

Establishing a Minor in Organic Production Systems



ABOUT

The Department of Plant Science at Fresno State is located in the nation's most productive agricultural valley. Graduates acquire a sound academic background deeply rooted in field-based experience in the broad array of disciplines within plant science. These currently include pomology, vegetable crops, agronomy, environmental horticulture, soils, irrigation, economic entomology, plant pathology, weed science, and mechanized agriculture.



HOW IT WORKS

Fresno State agriculture is growing its academic programs to offer students the opportunity to pursue the first-of-its kind minor in Organic Production Systems with the addition of a dedicated professor in soil microbiology.

This newly created faculty position will allow the Department of Plant Science in the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology to dedicate expertise, add course offerings, and increase research and outreach focused on providing the knowledge and skills necessary for a growing workforce in organic production systems.

Fresno State has a proud legacy of educating students with real-world, hands-on experience. Fresno State's 1,000-acre agricultural laboratory (the campus farm) has 25 acres in olives and vegetable crops plus a greenhouse certified by the California Certified Organic Farmers. The campus farm provides students the opportunity to put theory learned in the classroom to the test or into practice every day while preparing them for their chosen careers in the organic industry.

Combining hands-on experience whether on the campus farm or in industry, with dedicated faculty to create an academic minor means Fresno State will be the educational hub for the organic industry. A dedicated soil microbiologist will increase students' awareness of career opportunities in the multi-faceted industry and provide a pipeline of college-educated graduates.



“At the epicenter of California’s organic crop production, Fresno State is uniquely positioned as the ideal field-based training ground for growing the future of our industry. Inclusion of soil health principles and systems via our degree-based program in Organic Crop Production Systems is an essential part of our mission.”

– Dr. John Bushoven, Department of Plant Science Chair

IMPACT

Organic products are a household norm for 82% of families across the United States. California’s Central Valley is at the epicenter of organic food production. California farmland represents 21% of organic acreage in the U.S. and 38% of all organic commodities sold in the country.

It’s only natural that Fresno State — located in the hub of organic food production in California — is the institution best equipped to prepare students to meet the demands of this dynamic industry. Ninety percent of Fresno State students come from the Central Valley and 80% remain in the Valley after graduation.

The addition of a soil microbiologist means Fresno State graduates will have the necessary skills to work in this growing industry. The addition of a soil microbiologist will create synergies that strengthen faculty interactions with industry leaders and increase applied research opportunities for students that positively impact regional organic agriculture needs.

PARTNER WITH US

Your partnership will help shape the future of today’s and tomorrow’s students whose careers are in the organic production systems industry. Our goal is to raise \$3.5 million to create an endowment to permanently fund the faculty position and expand Fresno State’s faculty expertise in soil microbiology. Your investment ensures a vibrant and sustainable future for organic food production in the Central Valley, California, and beyond.

No other university is better positioned to educate talented leaders that meet the needs of this industry than Fresno State. We invite you to become a partner and help produce productive tomorrows.

Your support can be made with a one-time cash gift, pledged over several years, via your estate plan or a combination of these. Gifts can also be made with securities, real estate, or other giving vehicles depending on your personal circumstances and financial goals.

"My passion for the earth has stimulated my interest to gain more knowledge in organic food production. The hands-on training I have gained as Plant Science Club project manager on the campus farm, plus learning about soil microbiology will help me fulfill my dream of owning my own strawberry farm."

- Bianey Medina, B.S. plant science
Class of 2021

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