



Beyond Organic: The Shift To Regenerative Organic

Regenerative Organic is not only a quickly rising label consumers are seeking, it represents a shift in consumer expectations and agricultural practices.

Sales of organic foods in the U.S. hit \$63.8 billion in 2023, an all-time high. Growing interest from Millennials and Gen Z due to their higher interest in sustainable food production will continue to elevate organic in the marketplace. The introduction of Regenerative Organic to the marketplace meets growing consumer desire for products that further align with their values around environmental considerations, animal welfare, and fair trade.

USDA Certified Organic vs. Regenerative Organic Certified®

In USDA Certified Organic products, the mandatory criteria for certification is that 95% of all included ingredients are organic. With Organic products, you can be sure the soil in which the ingredients were grown was managed without the use of fertilizers

or pesticides. Organic farming relies on natural principles like biodiversity and composting along with the omission of chemical intervention to fight pests and weeds that conventional farming has come to rely on.

Regenerative Organic agriculture builds on this methodology by not only maintaining resources, but improving them. It's a holistic approach to farming that rehabilitates soil, respects animal welfare, and improves the lives of farmers and farmworkers.

Regenerative Organic Certified® (ROC) is a new certification for food, fiber, and personal care ingredients. It represents the highest standard for organic agriculture in the world—using USDA Certified Organic as a baseline, and then adding on additional criteria to promote more holistic agricultural practices. It requires that the quality of the soil in which the organic crops are grown is actually improved, or regenerated.

This new certification doesn't seek to replace the USDA Certified Organic label, but add to it. Only products that are already USDA Certified Organic are eligible for ROC certification.

It's important to note that regenerative agricultural practices draw from Indigenous wisdom and practices. The term "regenerative organic" was coined by Robert Rodale of the [Rodale Institute](#) in the late 1980s to distinguish this type of farming that goes beyond mere sustainability.

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	USDA CERTIFIED ORGANIC	REGENERATIVE ORGANIC CERTIFIED
Scope Of Practices	Minimizes synthetic inputs like pesticides and fertilizers.	Enhances the entire ecosystem with practices like soil regeneration, biodiversity promotion, and holistic land management
Soil Health Approach	Focuses on soil health through composting and crop rotation.	Restores soil health comprehensively with methods like cover cropping, reduced tillage, and diverse plant species for enhanced organic matter and biodiversity.
Carbon Sequestration	Does not explicitly prioritize carbon sequestration.	Emphasizes capturing and storing carbon in the soil to mitigate climate change by reducing emissions and increasing storage.
Ecosystem Services	Supports certain ecosystem benefits.	Actively fosters a more diverse and resilient environment, enhancing services like water retention, nutrient cycling, and wildlife habitat creation beyond organic standards.
Holistic Approach	Less emphasis on holistic thinking.	Takes a holistic view, considering social, economic, and ecological aspects for a sustainable and regenerative farming system that extends beyond the farm itself.

Why Are Regenerative Practices Important?

It's never been more important to replenish topsoil levels, protect critical resources, and remove dangerous chemicals from our food system.

Research shows that:

- Global topsoils will be depleted in 60 years.
- Conventional agriculture contributes up to 25% of the emissions driving the climate crisis.

Regenerating soil health includes cover cropping, crop rotation, low- to no-till, rotational grazing, composting, and zero use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. This results in more nutrient-dense soil. Richer soil leads to healthier and larger crop yields. Regenerative practices start with the soil microbiome, and then expand out to include the welfare of animals and farm workers.

“Regenerative organic agriculture is the number one thing humans can do to combat global warming.”

*–Yvon Chouinard,
Founder of Patagonia*



How is Starwest Botanicals Implementing Regenerative Practices?

We led the Organic industry to certification in the past. Now, we're raising the bar again with Regenerative Organic Certified herbs and spices.

Our global collaboration with organic farmers is at the forefront of pioneering the Regenerative Organic Certified movement, making a positive impact one seed at a time. We are in the process of working to empower several of our small farmer partners to achieve Regenerative Organic Certification.

Introducing Organic Plus™

We are grateful to announce, in 2025, we will have more than 100 Starwest Organic Plus™ Regenerative Organic Certified culinary herbs and spices available for contract.

Organic Plus means that these products not only meet the organic certification, but have also been nurtured through regenerative farming methods to achieve Regenerative Organic Certification.

Due to the delicate nature of organic agriculture and the time and care it takes to meet the regenerative standards, there will be a finite supply of materials available. Please work closely with our team to contract your ingredients so we can meet your needs.

Grow Your Dreams™

At Starwest, our dream is cultivating an organic and regenerative planet. We envision a world where we nurture the earth as much as it nourishes us, leaving behind a legacy of sustainability and abundance. With our Grow Your Dreams™ campaign, we welcome you to be a part of the movement to regenerate our ecosystem.

We've included a QR code on our Organic Plus™ products where customers can enter their details and receive a postcard brimming with wildflower seeds ready to sow directly into the earth.

“We need to shift the global food system to make regenerative organic agriculture the new normal. Regenerative Organic Certified® lights the path to healthy soil, ending factory farming, and fairness for farmers and workers.”

*—David Bronner,
CEO of Dr. Bronner's*

Together, we're nurturing the earth, revitalizing pollinator habitats, and fostering the growth of our collective dreams. Join us in creating a better world, one seed at a time.

Join Us in the Regenerative Organic Movement!

If you're interested in adding Regenerative Organic Certified ingredients to your offerings, please contact our team at info@starwest-botanicals.com for the full list of Regenerative Organic products we can source.

