



CFSA's Organic Agricultural Inputs Survey

Farmers in the Carolinas have consistently identified the limited supply of agricultural inputs for organic crop production as one of the most significant obstacles to increasing organic production in the region. The lack of locally available inputs creates major barriers to farmers entering or expanding organic production and contributes to higher prices that organic farmers must pay for small orders, freight, and related costs.

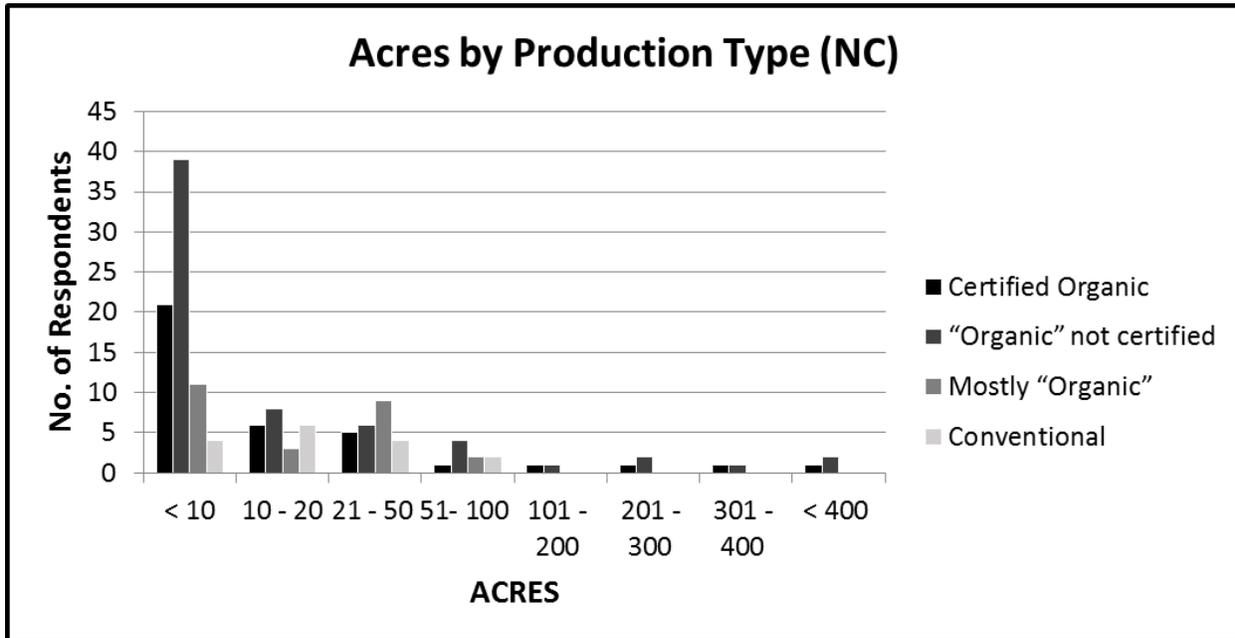
METHODS

In the spring of 2013, the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (CFSA) conducted the Organic Inputs Survey to identify the most commonly used OMRI listed and/or NOP compliant products used by farmers in North and South Carolina and the local suppliers from which they purchase.

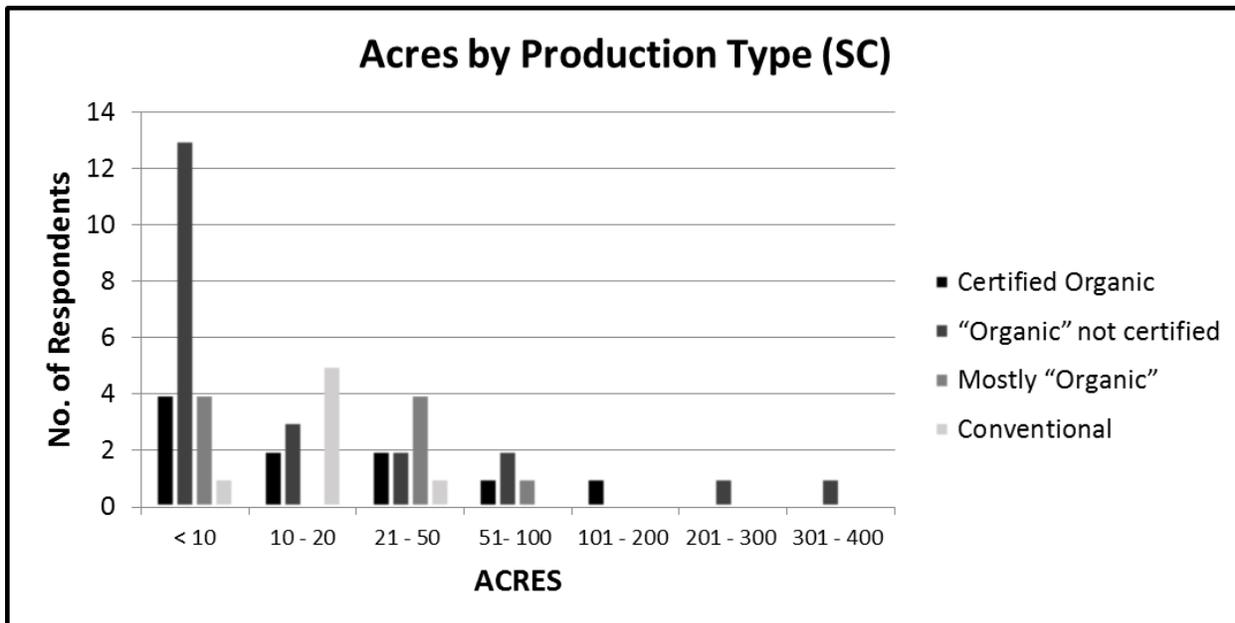
RESULTS

We received 115 completed surveys from growers in North Carolina (73 respondents) and South Carolina (42 respondents). Of those respondents, 71% produced fruits and vegetables, 21% row crops, 32% livestock, and 6% hay, all on a commercial scale. Twenty-eight percent were certified organic, 43% claimed to be organic but not certified, 17% claimed to be mostly organic with occasional use of conventional inputs, 9% had both conventional and organic acres in production, and 4% were conventional only.

GRAPH 1: Number of respondents and the amount of acres in each production category for North Carolina respondents.

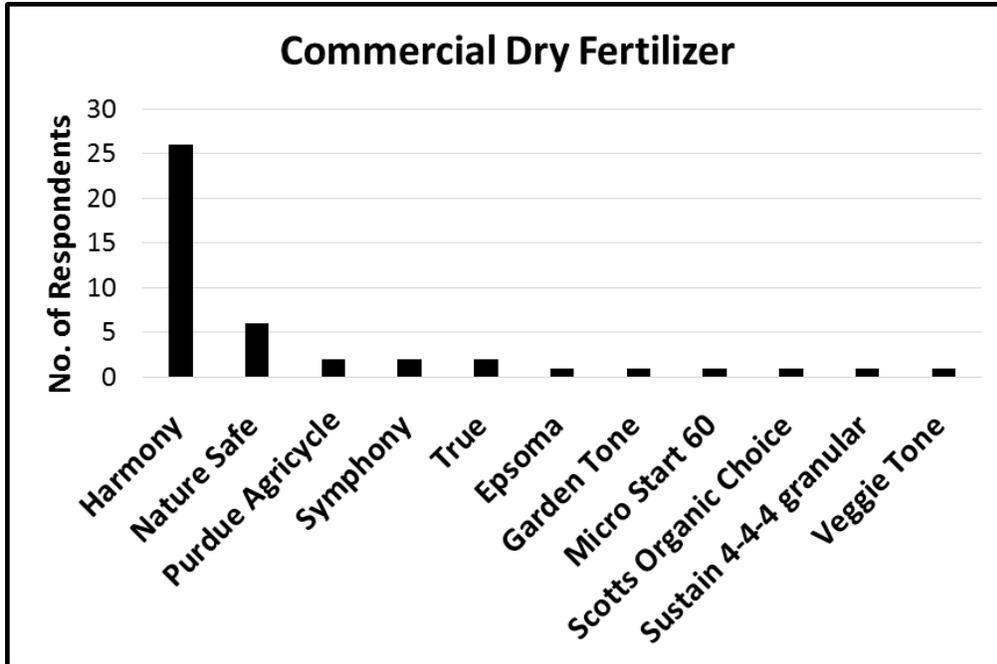


GRAPH 2: Number of respondents and the amount of acres in each production category for South Carolina respondents.

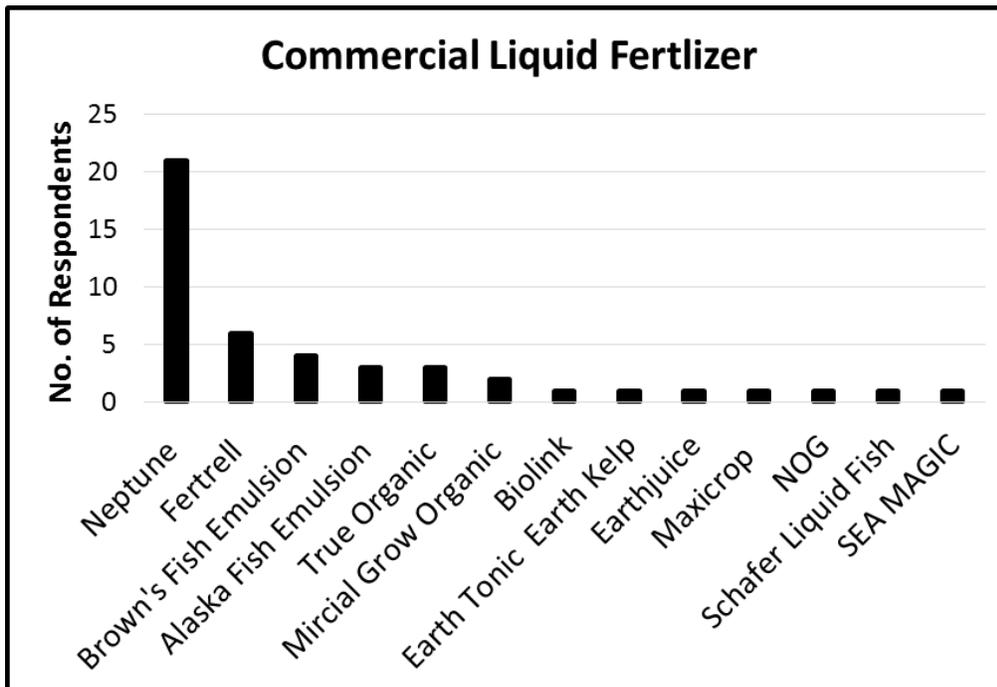


We also surveyed growers to find out what types of inputs they were purchasing. Below are the results for dry and liquid fertilizer and organic pest control products.

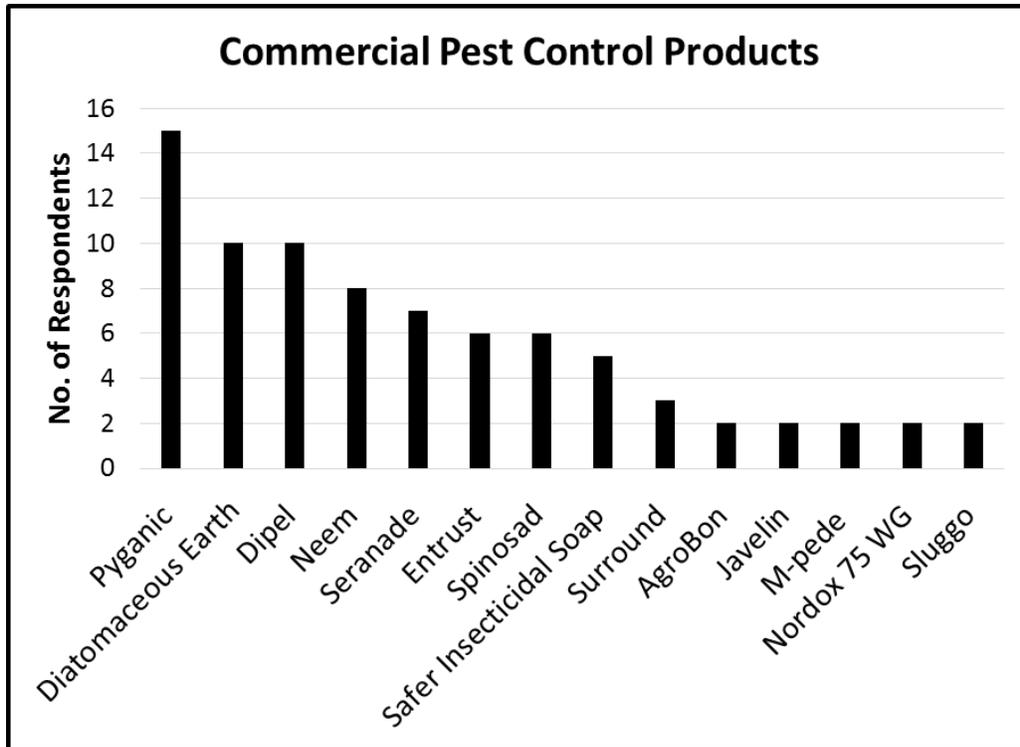
GRAPH 3: Brand of commercially available dry fertilizers growers are purchasing.



GRAPH 4: Brand of commercially available liquid fertilizers growers are purchasing.



GRAPH 5: Brand of commercially available pest control products growers are purchasing.



DISCUSSION

Agriculturalists have consistently identified the limited supply of agricultural inputs for organic crop and livestock production as one of the most significant obstacles to increasing organic production in the Carolinas. CFSA’s Farm Services team assessed the organic input supply chain to identify gaps using an Organic Inputs Survey. CFSA asked growers to tell us from which local suppliers they are purchasing organic inputs and which brands of organic dry and liquid fertilizers and pest control products they purchased.

Using this information, CFSA then surveyed those suppliers in order to develop the Organic Inputs Finder, now available [online](#). This resource is designed to help farmers locate organic inputs from local suppliers in North and South Carolina.