Oregon Tilth, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports and promotes biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture through education, research, advocacy and certification.
Oregon Tilth is a leading nonprofit certifier, educator and advocate for organic agriculture and products since 1974. Our mission to make our food system and agriculture biologically sound and socially equitable requires us to find practical ways to tackle big challenges. We advance this mission to balance the needs of people and planet through focus on core areas of certification, conservation, public health, policy and the marketplace.

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**LET’S GET STARTED!**

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Our work is guided by the beliefs that underpin our mission, the intent that shapes our vision, and the ways we engage our work and our communities. We believe our identity is unique. We believe our identity is powerful.

Today, we look for opportunities to bring everyone to the table – government agencies, farmers, nonprofits, businesses and citizens – to find the best solutions to meet food system challenges face on. Through our membership, our certification program and other programs, we embrace sharing knowledge and model practices that help spur discovery and accelerate innovation in sustainable food system practices.

Since 1984, Oregon Tilth has been a part of discussions and actions that have influenced local, regional and national sustainable and organic communities, policies, and practices for decades. Oregon Tilth is uniquely positioned to increase sustainability throughout the entire supply chain from seed to table to develop practical approaches from the bottom up. We take an integrative-based approach to our work, directing resources to focus on the interrelationships between people, environment, policy and economy to have maximum impact.

Over the past 40 years, Oregon Tilth has led the way in organic agriculture and sustainable production methods, playing a leading role in the formation of a federal USDA National Organic Program and expanding organic sustainability beyond agriculture to textiles and other products. We believe in a holistic approach to food production and encourage producers to create organic systems that improve soils, preserve natural resources and minimize public health risks. Our work with processors, handlers and marketers of organic products ensures the organic integrity of products from the farm to the table, and everything in between.

Oregon Tilth Certified Organic (OTCO) provides certification services of the highest quality that reflect and respect producers’ dedication to organics. Our staff is committed to providing excellent customer service and technical assistance to ensure that each individual’s certification experience is educational, transparent and timely. We believe that the lasting relationships we cultivate with our clients, combined with Oregon Tilth’s education and advocacy around organics nationwide leads to real change for the environment, our food system and the well-being of our greater agricultural community.

**Our Intended Impact**

1. Nurture Healthy Land
2. Develop a Deeper Relationship Between People and Food
3. Grow the Organic Sector
4. Ensure Integrity of Organic Products
5. Drive Public Investment in Sustainable Agriculture
Our History

In 1974, Tilth became the name for a regional network of organic farmers and gardeners in the Pacific Northwest that Wendell Berry called, “a constituency for a better kind of agriculture.” “Regional Tilth” became a community addressing issues relative to sustainable agriculture. In 1984, Willamette Valley Tilth began an organic certification program to serve the needs of growers looking to protect and promote organic farming. These standards inspired certification programs in other states. In 1986, Oregon Tilth was incorporated, and became a non-profit in 1987. Oregon Tilth formed the Western Alliance of Certification Organizations with California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) and the WA State Dept. of Agriculture’s Organic Program to formulate materials list standards and further align the three western certification programs.

In 1997, Oregon Tilth helped form the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), evaluating materials for use in organic farms and processors nationally. Today, Oregon Tilth is the third largest USDA accredited organic certifier, serving over 1,598 processors and growers, restaurants and retailers representing the entire food chain, from seed to fork. Our leadership in the organic movement is well-documented and ongoing.

Tilth’s work alongside our partners, collaborators and stakeholders, continues to shape our mission of promoting biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture.

Building A Legacy Over Time

1. Oregon Tilth is one of the largest certifiers in the country and undeniably the most balanced. Roughly half of our certified operators are farms and the other half processors, giving us a unique and invaluable perspective on the entire supply chain, from seed to table, farm to fork, literally from the ground up.

2. Unlike most sustainable agriculture events, our biennial event, Organicology, seeks to bring all of the stakeholder groups to the table to not only develop skills in their own areas of activity but to gain exposure to the challenges and accomplishments of those in other areas of the trade and movement. With over 1,100 participants in 2015, Organicology offers timely intensive training sessions, workshops, world class keynote speakers, amazing entertainment and networking. Organicology is a conference of its own class.

3. In Good Tilth, our quarterly magazine, covers a wide range of topics related to sustainable food systems and social equity in agriculture. In publication for over 27 years, IGT has evolved from a black and white newspaper to a full color, long-form quarterly magazine alongside a multimedia digital website at igt.tilth.org, reaching over 25,000 individuals in print and online.

4. We believe good things happen with good policy. We participate in national coalitions to advocate for a sustainable food system. Our work includes grassroots action with our members and clients, creating connections between legislators and communities to help inform, educate and influence policy changes.

5. Our education work involves farmers, processors, scientists, researchers and other partners to tackle challenges with a wide range of knowledge. Discussion and engagement are at the core of all of our efforts. Through education, we nurture promising practices that become everyday approaches that help conserve our environment, strengthen regional economies and enhance public health.
OUR REACH + IMPACT

6 COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD WITH OREGON TILTH CERTIFIED ORGANIC SERVICES

48 STATES HAVE OREGON TILTH CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPERATIONS

1598 CLIENTS

21 CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPERATIONS IN CANADA

97 CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPERATIONS IN U.S.

1476 CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPERATIONS IN MEXICO

29,624 OREGON TILTH CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTS

3,758,328 OREGON TILTH CERTIFIED ORGANIC ACRES
Over the next few years, our focus will be directed toward achieving an impact in and through the sustainable and organic food movement, and among those the movement serves. This is our strategic direction. This direction will shape our energy, our priorities, and our action going forward.

**OUR STRATEGIC PLAN ORIENTS US TO PURSUE THESE FOUR PRIMARY STRATEGIES:**

- Retain and transition more farmers and ranchers into organic
- Increase value and provide multiple benefits to certified clients
- Engage and educate consumers
- Increase collaboration, innovation, and investment in sustainable food systems

**Retain and transition more farmers into organic.**
We envision attracting and retaining more farmers and ranchers to transition into organic. This means building an “on ramp” to bring farmers and ranchers more easily into and through the transition. We will signal opportunity to growers and provide education to help the transition, and once in transition, to supporting farmers through transition.

**Increase value and provide multiple benefits to certified clients**
We intend to develop among certified clients a deeper appreciation for the value of certification and to make certification more meaningful and less transactional. We envision clients receiving multiple types of certification that are important to them, from Oregon Tilth. Clients will come to see the full and robust value of certification and embrace the wide array of ways certification will help their operations.

**Engage and educate consumers**
We intend for people to know, care about, and connect with the source of their food. We aim for people to believe in the benefits of organic food and agriculture for themselves, their family, and their broader community. Our vision is that consumers would come to understand that their purchases impact the land.

**Increase collaboration, innovation, and investment in sustainable food systems**
Building on our strategic advantage of access and influence and our engagement with clients, our intention is to increase collaboration across the sustainable and organic movements. Oregon Tilth can be a bridge builder in this arena. We intend to play a role in creating a strong, united, and trusted voice for sustainable food systems at the national and regional level.
BOARD EXPECTATIONS

ACTIVITIES + RESPONSIBILITIES

- Prepare for and participate in board meetings
- Maintain a deep understanding of board governance model + governing documents
- Help create connections, partnerships and content for advocacy and outreach
- Review and complete monitoring reports
- Provide fiscal oversight for the organization
- Be a member of Oregon Tilth in good standing

COMMITMENTS

- Participate in one board committee (1-2 hours per month)
- Attend up to three in-person meetings per year (1.5 days)
- Participate in teleconference meetings (2-3 per year, 2 hours)
- Attend our annual membership meeting and Organicology Conference (biennial event)