Standards and Certification process and verification was established and functioned very well without USDA intrusion. The USDA usurped and changed the effective organic certification process to allow large agribusiness access to the organic market. The USDA has corrupted the original standards and imposed additional costs on the small organic farmer. I am opposed to any further intrusion by the government and its agencies into organic farming.
514	2013-10-07 2	Andrea	Bustos de Romo	NY	11741	No	
515	2013-10-08 1	Laura	Barnaud	SD	57762	Yes	
516	2013-10-08 1	Bernard	Barnaud	SD	57762	Yes	
517	2013-10-09 0	Jeff	Hill	KS	67730	Yes	We do not need an organic check off program.
518	2013-10-09 1	Michael	Blahut	NJ	07439	Yes	
519	2013-10-10 1	Carla	Curle	CA	93955	No	
520	2013-10-14 0	Leon	Morton	NC	27253	No	
521	2013-10-18 0	robert	ricahrd	OR	97210	No	I own a food enterprise that depends upon a viable local, organic supply. Please do not introduce regulations that make it harder for small farming operations to produce organic product.
522	2013-10-18 0	Carroll	Wade	NY	14855	Yes	
523	2013-10-18 1	Janet	Cowling	MI	48176	No	I
524	2013-10-18 1	Cecilia	Bowman	IN	46118	Yes	
525	2013-10-18 1	Kathy	Jaffey	IA	52556	No	There are several proposals afoot that would increase costs for organic farmers and further widen the gulf between the price for organic food and commodity crops, and would also very likely reduce the number of organic farms and farmers by making it too difficult for organic farmers to make a living. I strongly oppose these measures, and suggest that legislators would better spend their time reducing or eliminating subsidies for gmo seeds and their companion chemical treatments. The sheer quantity of chemicals required to keep gm crops going is killing off the bee population, polluting the water and creating the dead zone in the gulf of mexico. These are real problems that regulations need to address. The cost of commodity farmers not using cover crops to hold the soil in place and to absorb rain water and melted snow during the 8 months of the year when corn and soy are not growing is enormus and is carried by the public, not the commodity farmers who are getting the big subsidies to carry on the practises that pollute the water, erode the so8l, cause the dead zpne and reslult in less nturitious food for the consumer.
526	2013-10-22 1	Amy	Krasne	IA	51503	Yes	As an organic farmer, I am opposed the the Organic Check-Off program- honestly all check offs. I would be better served to keep my money to use as I like for promotion of organics.
527	2013-10-22 2	Blakeley	Kim	CA	94122	No	
528	2013-10-23 1	RaeMarie	Timm	NC	28451	No	

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
529	2013-10-28 0	Michael	Monthey	WI	53901	No	I am a consumer of organic food products. The main reason I back this petition is because organic farmers deserve to make a better living on producing and providing safer and naturally wholesome foods for us to eat, not to be victims of government corruption and corporate greed. If the Organic Check-off Program is passed, we will lose value within the organic food system in the long run.
530	2013-10-29 1	Diane	Adams	IN	46960	No	I work with many organic and natural farmers, they do not need the additional cost exhaustion. They have children to feed and seeds to purchase. They can donate if they choose, and their money is theirs to choose.
531	2013-10-29 2	alexandra	loureiro	NJ	07974	No	organic food should not have to pay to be labeled organic, genetically modified food NEED to be labeled, we need to know if our food is not "natural"
532	2013-10-31 1	Daniel	Gasser	OH	44276	Yes	
533	2013-10-31 1	James	Gasser	OH	44276	Yes	
534	2013-11-04 0	Michelle	Benrud	MN	55027	Yes	
535	2013-11-04 0	Roger	Benrud	MN	55027	Yes	
536	2013-11-06 2	Stacy	Shaker	WI	53929	Yes	
537	2013-11-06 2	Tim	Shaker	WI	53929	Yes	
538	2013-11-09 0	Johnny	Stansell	Tx	79601	No	The people who sing the praises of any check-off are the ones running the program. A government program with fat salaries and pensions that take money away from the farmer. "Got Milk?", very successful??? milk consumption down cheese up, but it's not "Got Cheese" Do car companies collect a dollar a 100 pounds from car owners to advertise as a separate program run by the government??? Currently organic gardener with a goal of an organic dairy. All said the gov people who will shove this down the throats of farmers can't help it because there is a lot of money to be made off them!!!
539	2013-11-09 0	Margaret	Passarello	N.J.	08021	No	
540	2013-11-11 2	Amanda	Freitas	RI	02903	No	I am an organic eater.
541	2013-11-16 1	Laurin	Vinson	MO	64137	No	Please support organic farming and natural food production.
542	2013-11-19 1	Gary	Bechtold	NJ	08848	Yes	
543	2013-11-28 2	Ron	Ackerman	IL	61726	Yes	
544	2013-12-10 1	Sam	Welsch	NE	68502	No	I certify many organic farmers and I do not see any benefit to farmers under the proposed Organic Check-Off program. Sales of organic products has been averaging increases of over 10% per year during the past ten years since the implementation of the National Organic Program. Maintaining the integrity of that program so consumers continue to trust the USDA Organic Seal is important and necessary to sustaining the growth of organic trade. The proposed check-off is not needed.
545	2013-12-10 1	douglas	hartkopf	ME	04910	Yes	
546	2013-12-10 1	Ann	Wilson	ME	04438	Yes	

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							I have contacted both of my senators in the last couple of years. Sen Fischer's office actually called today about this, and Sen Johannes did call back last year and asked questions about this. They are interested. I am 100% AGAINST this check off. I should have thought of this myself to fund my work.....
547	2013-12-10	2 Tim	Cada	NE	68629	Yes	
548	2013-12-11	0 Klaas	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
549	2013-12-11	1 Richard	Parker	NC	28125	Yes	
550	2013-12-13	1 Maria	Amador	CA	95540	No	
							We are already putting in 18 hour days while losing more than \$30,000 last year alone. We are on food stamps and Medicaid. DO NOT INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF CHARITY WE ARE ALREADY GIVING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BY MAKING US PAY FOR SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T EVEN PROMOTE THE HEALTHFUL MILK WE ARE SUPPLYING. Thanks for your time.
551	2013-12-20	2 Linda	Rodriguez	WI	54665	Yes	
552	2013-12-27	1 Steph	Beneng	NY	12936	Yes	
553	2014-01-01	2 alan	van dyk	n.y.	12866	No	
554	2014-01-14	1 Lisa	Turner	ME	04032	Yes	
							Stop creating mandates that stress the profit margins of organic dairy farmers. the organic farmers are being pushed out of business. You are squeezing them too hard.
555	2014-01-17	0 Linda	Voith	NY	14711	No	
556	2014-02-02	2 Steve	Kimball	NY	14733	Yes	
557	2014-02-08	1 Hans	Wolfisberg	WA	98247	Yes	
558	2014-03-10	0 Linda	Voith	NY	14712	No	Please discontinue the check off program or exempt all organic farmers from it.
559	2014-03-15	1 Bill	Casey	NY	13020	Yes	
560	2014-03-15	1 cecil	linscott jr	ME	04438	Yes	
561	2014-04-29	1 Erika	Worden	NY	13865	Yes	
							Generic advertising does not work. Tell me how they propose to promote organic without disparaging non-organic food?
562	2014-06-06	2 Jim	Goodman	WI	53968	Yes	
563	2014-06-07	0 Dave	Minar	Mn	56071	Yes	We don't need this unwanted tax.
564	2014-06-07	1 Julie	Rawson	MA	01005	Yes	
565	2014-06-10	2 Charles	Brault	MD	21788	Yes	I am opposed to all check-off programs.
566	2014-06-10	2 Tim	Cada	NE	68629	Yes	NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO AND NO----- NO ORGANIC CHECKOFF!!!!!!!
567	2014-06-10	2 Richard	Parker	nc	28125	Yes	Less government is better.
568	2014-06-11	0 Charlie	Greene	NY	13118	Yes	Thank you for providing this opportunity to stand free of the OTA and USDA-NOP check off.
569	2014-06-11	1 Diana	Saxton	NY	14775	Yes	I am against an organic check off!!
							I am 100% opposed to checkoffs in all forms, but especially an organic checkoff. As far as I am concerned, they are un-American - more like Soviet-style "collective" thinking. The Founding Fathers must be rolling over in their graves. It's this kind of taxation and government intrusiveness that makes me sad for our country.
570	2014-06-13	2 Dana	Haugli	IA	50423	Yes	
571	2014-06-14	0 Stephanie	Beneng	NY	12936	Yes	

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572	2014-06-19 1	Bill	Jessup	CA	92274	Yes	I would be excluded from the proposed assessment. Opposed nonetheless.
573	2014-06-21 1	Philip	Davis	CO	81419	Yes	
574	2014-06-22 1	Lynda	aGREStI	az	85379	No	
575	2014-06-22 1	Jeanne	Brooks	ME	04066	No	Although I am not a farmer, I agree with this petition since I support our local organic dairy farmers and trust them if they do not believe in the "Check-Off" Program. I am a certified organic handler (Oh, Oh Organic, Inc.). I am completely opposed to this program as written. It is a tax without representation. I see certified organic ingredients into the cosmetic industry. This industry will not receive any benefit for the cost involved.
576	2014-06-23 1	Gay	Timmons	CA	95030	No	
577	2014-06-24 1	Susannah	Smith	VA	24013	No	
578	2014-06-26 1	E	Hudson	WI	54630	No	Organic nursery business and gardens since 1975.
579	2014-07-04 1	Pete	Gaspar	KS	66701	Yes	The USDA cannot be trusted. The check-off system is fundamentally broken from the farmer's perspective. It is money that has been, is, and will be used against our interests.
580	2014-07-06 0	Tony	Marzolino	NY	13736	Yes	
581	2014-07-12 1	Arden	Landis	PA	19540	Yes	I am totally against any form of check off Let the companies that sell the products promote them if there such a big return on the money spent.
582	2014-07-12 1	David	Minar	MN	56071	Yes	We do not need an Organic checkoff
583	2014-07-12 1	Rich	Larson	VT	05774	No	Working toward organic certification. We can manage our own businesses, thank you. I DO NOT WANT A GOVERNMENT-MANDATED 'CHECK-OFF'. I DO MY OWN ADVERTIZING, THANKYOU.  As a dairy farmer in Washington State we have paid into our State Dairy Promotional program. Since the National program was instituted, and a good share of the money that is collected in this state, and now goes into the national program we have become disenchanted with Federal Promotion Programs. I am not at all comfortable with "The Organic Trade Association" and its policies and lack of transparencies, and its representation of Processors, who tend to make a profit under all circumstance, and farmer do not. Promised increased sales (the reason for the promotion deducts) have not proved to be so. Sincerely Janet and Robert T. Baker, Osceola Jerseys, Organic Valley Producers,
584	2014-07-17 2	janet a	baker	WA	98022	Yes	
585	2014-08-11 0	TONY	MARZOLINO	NY	13736	Yes	
586	2014-08-11 0	Rich	Larson	VT	05774	Yes	I don't want any government 'help'. I market my own products, and it is very effective. I will not pay into a public cesspool.
587	2014-08-13 0	arthur	harvey	ME	04220	Yes	The trend of history and science is in our favor. We do not need the "help" of the advertising industry.
588	2014-08-21 0	Dale	Johnson	WI	54162	Yes	
589	2014-08-23 1	Nora	Owens	MA	01342	Yes	
590	2014-08-23 1	Eric	Glasgow	Ma	02535	Yes	
591	2014-08-23 1	Johnny	Stansell	TX	79601	Yes	

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592	2014-08-23	1 anne	phillips	ny	13045	Yes	
593	2014-08-25	0 Trent	Hendricks	Mo	65692	Yes	
594	2014-08-28	2 Liana	McCoy	Mn	56466	No	I am a black angus beef farmer, formally registered neither the beef check-off or the American Angus Association has helped my sales or increased them. Organic farmer or not a federally mandated check-off for any commodity or being organic is just taking money from the farmers who struggle to make ends meet to begin with. I think the idea of MOSES and the organic conferences with farmer involvement minus all the big Ag or government sticking there noses or sticky fingers in is much better. I feel there are better ways to research and prove organic and sustainable farming is way better than the 'newer' conventional/chemical farming.
595	2014-09-14	0 Adam	Sheridan	GA	30516	Yes	
596	2014-09-17	1 Florence	Minar	MN	56071	Yes	
597	2014-09-18	0 don	faulkner	VT	05602	No	previously an organic farmer, my wife and I know that Organic farmers almost without exception vehemently oppose the proposed check-off program as do we and probably most of any Organic consumers who are aware of its Negative effects on Organic producers and failure to help Organic Agriculture much as the Beef and Dairy Check-offs failure.
598	2014-09-20	2 Klaas	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
599	2014-10-27	1 Ellen	McConnell	NJ	08872	No	
600	2014-11-30	0 Tony	Marzolino	NY	13736	Yes	
601	2015-02-16	1 Alan	Gordon	CA	93003	Yes	I cannot stress how emphatically I am opposed to ANY checkoff program. We will do just fine without any involuntarily imposed additional tax(s) on our farms. The host of current regulations are necessary, though onerous, to protect the integrity of Organics. Additional expense, administered by those with a different agenda is a burden unneeded and unwelcome.
602	2015-02-18	1 Conor	MacDonald	ME	4574	Yes	
603	2015-03-01	1 David	Minar	MN	56071	Yes	
604	2015-03-07	1 Paul	Van Amburgh	NY	13459	Yes	
605	2015-03-07	1 John	O'Meara	ME	04762	Yes	Organic farmers do not support this proposed program.
606	2015-03-14	0 Linda	Voith	NY	14711	No	I am a consumer who supports the efforts of organic producers. The producers overwhelmingly oppose the check off program, and state that it does give them fair representation. They state that it will tax them for overseas organic products of their competitors who would be exempt from the check off. For all of these reasons and many others, i oppose the check off program.
607	2015-03-15	1 Lyle	Edwards	VT	05874	Yes	
608	2015-03-15	1 Steve	Straits	OH	44687	Yes	I do not trust the USDA Federal Research and Promotion Programs. This only benefits marketers and retailers. They are the ones that need to pay for their own promotion!!! I am producing a product that is already in short supply. I need all the income I can get to support my own expansion!!!

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609	2015-03-18	1 Mitch	Blumenthal	FL	34240	Yes	
610	2015-04-13	0 Joseph	Sawyer	NH	03608	Yes	
611	2015-04-16	2 Kathie	Arnold	NY	13158	Yes	I am against any kind of compulsory check-off program.
612	2015-04-16	2 Tony	Marzolino	NY	13736	Yes	
613	2015-04-17	0 Charles	Brault	MD	21788	Yes	
614	2015-04-28	0 Klaas	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	
615	2015-05-06	1 Diane	Kistler	NY	13637	Yes	
616	2015-05-06	1 Phil	Barbato	NY	11901	Yes	
617	2015-05-06	1 Bob	Schultz	NY	14701	Yes	
618	2015-05-06	2 Fred	Griffen	NY	13040	Yes	I also do not trust the OTA because in my opinion they are a mouthpiece for large corporate organic entities and are also behind and/or support efforts to allow more synthetic ingredients and inputs in organic agriculture which undermine the essential and original standards established by the NOSB.
619	2015-05-08	0 Pat	Sharpless	NY	14489	Yes	
620	2015-05-08	1 Fred	Jodry	NY, NJ	10805	No	As above stated!
621	2015-05-09	0 Nadia	Maczaj	NY	12428	Yes	
622	2015-05-09	0 Oleh	Maczaj	NY	12428	Yes	
623	2015-05-10	1 Anne	Schwartz	US: W/	98283	Yes	Thank you very much for putting together this website. I worked with many others to draft and pass our WA state organic rule, and the Federal Rule on Organics. It is very disheartening to see the state of affairs these days. Your website will be very helpful for me as I work to engage my colleagues across the state to stand against the check off. It will not be easy, but we do have our own example of the WA State Apple Commission which was reduced by court order due to their own misuse of funds. Thank you again.
624	2015-05-11	2 Bruce	Drinkman	WI	54013	Yes	
625	2015-05-11	2 Daniel	Zufall	NY	13658	Yes	The Organic farming industry does not need a "check-Off" program, because the various co-ops and businesses are able to successfully promote the industry themselves.
626	2015-05-13	0 Peter	Martens	NY	14527	Yes	What direct benefit will the farmers paying this proposed checkoff experience? There is already more demand than can possibly be filled by current certified production and prices are stable and high. A checkoff is used by processors and industry groups to increase demand for a product and through increased demand, increase price. If demand is already greater than supply and price already high what can this accomplish? It will simply drive more imports of organic food from other countries and could actually undermine the reputation of organic in the marketplace because of questionable oversight in other countries. This is a bad deal for everyone except those who would receive a healthy salary for administering the program at the OTA
627	2015-05-13	0 Ila	Terry	NY	13646	Yes	



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							IDENTIFY WHERE AND HOW THE MONEY IS GOING TO BE SPENT, AND NOT BENEFIT THE FEW LARGE AGRI BUSINESSES, BUT CONCENTRATE ON THE SMALL FARMER WHO NEEDS THE MOST HELP.
628	2015-05-13	1 JON	KOWAL	NJ	08822	Yes	
629	2015-05-13	1 Robert	Moore	NY	13812	Yes	
							Organic is a grassroots movement that came about without the use of or need for a checkoff funded program. Much of the confusion in the commodity marketplace is due to lack of regulation and oversight regarding the terminology and labelling allowed (or required) on product packaging. The mandatory labelling of GMOs and Country Of Origin on food will both boost sales in the organic sector without the need for further promotion by the organic industry.
630	2015-05-13	1 Pam	Moore	ny	13812	Yes	
631	2015-05-13	1 Sally	Fox	CA	95606	Yes	
							Small farmers need to have an automatic voice, not measured by how much they feel like paying in. The market pressures are so high, margins too tight, justifying a bureaucratic payout is lunacy. Locally sourced organic food is better.
632	2015-05-13	2 Gregg	Stiner	ME	04654	Yes	
							The OTA is not the first of its kind of a generic checkoff. The conventional fruit and vegetable industry in 2009 proposed a generic multi commodity checkoff through PBH (Produce for Better Health Foundation). It FAILED. <a href="http://www.perishablepundit.com/docs/kaiser-backgroundbrief.pdf">http://www.perishablepundit.com/docs/kaiser-backgroundbrief.pdf</a> Here is the paper that created concern and opposition for the Generic PBH checkoff.
633	2015-05-18	1 Bryce	Stephens	KS	67643	Yes	
							Please do not use my email for any other solicitation. I do not normally give out my email address but am making an exception in this case.
634	2015-05-18	1 Daniel	Pace	NJ	08534	No	
635	2015-05-18	1 Dave	Hunt	NJ	08867	No	
636	2015-05-18	1 Krista	Coleman	NJ	08823	Yes	
637	2015-05-18	1 Christopher	Bujara	NJ	07013	No	
							The Organic Program does not need another program designed to break small farmers. National Organics Board is increasingly packed with large producers corrupting the intention of organic food to please Big Ag who want a larger easier share of the markets. With a handful of very large profitable companies already getting half or more of all farm subsidies, an increased effort must be made to assist all producers to maximize their clean and profitable efforts. Check off again hurts the Big Ag competition which again seems to be by design. My entire life I have strived to find the cleanest food possible after being raised on disgusting processed foods my Mom trusted and loved. As standards keep being degraded intentionally by USDA and now NOB, I personally seek out even smaller growers who are not labeled but trustworthy. The aforementioned have gone so far over the line with their bias against family and small farms, food safety and trustworthiness it has lost any credibility with anyone paying attention. Stop being enforcers for big ag - punishing farms who are no threat to big ag. Stop it, No Organic Checkoff.
638	2015-05-18	1 carol	jagiello	nj	07403	No	
639	2015-05-18	1 Susan	Asack	NJ	08540	Yes	
640	2015-05-18	1 Jim & Megar	Gerritsen	ME	04735	Yes	

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641	2015-05-18 1	Nora	Pugliese	NJ	078553	Yes	
642	2015-05-18 1	Bud	Feder	NJ	07044	No	
643	2015-05-18 1	Janice	Hazeldine	NJ	08520	Yes	let us choose our own way to advertise. I dont want to have my products railroaded by someone who has no idea about what I grow and I certainly dont want to have to pay for such garbage.
644	2015-05-18 1	WILLIAM	SHADEL	NJ	07735	No	
645	2015-05-18 1	Sandi	Robertson	NJ	07720	No	Please don't make it harder for organic farmers and producers to make a decent wage. High quality organic foods can stand on their own.
646	2015-05-18 1	Lucy	Kuiper	PA	18343	Yes	This only pushes out more farmers. Where will our food come. Collectivism should have died with the Soviet Union, but it is alive and well in the United States through mandatory, "collective" agricultural checkoffs. Whatever happened to good old American independence? If Communism was scary, corporate cronyism is even scarier and has pretty much decimated rural communities and environmental health in the name of "feeding the world." Go ahead Comrade - be just another cog in the wheel, always looking over your shoulder.
647	2015-05-18 1	Dana	Haugli	IA	50423	Yes	Vote for the organic checkoff.
648	2015-05-18 1	Richard	Tregidgo	PA	17532	Yes	
649	2015-05-18 2	Wilson	Klein	nj	08721	Yes	stop feeding the bureaucratic tapeworm
650	2015-05-19 0	Jeanne	Lardino	NJ	07876	No	
651	2015-05-19 0	Suzanne	Cunningham	NJ	08844	Yes	
652	2015-05-19 0	John	Theobald	NJ	07712	Yes	
653	2015-05-19 1	Liz	Bawden	NY	13646	Yes	This check-off really does not serve the interests of the organic farmer. The proposed budget for administration costs alone should send off alarm bells that someone else will be profiting greatly from this check-off.
654	2015-05-20 1	Jeff	Larkey	Ca	95060	Yes	I have been farming organically since 1981. The OTA does not represent me. I have and will develop my own markets, thank you very much. Another example of "Farming the Farmer". Enough! This program was conceived and is being pushed by people who make their living off of the actual producers of Organic food. I am talking about the merchants, processors and large corporations who have consolidated the organic label into a generic faceless commodity. These kinds of programs offer absolutely no benefit to farmers but I will be forced to pay for their benefit. They are bleeding us to death with their fees so they can market "their" products. This, even though, by their own admission, the demand for organic products exceeds the supply. How does bleeding existing farmers dry create more organic farmers?
655	2015-05-21 0	Rebecca	Warsinsky	WV	26501	No	As a consumer of organic food and products, and as an organic gardener, I oppose the Organic Check-Off Program. I oppose this Program because organic farmers' do not need or deserve to have their profitability negatively affected, which would then most likely be passed down to the consumer. It is an unfair and unnecessary program which will only hurt the organic farmer and in turn, the consumer.

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656	2015-05-22 0	Janet	GRILLO	NJ	08825	Yes	
657	2015-05-22 1	Steve	Bear	WA	98368	Yes	<a href="http://alpenfirecider.com/">http://alpenfirecider.com/</a> Who we are, part of an industry that has so few organic people involved.
658	2015-05-23 0	Chris	Klebaum	WA	98951	Yes	If the people creating the checkoff think it's such a good idea, why don't they fund it themselves?
659	2015-05-23 1	Francoise	La Monica	MA	02459	No	Consumer
660	2015-05-24 0	Alan	Ward	SD	57070	Yes	I do not want a check-off program of any kind. A check-off program is legalized stealing from the producers so some " industry representatives" can line their pockets at our expense!!
661	2015-05-25 1	Mariellen	Keefe	NJ	07920	No	This program will negatively affect the growing community of small organic farmers in NJ.
662	2015-05-25 2	Joel & Tami	Shaw	KS	67749	Yes	The wording of the petition describes our feelings very well. Thank you.
663	2015-05-27 0	Ray	Hoppes	OH	43160	Yes	I don't want an organic checkoff. I do not need an organic checkoff. It's just a way for some middlemen to make money off us organic farmers. Let us just do our job and leave the politics out of it. Thanks
664	2015-05-27 0	Sue	Rau	NY	13662	Yes	
665	2015-05-27 0	Andy	Soutar	NY	13662	Yes	
666	2015-05-27 0	Roger	Wechsler	WA	98232	Yes	
667	2015-05-27 1	Liana	McCoy	MN	56466	No	I am not a certified organic farmer, but I am a farmer and have had dealings with check-offs. In my opinion it did not help in advertising like they claimed to help sell my product. I have had to do all of my own advertising, etc to get decent prices for my commodity. I feel the check-offs are just another way to get money from farmers to pay for people to sit in ivory towers, get paid huge wages, do what the big corps wants, and still no nothing about the products themselves and the work that goes into them. I oppose any kind of check-off. Farmers just need to unite to help each other not let someone less knowledgeable about their work and products do it for them.
668	2015-05-27 1	Pam	Moore	ny	13812	Yes	
669	2015-05-27 1	Robert	Moore	ny	13812	Yes	
670	2015-05-27 1	Michael	Evenson	CA	95558	Yes	We don't need any promotion. The quality of our products speaks for itself and by the growth of our market, it does not need any help.
671	2015-05-27 1	Diane	Burnett	AZ	85338	No	
672	2015-05-27 1	Rich	Larson	VT	05774	Yes	I will make my own advertising decisions, thank you. I do not want some government bureaucrat sucking off more of my small farm income. What a stupid idea. Who benefits? Follow the money, and find who benefits. Not small organic farmers!
673	2015-05-27 1	Diane	Skoss	NJ	07059	Yes	I'll be in charge of deciding how to spend my marketing budget, thank you very much. There's no extra cash in my kitty to pay for another government program.
674	2015-05-27 1	joseph	Dietz	mn	56236	Yes	
675	2015-05-27 1	Elizabeth	OHara	CA	95678	No	This is yet another way to promote corporate control of our food!

Entry Id	Date Signed	Name	Last	State	ZIP Code	I am an organic farmer.	Comments
676	2015-05-27 2	Bonnie	Wideman	WI	54655	Yes	We don't need this!
677	2015-05-27 2	Fred	Griffen	NY	13040	Yes	
678	2015-05-27 2	bill	ahlborn	pa	18940	Yes	
679	2015-05-30 2	A	B	MI	48302	Yes	
680	2015-05-31 1	Charles	Lambert	Ill.	60914	Yes	we need to promote organics but not to the benefits of corporation that want to take control