



## “Going organic?”

You are a farmer and have been hearing a lot about organic farming practices, which are better for the environment than using chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Some suggested practices include leaving a buffer around your fields for wildlife, no-till farming, and using natural methods of pest control. Using these methods will improve the long-term condition of your land and will benefit the environment. However, in the short term you may lose profits. You are already having trouble paying your bills with current practices. What would you do?

- Would you continue farming using the techniques you have used for years?

*Some students may think it is more important to continue to make a profit than to change farming practices. Other may believe the change to less chemical dependent techniques are worth the time and money.*

- Would you try some new methods on part of the farm to test the results?

*This may be a good option for starting out with a new technique. The farmer could slowly move away from chemical practices once he or she identifies that they can still survive financially using organic methods.*

- Are you breaking any laws by not changing your farming practices?

*No. You are actually helping the environment.*

- What are some of the methods used in IPM?

*Biological controls, including natural pests and genetic modification.  
Increasing crop diversity.  
Reduction of pests through regulatory controls.  
The use of synthetic and naturally occurring pesticides, when needed.*

- Who could you contact for assistance and information about sustainable farming practices?

*Department of Agriculture  
The Land Institute*