

Organic Farmer and Consumer Protection Act

Led by Senator Tammy Baldwin

The Problem: Some organic imports are fraudulent, undermining consumer trust in organic and harming farmers who play by the rules

In the past year, reports by both the [press](#) and the [USDA Office of the Inspector General](#) have revealed concerns about the integrity of agricultural products imported into the United States to be sold as organic. The longer supply chain of imported products compared to domestically grown products creates greater opportunities for violations of organic production and handling standards. In May, the Washington Post reported on substantial fraud in imported grain from Turkey destined to be sold as organic in the United States. Consistent organic integrity is key to maintaining consumer confidence and adds value to organic products. Fraudulent organic imports have the potential to seriously and unfairly damage the strong reputation of organic products and undercut sales of domestically produced organic products, posing a threat to US farmers and consumers alike.

The Solution: Updates to import protocols to uphold the integrity of the USDA Organic seal and ensure fairness for US farmers

This bill:

1. Works to ensure that all organic products admitted at ports of entry in United States are authentic and to prohibit the entry of imported products that do not meet National Organic Program standards for organic production.
2. Addresses the threat that fraudulent imported organic products pose to US farmers and consumers.
3. Creates a level playing field for American farmers by ensuring that farmers abroad abide by robust organic production standards, just like domestic organic farmers.

The *Organic Farmer and Consumer Protection Act* accomplishes this by:

- Implementing recommendations of the September 2017 Audit Report on organic imports published by the USDA Office of the Inspector General;
- Improving traceability by modernizing tracking and documentation systems for imported organic products;
- Increasing transparency and providing organic standard enforcement authorities with expanded access to data about organic import volumes and countries of origin;
- Providing USDA greater authority to oversee and review organic certifiers abroad;
- Ensuring that all imported organic products carry electronic organic documentation; and
- Improving coordination between federal authorities that oversee import protocols and organic enforcement to allow faster sharing of information and response in cases of potential fraud.