

Extension Specialist I Organic Programs



Job Description



The goals of this position are to increase awareness of organic production in Texas, increase organic acreage in Texas, increase economic impact of organic production in Texas, and support applicants in successfully completing the organic certification process. The specialist will serve as an information resource for current and prospective farmers and ranchers interested in improving their organic operation or becoming certified. A major focus of this position is assisting with certification applications and renewal requirements. The candidate also will be expected to identify research findings and information related to pest, disease, and weed pressure and other issues affecting organic and to provide recommendations in line with organically approved methods and current research. The candidate may also provide direction with regard to organic/untreated/non-GMO seed sourcing and research with new prospective organic crops. The candidate should expect to work with TAMU Administration and faculty; Research and Extension personnel; Federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations; personnel from other universities, centers, and institutes; and other partners to plan and develop projects and grant proposals to address statewide organic agriculture information needs.

Major/Essential Duties of Job

- Provide guidance to persons or entities seeking organic certification.
- Serve as a liaison connecting organic operators to Extension and Research scientists to provide guidance on general and sector-specific questions.
- Communicate with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and other certifiers to facilitate compliance with certification requirements.
- Provide feedback to Texas A&M AgriLife and TDA on the state of organic agriculture based on interactions with farmers, ranchers, and other entities.
- Investigate solutions to barriers to organic certification.
- Other duties as required.

Required Education and Experience

Masters degree in an agricultural or agribusiness field. Technical knowledge of organic plant and/or livestock production is necessary.



*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*

Preferred Education

At least one degree (BS or MS) in agricultural economics, or a closely related field. Specialized training and education in the USDA AMS regulations regarding organic agriculture, organic inspector training for farms and processing facilities.

Preferred Experience

Experience developing and delivering outreach educational programming on issues related to organic agriculture and organic certification. Government relations experience. Farming/ranching, agronomy, horticulture, or range management experience.



Preferred licenses, certifications, or registrations

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Accredited Certifying Agent (ACA) through National Organics Program (NOP) or willingness to obtain similar certification.

Required special knowledge, abilities, and skills

The candidate should be knowledgeable of and capable of becoming an expert at the application and renewal process for organic certification for producers, handlers, and processors. This requires an understanding of the certification process for both small consumer/retail farms and large commercial/wholesale operations. The candidate must be willing to become familiar with funding opportunities and other forms of assistance through TDA, USDA, and other entities that aid all certified or prospective certified participants. The candidate must also have the ability to work closely with, and effectively communicate to diverse audiences (verbal and written); ability to plan, conduct and evaluate educational programs; ability to effectively use a personal computer; and ability to multitask and work cooperatively with others. Travel is required.



Preferred special knowledge, abilities, and skills

All positions are security-sensitive. Applicants are subject to a criminal history investigation, and employment is contingent upon the institution's verification of credentials and/or other information required by the institution's procedures, including the completion of the criminal history check.

Contact

Dept. of Agricultural Economics
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
ph. 979.845.1751
fx. 979.845.3140
<https://agecoext.tamu.edu/>

For more information or to apply:

<http://bit.ly/OrganicSpecialist>

or View Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
posting R-027759 at

<https://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/hr/careers-employment/>