



# THE ORGANIC MOVEMENT IN MICHIGAN

Edited by Maynard Kaufman and Julia Christianson

Maynard Kaufman interrupted his teaching career at Western Michigan University in 1973 with a half-time leave of absence from classroom teaching to supervise a living-learning School of Homesteading on his 160 acre farm near Bangor, Michigan. This led directly to his participation in Organic Growers of Michigan (OGM) which also began meeting in 1973, and his farm was one of the first six in Michigan to be certified organic. He continued to be active in the organic movement for the next 40 years, and when Organic Growers of Michigan was in its doldrums he played a leading role in the organization of Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance (MOFFA) in the early 1990s.

Julia Christianson is the administrative staff person at MOFFA and had volunteered to collect and organize written materials, such as newsletters and formal papers, and prepare them to be archived. Thus she also has access

to the history of the organic movement. Her computer skills have literally created the book we call *The Organic Movement in Michigan*. The plan for the book was prepared by Maynard Kaufman several years ago, but it was postponed until a competent person volunteered to help in getting it written and edited.

MOFFA remains the organized advocate of the organic movement in Michigan, and it is the publisher of the book. Income from the sale of the book will help to support its ongoing activities.

The 19 chapters in the book encompass a wide variety of information: historical summaries of the major organic organizations, reports on various organic activities, and essays about the past, present and future of organic farming. They provide a record of both successes and failures, triumphs and tragedies, such as the fatal encounter of OGM with the Federal program for organic certification. Early organic growers were anticipating the federal program as a recognition of organic farming and as a guarantee that food sold as organic would be organically raised. But the federal organic program cost growers much more for certification and it opened the organic market to corporations who soon overgrew smaller farmers.

- Did you know there is a Student Organic Farm on the campus of Michigan State University?
- Did you know about the website for [beginningfarmers.org](http://beginningfarmers.org)?
- Did you know that organic farming can help to slow climate change?
- Did you know that a group of organic farmers in the Thumb can export their beans and grains at more than twice the price that conventional producers can get?
- Did you know that organic food coops organized during the early 1970s are still in operation in nine Michigan cities?

Look for the book in May at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).