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organic certification is the sustainable pest management

The Department of Pesticide Regulation should not create new certifications for sustainable pest management. Instead, the Department should support organic farmers because organic farming is sustainable pest management.

Organic standards prohibit the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. Organic farmers use ecological methods to build soil health and manage pests, weeds, and diseases. Organic allows a limited toolbox of synthetics only after ecological methods prove insufficient, and the farmer ensures crops, soil, and water are not contaminated. Out of 900 synthetic pesticides, 27 are approved for restricted organic use while growing food. Each of these materials is reviewed every five years for adverse human and environmental health impacts.

As a result, organic farming supports diverse populations of beneficial birds and insects that prevent and control pest outbreaks, thereby reducing reliance on pesticides.^{1,2,3,4} Extensive global analyses demonstrate that organic farms support higher populations of beneficial insects and bird species than conventional farms. Organic farms host on average 50 percent more organisms than conventional farms⁵, particularly natural pest enemies and pollinators.^{6,7}

Organic farmers are required to implement practices that conserve biodiversity.⁸ Research shows that organic farming increases biodiversity by 30 percent compared to conventional farming.⁹ Similarly, another comprehensive meta-analysis shows that organic farming significantly increases populations of beneficial insects, birds, and soil-dwelling organisms, as well as non-bird vertebrates (mammals, reptiles, etc.) and plants.