

Organic farming advocates are looking to close a loophole that has enabled producers to convert wildland into organic farmland.

Instead of waiting for already cultivated land to "rest" in order to be used for organic cultivation, many are looking to nearby untouched land to be certified more quickly, according to the [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#).

For some organic farmers, the wait is too long and they turn to untouched land nearby. "It's easier to destroy that native prairie to bring it into organic production," Helen Atthowe was reported as saying.

"It makes no sense to have a loophole that would allow their destruction," she told Reuters.

Consumer blowback is a key concern for many. The worry is if enough consumers become aware of the practice of converting wildland to organic farmland - and causing environmental harm in the process - trust in the organic label will fray, Policy Director for the Cornucopia Institute, Marie Burcham was reported as saying.

"That's a problem because a lot of small family farmers rely on the organic label to make a living."

Organic programs in about a dozen other countries bar the conversion of wildland for organic farming, but it is not specifically outlawed under the U.S. program.

Advocates are looking to close that loophole, with some looking to the Biden administration and others creating their own certification to make up for what they see as failings in current policy.

An alliance of a few major brands is in the early phase of rolling out a global certification that seeks to address what it sees as gaps in the federal standards.

"I think everybody is looking for this higher bar of certification, because there's been this sense among consumers that the organic label has been weakened," Elizabeth Whitlow, Executive Director of the Regenerative Organic Alliance was reported as saying.