

# Profile from the Field

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## New Organic Oat Variety Results Out

**Project Titles:** New Organic Oat Variety Results Out

**Coordinators:** Melanie Caffe-Treml

**Location:** Brookings, South Dakota

**SARE Grants:** \$30,000

**Duration:** 2017-2019

To read the full project reports, go to <https://projects.sare.org/> and search for project number **ONC17-026**.

From breakfast cereals to animal feed, the demand for organic oats is on the rise. With a 1.8x projected increase in revenue for the organic oats market from 2017 to 2027 (Future Market Insights, 2017), and a shorter growing window, oats might be a good fit for organic growers in the North Central region. A crop that can be spring-sown and harvested earlier in the season is appealing, but South Dakota State University oat breeder, Melanie Caffe Treml, wants to remind growers that oat variety selection is important when thinking about revenue impact.

“Although oat variety recommendations are available for conventional management systems from several public variety testing programs, very limited information on variety performance under an organic production system is available,” says Caffe-Treml. “Because chemicals are not used to control weed and pests in organic farming, the choice of variety constitutes an even more important farm management decision than for conventional farming systems.”

Caffe-Treml is working to identify oat varieties for organic growers. She received SARE support to trial 20 oat varieties under organic management with several producers in South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, and the results are in. Some of the highlights from the results are listed below.



With support from SARE, Melanie Caffe-Treml trialed 20 oat varieties under organic management, and the results are in.

### Organic Oat Variety Trial Highlights

- Oat yields in the multi-state organic oat trials averaged 71 bu./acre in 2017 and 2018, ranging from 60 bu./acre at Lamberton, MN (2018) to 102 bu./acre at Evansville, WI (2017).
- Varieties that were statistically in the top yield group included Betagene, Deon, Saddle, and Goliath.
- For the milling industry, grain specifications generally include a minimum test weight. Caffe-Treml

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reported that the Antigo, Sumo, Saddle, and Deon varieties were likely to meet the test weight requirement.

## Dig Deeper: Organic Oat Variety Trial Results

You can view detailed results of this organic oats variety trial, including maturity ratings, lodging scores, crown rust resistance, milling characteristics, and average test weights at <https://extension.sdstate.edu/sites/default/files/2019-05/P-00107.pdf>

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