



## **TALKING POINTS FOR FARM BILL HEARING**

Monday, October 9, 2017 10:00 AM

SUNY Cobleskill, Bouck Hall Auditorium, 107 Schenectady Ave.

Please tell the House Agriculture Committee why organic farming and food is important to you. Below are 4 Farm Bill priorities for NOFA-NY

- **ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM** – Full mandatory funding for this important assistance to offset organic certification costs to farmers, help increase number of U.S. organic farmers to meet growing demand for organic products.
- **ORGANIC AGRICULTURE RESEARCH ACT (HR 2436)** – If we are going to be able to meet growing demand for organic food with domestically produced product, we have to do a better job of funding research to address production constraints faced by our farmers. Therefore, Congress should support bi-partisan legislation to increase mandatory funding for Organic Research in the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative to \$50 million. Funding for USDA's organic-specific research programs has been stagnant for years, and broader programs like AFRI are not funding much organic research at all. (On average, only about 0.2 percent of AFRI funding goes toward organic research).
- **ORGANIC FARMER AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT (HR 3871)**– Support bi-partisan legislation to prevent the importation of fraudulent organic products from overseas through stricter enforcement of organic products entering the U.S., modernization of organic import documentation, and new technology advancements.
- **SEEDS & BREEDS** – Farmers need seeds and animal breeds that are ideally suited to their local growing conditions, changing climates and farming systems. USDA should be prioritizing this work, by using existing research programs to dedicate \$50 million in annual funds to public plant and animal breeding efforts, with a focus on regionally adapted cultivars.