

# Organic News



## Organic-loving consumers will likely keep buying sustainable food despite higher prices

Tim Paradis with Business Insider wrote this headline and article about consumers. If you get a chance to read it here is the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8fjfhv>

- Grocery prices are up 10% from a year ago, but some devoted foodies will keep buying organic.
- About four in 10 consumers who order takeout are willing to spend more on sustainable to-go options.
- Shoppers expect organic and are increasingly looking to food for how it can boost their wellness.

## Upcoming Rice Field Days

The upcoming Rice Field Days are titled “Designing Texas Rice for the Future,” and they feature a lot of information for Texas producers. As always there will be lots of general information on rice production but specifically there will be a look at the future of rice breeding. Whether conventional or organic, rice breeding work holds the keys to our future and these researchers are working hard to overcome nutrient deficiencies, disease and insect pressure, yield, and more.

**Eagle Lake Field Day**, Tuesday, June 28 starting at 4 pm.

**Beaumont Field Day**, Thursday, July 14 starting at 8 am.

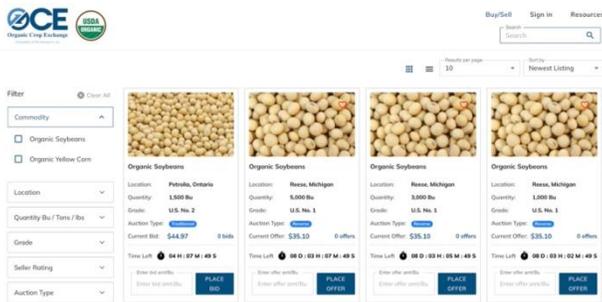
## Organic Rice Project Work Underway

The demand for organic rice in the U.S. exceeds domestic supply, and as a result there is significant competition from imports. While there is substantial growth and expansion potential for the organic rice sector, the U.S. organic rice industry needs objective information about the economic opportunities in the organic rice market in order to take advantage of this potential. To date, very little information exists regarding the economic and marketing characteristics, and the attitudes and preferences of producers and consumers toward organic rice in the U.S.



Fortunately, the Extension and research programs of Arkansas, Texas and California were recently awarded a grant to address these issues.

The overarching goal of this project is to facilitate the growth of organic rice production in the U.S. and foster the growth of the domestic market. To achieve this long-term goal, this project hopes to generate information about the adoption of production and marketing practices, consumer attitudes and preferences, and strategies to further expand the organic rice market in the U.S. Also, a multi-state outreach program will be developed to ensure the outcomes of this project reach the rice industry stakeholders and maybe foster organic rice industry growth. As an organic rice producer, you may be contacted to help provide grower input – we need your help!



**<https://OrganicCropExchange.com>**

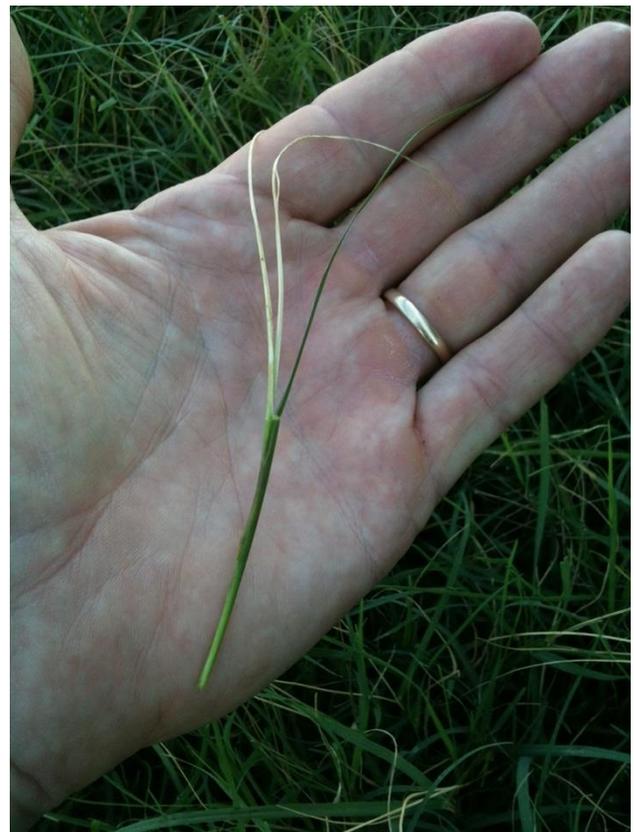
A few months ago, I was watching a YouTube video about organic grain and Matt Woods with OCE was being interviewed about their new organic grain marketing service. I went to the website to check it out and was really impressed with the idea and potential. It is kinda like eBay for organic grain!

Since then, I have had a long conversation with Matt and am excited that the service is there and that they want to expand into other commodities as fast as possible. Organic is still a very small part of overall grain marketing but that doesn't mean you have to be in the dark about price discovery.

**Bermudagrass Stem Maggot**

I sure don't want to sound all doom and gloom, but we do need to make sure all our organic pasture and hay growers are aware of a severe problem that is only getting worse. Organic bermudagrass hay or grazing producers should know this insect and unfortunately bermudagrass stem maggot (BSM) is here, and it doesn't seem to be going away!

If you are not sure about this insect or the damage it causes, then later this spring walk out in your pastures and look at all the dead tips (picture below). This insect has four life stages: the adult is a small fly, the adult lays an egg on the bermudagrass stem, the egg hatches a maggot or small larvae that burrows into the stem and feeds for several days. The feeding it does cuts through the topmost leaves so that they die. These leaves that died look just like a killing frost came through without the cold weather.



Alicia, Coastal and Tifton 44 are the most susceptible since they are finer textured bermudagrasses. Tifton 85, which is a coarser grass, just doesn't have as much of a problem with BSM as others.

What can you do as an organic producer? One option for mitigating the damage caused by BSM is through harvest management. If damage is found within 1 week of the normal harvest stage, then harvest the crop as soon as weather conditions allow. Once you see the damage, you are not likely

to get much more yield. If damage is within 1 to 3 weeks after the previous harvest, it is also likely that the crop will not add a significant amount of yield.

The damaged crop should be cut and (if the yields are enough to bale!) baled and removed from the field as soon as weather conditions allow. Leaving the damaged crop in the field will only compete with any attempts by the plant to regrow and decrease the opportunity that the next cutting will have to accumulate mass.



Can you treat organically? Yes, if you need to treat, then an organic pyrethrin or pyrethrin mix is an option. Current recommendations are to treat after a cutting if damage levels are high. Best results have come from treating twice—once a few days after baling the previous crop as the grass begins to resprout, and again 5 to 7 days later. Another possibility is the many and varied botanical products (cinnamon, garlic, clove, etc.), but this may be hit or miss! As always check with your certifier before making any treatments. In this dry year we can't afford to lose any hay to BSM!

## Peanut Seedling Test Plot

Today (May 20) we finished planting a peanut seedling disease test plot at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center in Stephenville. In this test we are

looking at 10 different treatments for seedling disease control on untreated peanut seed.



Conventional peanut seed is treated with a fungicide that protects the seed and the young seedling from any of the common fungus diseases found in soil. Seed treatments are really beneficial in situations where the conditions are not very good for germination like cold, wet weather. In an organic system with untreated organic seed, you basically need to wait till the weather is better or maybe you discover some organic treatments you can use when you plant, like in this test. What we are doing is testing some organic seed treatments (applied to the seed before planting), some liquid in-furrow treatments, and some soil incorporated treatments and comparing them with an untreated check (just peanut seed) and a check with a regular conventional fungicide treated seed.

Over the course of the next several weeks we will be evaluating the germination percentage for each of the 400 seed planted in each treatment, how quickly they grow, and the stage of plant growth at each week. For more details on treatments and methods go to this website: <https://agrilifeorganic.org/blog-posts/>

## Organic Products List

I am working on a project to **list organic products** and make them available to organic producers and handlers. This list will show a product's active ingredient name, type, some of the

product names with that active ingredient, uses for that ingredient (insects, disease, etc.) crops labeled, and disease or insect controlled.

Type of active ingredient	Active ingredient(s)	Example product(s)
<i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i>	strain MBI 600	Serifel
<i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i>	strain D747 (Ba D747)	Double Nickel 55, Double Nickel LC
<i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i>	strain F727	Amplitude, Amplitude ST, Stargus
<i>Bacillus mycooides</i>	isolate J	LifeGard WG
<i>Bacillus pumilus</i>	QST 2808	Sonata
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	strain IAB/BS03	AVIV
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	strain QST 713	Cease, Serenade (ASO, MAX, SOIL), Rhapsody
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	strain GB03	Companion
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	var. <i>amyloliquefaciens</i> strain FZB24	Taegro, Taegro 2
<i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i>	var. <i>israelensis</i>	Gnatrol
<i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i>	var. <i>kurstaki</i>	Crymax, DiPel
<i>Bacillus velezensis</i>	NCIMB 30322	LALRise Start, or Vita
Bacterial peptide	Rhamnolipid biosurfactant (from <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> )	Zonix
Bacteriophage	Unspecified Bacteriophages (8 strains)	AgriPhage, AgriPhage CMM, AgriPhage Citrus
Botanical	Clove, rosemary, peppermint oil, cottonseed oil, thyme, garlic, cinnamon	GreenFurrow BacStop
Botanical	Clove, rosemary, peppermint oil, cottonseed oil	GreenFurrow EF 400

**Why is this important?** It is very common for growers to be familiar with a brand name product but then along comes another brand name and yet they contain the same active ingredient! This and much more information on crops and potential control is planned!

## Pecan Scab Disease Control

So far, we have been too dry to worry about pecan scab disease in Central Texas, but I am sure the problem has not gone away. When we do get some wet weather, we will be applying treatments with two organic products that are great in a rotation program for conventional growers and certainly something to consider in an organic pecan



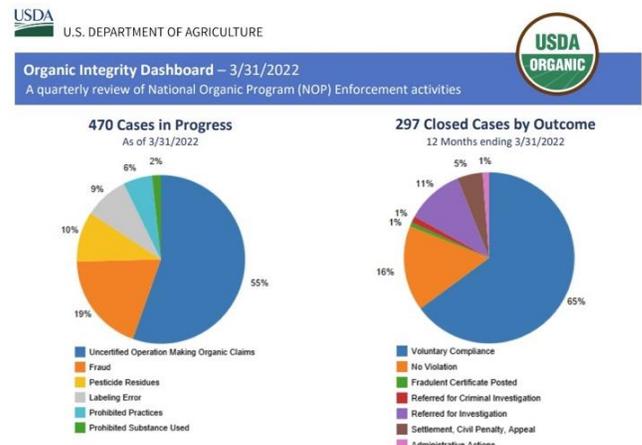
program. The treatments include Certis Biologicals - **LifeGard**, *Bacillus mycooides* and **Sil-Matrix**, a potassium silicate. They are applied by the grower

in 12-acre blocks and compared with an untreated control and the grower’s standard fungicide treatment. This is not an organic orchard, but it is an orchard with a history of pecan scab problems.

## Organic Enforcement

I gave an organic program talk the other day and was surprised by audience members who claimed to be buying organic products but in truth they were not! The picture below shows the latest NOP enforcement issues and again the uncertified organic claims are the bulk.

If you suspect some company or individual is involved in anything that might affect the integrity of the National Organic Program, please file a complaint here



(<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/enforcement/organic/file-complaint>) or have your certifier file a complaint.

## Upcoming Organic Events or Meetings

Soil Regen, “Farming for the Future” soil health conference in Salado, TX. June 1-2.

Eagle Lake Rice Field Day, June 28 starting at 4 pm.

Texas Pecan Growers Association, July 10-13 in San Marcos

Beaumont Rice Field Day, July 14 starting at 8 am.

**Organic Cotton/Peanut Tour**, Thursday, September 1 in the Seminole area.