

How are family farms faring as companies buy land to meet growing organic food demand?

Farmers... want to meet the growing demand for organic, but are faced with several challenges to increasing acreage. Most significantly among these is the [three-year transition period](#) set by the...USDA... in which farmers can't use chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Farmers take a hit on ...specifically paying for more labor and new equipment and can't generally market their transitional crops at a premium during this period...

...In order to meet the growing consumer base, some businesses are seeking to level the... playing field by investing directly in organic farms and farmers.

Take Nature's Path. The company has been [investing in farmland](#) since 2008 to ensure that it has enough organic grains to produce its cereals...

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Earlier this year, Costco... [announced](#) plans to support farmers directly in order to ensure a steady supply of organic crops...

While it's obviously a boon for these companies to have a direct supply... the trend raises questions about the benefits to farmers.

Farming is a tough business... Will investments by a large food producer ultimately keep small family farms on the land? Or are farmers being locked into exclusive agreements, signing onto long-term contracts that amount to vertical integration?...

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Digested: Buying the Farm](#)