

Stronger Local Food Systems Start with Stronger Market Connections

Connecting farmers and buyers to grow organic supply chains in rural communities

Top Barriers Identified by Farmers and Organic Partners Nationwide

Insights from conversations with farmers and organic partners across the U.S.

- Lack of certified organic processing and handling infrastructure
- Limited understanding of organic market demand and available opportunities
- Need for aggregation through cooperatives and food hubs
- Gaps in trust and relationship-building between buyers and sellers
- Unclear return on investment for organic transition

Our Approach

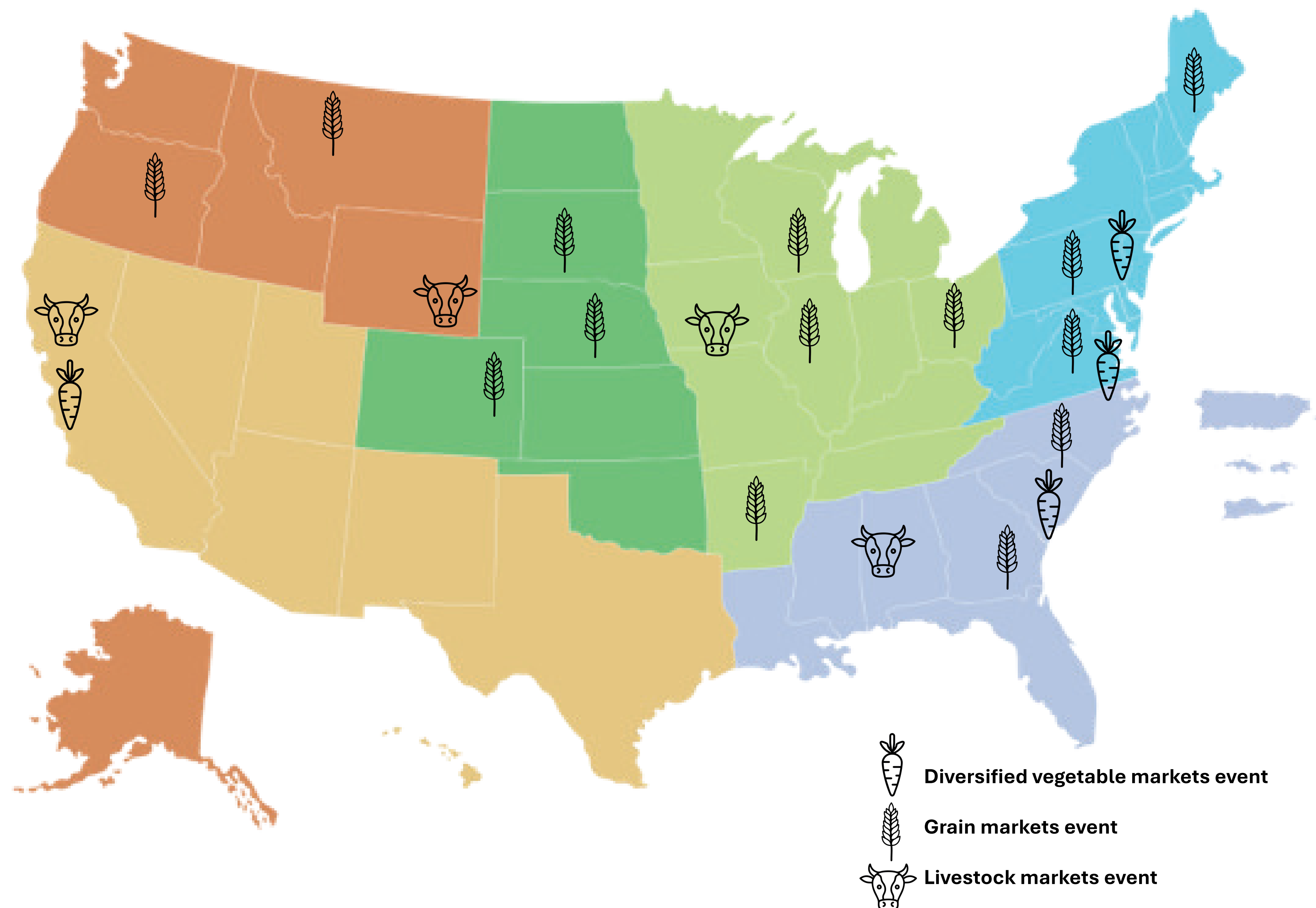
The Markets team at Rodale Institute partners with the Organic Trade Association through the USDA's Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) to grow the organic marketplace.

We connect farmers and buyers through:

- Buyer-seller mixers
- Buyer farm tours
- Market development workshops
- Webinars and regional events

Events are designed for:

- Organic farmers
- Farmers transitioning to organic
- Producers exploring organic production
- Buyers across the supply chain



Results to Date

- 36+ in-person events
- 300+ buyer and 1,000+ farmer attendees
- Development of regional organic market toolkits

What We're Seeing

- Growing demand for regional organic supply chains
- Events lead to real business connections
- 1:1 technical assistance + group learning = highest impact

Why This Matters for Rural Grocers

Your role directly shapes whether organic farming can grow in your region. Rural grocery stores are essential partners in building regional organic markets:

- Create reliable demand for local organic products
- Support farmers transitioning to organic production
- Keep food dollars circulating within rural communities
- Expand access to healthy, locally produced food

Get Involved

Learn more and find events: [organictransition.org/region/national](https://www.organictransition.org/region/national).

Connect with Rodale Institute's Markets Team: markets@rodaleinstitute.org