



The Louisiana Organic Center of Excellence ***Building and Sustaining the Organic Economy***

Mission Statement

The Louisiana Organic Center of Excellence will be the catalyst to develop a flourishing Organic Economy in the State of Louisiana. The objective of the Louisiana Organic Center of Excellence (LOCE) will be to develop new organic business, educational and technological tools to strengthen and assist Louisiana's underserved rural communities and organic enterprises.

The Louisiana Organic Center of Excellence program will focus on economic opportunity, sustainable business and community development, community-based partnerships and a strategic vision for change. The purpose of the LOCE will be to accelerate the commercialization of organic products and marketing partnerships that stimulate organic agriculture, processing and retail enterprises in Louisiana. The objectives of the LOCE will be to support a strong Organic Economy through innovation, information sharing, technical assistance, and commercialized organic production to increase the share of organics in the Economy through:

- Expanded partnerships with business
- Linking to Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Communities
- Louisiana State USDA Rural Development field staff,
- Southern University,
- Louisiana State University and other colleges and universities, civic organizations, 4 H Club, Avoyelles Parish Tourism Board, Lafayette Parish and other rural communities.
- Developing and engaging a well rounded, informed and focused stakeholders group.

Statement of Principals

The Louisiana Organic Center of Excellence:

1. Will operate from an Economic Development model that encourages business development using market forces as the key factor for decision-making.
2. Will foster the adherence to accepted organic and sustainable agricultural principals.
3. Will focus research and development of organic business opportunities and solutions to challenges in the Southern US.
4. Will foster fair enterprise practices that encourage fair and equitable rewards for business endeavors throughout the business channels.
5. Will grant access to programs that reduce the barriers to entry for organic enterprises.
6. Will develop related funding mechanisms for The Organic Center of Excellence through the economic successes of best practices that can be measured, communicated and commercialized.

Members Charter

The Louisiana Organic Centre of Excellence Stakeholder Members will

1. Develop business enterprises, practises and systems that complement with the natural environment and resource systems.
2. Build, protect and sustain agricultural, processing and distributions systems that “assure environmental responsibility throughout the life cycles of the processes and products”.
3. Maximize farm and processing recycling and minimize the use of non-renewable resources; provide crop nutrition using crop rotations, and relatively insoluble nutrient sources made available to the plant by the action of soil micro-organisms.
4. Ensure the ethical treatment of workers and animals paying full regard to their evolutionary adaptations, behavioural needs and welfare issues including nutrition, housing, health, breeding, rearing and slaughter.
5. Protect and enhance the farm environment with particular regard to the conservation of its wildlife and careful attention to the impact of the farming system on the wider environment.
6. Consider the wider economic, social and ecological impact of agriculture by respecting the environment; establishing ethical employment standards and bringing economic sustainability back to the Southern farm.
7. Create a legacy for the future of our children and their children ensuring a better quality of life and vibrant Organic Economy for future generations.

Note: In 2002, the USDA Rural Development announced funding to establish National Centers of Excellence in under-served rural communities. Magnaville’s LOCE will apply for this USDA funding.

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