

### **Organic Cross-Training**

An Intro to NRCS and Organic Certification



### **History of Organic Certification**

- Third-party certification in USA began in 1980s
  - Regional base; private and state-run certifying bodies
  - Response to expanding market and longer supply chains; ensure product integrity / credibility
- Small to mid-sized companies



#### **History of Organic** Certification



Decentralized structure



Grassroots approach to program development



Diverse approaches and services



### **History of NRCS**



Dust Bowl Beginnings



75+ years of technical assistance



Strong historical focus on soil and water conservation



Local offices – local connections



Midwest base



🎇 National Organization



# Impacts of this History on Today's Organization

(class discussion)



### Current Organic Structure



National Organic Program at USDA

Controlled marketing claim; facilitate trade

All scales and types of operations

Centralized administration; decentralized service delivery

Grassroots input with top-down decisions
Unified standards and process



### **Current NRCS Focus** and Structure



Nation-wide including territories



SWAPA + E (and human)



Farm Bill brings in new customers



Rural, Suburban, Urban focus with partners



Decentralized & centralized



# Impacts of Today's Organization on 'program' delivery

(class discussion)



#### Varying Missions Common Goals & Approaches

Use of incentives to encourage changes in behavior



Resource Protection

is Sustainable Farms