

**Organic Conservation Specialist
Oregon Tilth, Inc.**

Job Description

Overview: In partnership with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Oregon Tilth is hiring a shared national position to develop new technical information and training that will allow NRCS conservation planners to assist owners and managers of private working lands to make management decisions and use the latest and best technology to enhance resource conservation on organic agricultural production systems. The position will be based at the NRCS West National Technology Support Center (NTSC) in Portland, OR for a two-year term. The scope of this position is national and will require up to 2 weeks / month of long-distance travel.

Purpose: The purpose of this position is to 1) increase knowledge of USDA conservationists regarding organic agriculture production systems, 2) develop technical information for use by agency staff, 3) increase knowledge of organic certifiers regarding resource conservation, and 4) enable more strategically focused and effective outreach efforts in order to increase conservation assistance to organic producers.

The Organic Conservation Specialist is hired by, and reports to, Oregon Tilth's Executive Director. Additional oversight and guidance will be provided by a small advisory committee comprised Oregon Tilth's Executive Director, designated NRCS staff, and representatives from other interested partners.

Responsibilities of the Organic Conservation Specialist will include, but are not limited to:

1. Develop technology notes in collaboration with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) national and National Technology Support Center (NTSC) specialists.
2. Conduct technology transfer workshops in conjunction with NRCS State Offices, State Technical Advisory Committees, producers, conservation district directors and personnel, and other interested partners.
3. Develop case studies of successful integration of conservation practices with organic management systems.
4. Work with the NRCS national and NTSC specialists to integrate organic production criteria into national and state criteria for screening EQIP or other contract proposals.
5. Develop information to support cost-share programs for organic production around specific agricultural enterprises, such as dairies, vineyards, orchards, and commodity crops.
6. Develop job sheets for conservation practice standards that are critical for organic agriculture production.
7. Develop training targeted to regional organic organizations to increase their awareness and understanding of NRCS programs, services, and opportunities.

Job Specification

Full-time, salaried position with exempt status

The qualifications for the job of Organic Conservation Specialist include the following:

A. Education and Experience

1. *Required:* A BS/BA Degree in agriculture, conservation biology or related field *and* at least 5 years technical work experience, of which 3 years must be managing an organic production system. A clear understanding of the USDA NRCS Agency's mission.
2. *Preferred:* Work experience with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, local conservation district *and* in designing & implementing organic management systems.

B. Computer Skills

1. Email and Internet
2. Word Processing and Spreadsheet
3. PowerPoint or other presentation software
4. Database systems

C. Skills

1. Communication
2. Training development and delivery
3. Writing
4. Organization
5. Detail oriented
6. Multi-tasking

D. Specific Skills and Abilities

1. Ability to develop and deliver new technical information using established agency (NRCS) process, tools and resource infrastructure
2. Ability to network and establish supportive working relationships
3. Ability to communicate well with colleagues, stakeholders and target audiences
4. Ability to work as member of a team, and interface with all necessary branches of organization (Oregon Tilth) and agency (USDA NRCS).
5. Ability to solve problems and make decisions
6. Ability to assess and evaluate current and future work loads
7. Ability to plan, coordinate and deliver effective training workshops in a variety of contexts and appropriate to different target audiences
8. Ability to manage own travel and stay within a predetermined travel budget