

Imagining a Greater Organic Reset

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › We need to set a goal of 25% of farmers being organic by 2030, or as soon as possible. Only 17,000 of the US's two million farms are now certified organic, while another 10-15% could eventually be certified as organic
- › OCA and Regeneration International, working with leading organic certifiers across the world, have developed a plan to multiply the number of certified organic farmers, land managers, communities, and districts
- › One of RI and HC's flagship projects, with enormous global potential is the Billion Agave Agroforestry Project in Mexico, especially suited for small farmers in the 40% of the world's that are arid or semi-arid

OCA often talks about our long-term goal with Regeneration International and our allies: making organic and regenerative food, farming, and land use (and natural health) the norm, rather than just the alternative.

As our longtime ally Vandana Shiva points out, this would be "the solution to the soil crisis, the food crisis, the climate crisis, and the crisis of democracy."¹

OCA and our partners worldwide, including Mercola.com, are dedicated to addressing critical issues of environmental contamination, nutrition, junk foods, deteriorating public health, climate change, soil health, biodiversity, water pollution and scarcity, forced migration, economic justice, and rural economic development. But what do we need to do to make this goal a practical reality? What would an "Organic Greater Reset" look like.

Degenerate or Regenerative Subsidies?

We need to stop corrupt politicians, the Big Ag lobby, and the global elite from subsidizing degenerative chemical and fossil fuel-intensive agriculture, GMOs, lab food, and factory farms. Current global subsidies, propping up business as usual for degenerative agriculture, amount to \$700 billion annually.²

Shifting priorities, we can pay organic farmers and ranchers, not only a fair price for the food and products they produce, but also pay them for sequestering excess atmospheric carbon in soils and above ground plants and trees, as well as providing other key environmental services such as preserving clean water, improving soil fertility, protecting biodiversity, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, and rehydrating and reforesting parched landscapes.

Following recent policy reforms and recommendations in the European Union, strongly supported by our organic allies in the EU, we need raise our expectations and our demands in the US and North America.

We need to set a goal of 25% of farmers being organic by 2030, or as soon as possible. Only 17,000³ of the US's two million farms are now certified organic, while another 10-15% (according to FAO projections) could eventually be certified as organic, with minor changes in farm and animal husbandry practices, proper financial incentives, and improved infrastructure and market access.

In global terms this means we need to do everything we can to make certain that 10% or more of the world's 600 million (475 million are small farmers with 5 acres or less) farmers become certified organic by 2030. On the individual and community level this means boycotting chemically-tainted and GMO products and buying organic and local today and every day.

It means taking back our health and our health and food choices from Big Pharma, Big Food, Bill Gates, and the WHO. It means practicing preventive and natural health with organic food, natural herbs, and supplements. It means teaching our youth and those victimized by Big Food and the Big Chains by our positive marketplace behavior.

It means staying out of restaurants and coffee shops, especially the chains, unless they are sourcing local and organic products. It means cooking at home with organic fresh foods and ingredients, boycotting factory farmed meat and animal products and replacing these with grass-fed or pastured alternatives.

It means improving our cooking and home economic skills, and growing as much of our own food as possible in home or community gardens. It means working with family farmers and ranchers to make the transition to organic, regenerative, grassfed, and pasture-raised. Buying direct from organic and local farmers, independent retailers, co-ops, and buying clubs.

Looking for "Organic Plus" add-on labels and producers such as the Real Organic Project, Biodynamic Demeter Organic, American Grassfed Association, and Regenerative and Organic Certified. Last, but not least, it means demanding that politicians and local institutions stop subsidizing chemical agriculture, GMOs, and highly processed junk food.

There are approximately four million producers certified as organic globally, and an estimated (by the UN) 55 million more farmers producing organically or near-organically, but who are not yet certified for one reason or another. Presently there are 16 nations in the world with 10% or more of their farmers certified as organic. The global market for certified organic food and products is projected to be as high as \$437 billion dollars in 2026.⁴

The global market for all food (conventional and organic) is now estimated at \$10 trillion per year.⁵ OCA's goal, as part of a global movement, is to help the certified organic (and "Organic Plus") market grow to one trillion dollars by 2030, or as soon as possible thereafter. There are currently over 200 million acres of agricultural land certified as organic and 50 million acres of grazing lands under holistic livestock management.

We need 1-3 billion global acres under organic and regenerative management, as soon as possible. This will enable us to move to fix the environment, restore soil health, reforest parched and degraded lands, produce enormous amounts of nutrient-dense

organic and organic food, and reach net zero and "net negative" emissions as soon as possible.

Moving Past Zero to "Net Negative" Emissions

The climate crisis and its collateral damage: severe droughts, floods, violent weather, rising sea levels, and unprecedented phenomena like the disruption of the polar vortex and jet stream (causing extreme cold or heat waves), are real, as every farmer, including myself and those of us in the Regeneration International network, can attest.

Don't let yourself be confused by the fact that the fossil fuel industry, corrupt politicians (both Democrats and Republicans), and would-be global dictators such as Bill Gates, Klaus Schwab, and the World Economic Forum either deny that the climate crisis is real (or important), or else want to use the crisis as an excuse to gain dictatorial political power, greenwash their corruption, trample democratic rights and political sovereignty, and implement an authoritarian, Chinese Communist Party-style "Great Reset" or New World Order.

Current annual global greenhouse gas emissions are 37 billion tons of CO₂e. We need to reach net zero emissions and net negative emissions as soon as possible if we are to avoid wholesale climate and biodiversity collapse, endless poverty-driven conflict, forced migration, and water/food resource wars.

The only way we can do this is to make organic and regenerative food, farming and land use the norm. Keep in mind that almost all global agriculture was "de facto organic" for 8,000 years, right up until the disastrous advent of chemical agriculture (and later GMOs), factory farms, and ultraprocessed foods at the end of the Second World War.

Even if the world transitioned to 100% renewable energy tomorrow, this would not stop the ongoing terrestrial temperature and sea level rises and weather extremes. The world will continue to heat up because CO₂, unless we can draw it down into our soils and forests, lasts between 300 to 1,000 years in the atmosphere. The heat in the oceans will continue to adversely affect the climate and weather patterns until it slowly dissipates.

We are in the early stages of an environmental, biodiversity and climate crisis now. We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve energy, speed up the transition to renewable energy, preserve and regenerate our forests, restore ecosystems and landscapes, and make organic and regenerative food, farming, and land use the norm, not just the alternative. As organic farmers and consumers we have a crucial role to play.

OCA and Regeneration International, working with leading organic certifiers across the world, have developed a plan to multiply the number of certified organic farmers, land managers, communities, and districts while helping these organic farmers and communities move to the next stage of organic production (Organic 3.0),⁶ which is both organic and regenerative.

In the beginning RI will be focusing on the organic best practices of its 500 organic and regenerative farm affiliates in 60 nations.

These "best practices" include the Billion Agave Agroforestry project in Mexico, the SW US, and Latin America, "food forest" rainforest restoration in the Amazon, and intensive silvopasture projects in Latin America, best practices which are not only organic and regenerative, but which have the potential to be scaled-up on millions of acres. How can we expand the organic movement and the organic market dramatically?

Organic farmers and communities not only need to be paid a fair price for the food, fiber, and natural building materials which they produce; but governments, individuals, and corporations must also be lobbied and pressured to pay an "Organic Plus" Eco-Services fee for the Organic Eco-Services, carbon sequestration, and poverty reduction benefits of these organic producers.

"Carbon inserts" and "mitigation compensation" are the technical names for these payments. By working with Hudson Carbon and global organic certifiers like Demeter, we will be able to measure, quantify, and verify these eco-system benefits including soil fertility, soil organic matter, biodiversity, soil rainwater infiltration and retention, carbon sequestration (both below and above ground), and socio-economic (poverty reduction, etc.) impact.

Current annual global greenhouse gas emissions are 37 billion tons of CO₂e. We need to reach net zero and net negative emissions as soon as possible if we are to avoid runaway global warming, wholesale biodiversity collapse, climate catastrophe, endless poverty-driven conflict, forced migration, and wars.

Besides making the transition to renewable energy (50% or more by 2050) and implementing long overdue energy conservation measures, the global organic and regenerative community needs to draw down and sequester, above ground and below-ground, 20 billion tons of CO₂e per year in our soils, plants, and trees, as soon as possible.

The current and potential terrestrial carbon sink and biodiversity habitat of the Earth is made up of 4 billion acres of croplands, 8 billion acres of pasturelands and rangelands, and 10 billion acres of forest. Forty percent of these 22 billion acres are classified as arid or semi-arid.

Besides planting a trillion new trees⁷ and preserving and improving our 10 billion acres of forest lands, we need to bring a billion acres of cropland and rangeland (out of the total of 12 billion) under organic and regenerative management by 2030, and three billion acres by 2050.

If we can do this we will not only be able to mitigate, but actually reverse global warming, stop the Great Extinction of biodiversity currently underway, begin to reverse the global water crisis, qualitatively improve public health and nutrition, and eliminate poverty among the three billion farmers, farmworkers, and rural villagers on the planet.

OCA and Regeneration International are working to identify, publicize, quantify, valorize, financially incentivize, and scale-up organic and regenerative food, farming, and land-use best practices and best practitioners across the world.

These are the organic and regenerative best practices that sequester excess atmospheric carbon, both above ground and below ground, regenerate soil health, restore landscapes, increase biodiversity, regenerate watersheds and hydrological

systems, protect the environment, provide healthy nutrient-dense food, and eliminate rural poverty.

With adequate funding, RI and our partners will be able to achieve these objectives through public education, market demand, farmer-to-farmer training, grassroots lobbying, policy reform, and most importantly through developing an international organic carbon and eco-credits registry. This registry will develop, clarify, and channel financial incentives and investments into the ecological goods and services marketplace.

In this "Organic Plus" registry project we plan to use verified ecological outcomes, tied to management practices, to develop a Regenerative and Organic Carbon and Eco-Services Registry (ROCESR) that will enable producers to build and quantify their ecosystem services and benefits.

This will enable us to connect these "Organic Plus" producers with potential purchasers of these environmental services, as well to identify investors who can finance the scaling up of these best practices, and improve market access and infrastructure development for organic and regenerative producers, communities, and regions.

RI works in conjunction with Hudson Carbon (HC) of Hudson, NY, a global leader in (MRV) measuring, reporting, and verifying soil and above ground carbon and carbon sequestration, soil health, water quality, regenerating watersheds and hydrological system, economic equity, and biodiversity.

HC, in turn works with a global team of agronomists and scientists, including RI, providing expertise, training, and mentoring for producers and organic certifiers on management techniques that regenerate soil, biodiversity, and other essential ecosystem services.

RI's registry and network building is designed to be scalable. We expect it to grow quickly, especially in the Global South, as farmers and land managers learn the benefits of adopting organic and regenerative best management practices, having them verified, and then getting paid for them in the form of organic carbon and eco-system payments.

Pilot project participants will become catalysts for change in their communities. RI and Hudson Carbon will initially focus on the measuring, reporting, verifying (MRV), and registration of strategic RI affiliates and best practitioners in North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania.

The measurement and verification component of HC's MRV system is being built and tested in a variety of locations in the US and Mexico, using cutting edge technology, on the ground measurements, drones, satellite photography, machine learning and predictive soil mapping with a team of scientists who are international leaders.

One of RI and HC's flagship projects, with enormous global potential is the Billion Agave Agroforestry Project in Mexico, especially suited for small farmers in the 40% of the world's that are arid or semi-arid.

Basically, Hudson Carbon and a global network of trained organic certifiers will do the measuring, reporting, and verifying, while RI will certify, valorize, and put up for sale in the voluntary and mandatory global carbon marketplace the organic and regenerative carbon and eco-system credits.

Hudson Carbon's scientific data collection, reporting, and verification methods are unique in that they take a series of cutting-edge technologies and combine them into a cost-effective system, including developing a smart phone app that can be used by farmers and organic certifiers, to facilitate organic and regenerative certification, record keeping, and measurement, reporting, and verification of carbon and eco-system credits.

Hudson utilizes technologies such as Latin hypercube sampling, a machine learning algorithm that incorporates 60 co-variant layers to determine the sampling points that best represent landscape conditions, thus increasing accuracy. With this predictive mapping technology, HC can drastically reduce the number of soil samples required, as well as the cost of sampling.

In this project RI takes Hudson's data and methods to the next level by building a registry that will expand the incentives of organic certification beyond current organic

standards to include soil health, water, biodiversity and economic justice, offering significant financial rewards for producers who are not only organic, but regenerative as well.

In this way we can motivate a critical mass of the world's 60 million farmers and livestock managers who are farming organically or nearly organically, but who are not yet certified, to get certified, and then motivate them to take their organic practices to the next level (organic and regenerative), making them eligible for buyers of organic and regenerative carbon and eco-credits.

As veterans in the organic and natural health movement, we are proud of creating a massive global network of producers and consumers for organic foods and products. But we are expanding our ranks, market share, and acreage far too slowly. The organic, holistic grazing, Fair Trade, natural health, and climate movements are still not working together in full synergy.

Meanwhile Big Food, Big Ag, Big Biotech, and the global elite including Bill Gates, are working overtime to coopt the Regeneration movement and degrade organic standards, telling the public that chemical, GMO, and lab foods are the future, not organic, and most recently proposing that animal husbandry and grazing should be banned entirely.

Unfortunately, the environmental and climate action movement is still treating us in the organic and regenerative community as second class citizens, even though GHG emissions from degenerate food, farming, and land use practices constitute 35-50% of all emissions, while true organic and regenerative practices (along with alternative energy/conservation) can enable us to reach net zero emissions in 10 years.

Even though the UN estimates that 10-15% of the 600 million farms in the world are de facto farming organically, most organic and regenerative producers are still not certified because of costs and time constraints. Please support OCA, RI, and our allies as we move forward for a Greater Organic Reset.

Sources and References

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