Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC)
The Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC) is a joint project between Oregon State University, University of Wisconsin, Cornell University, the Organic Seed Alliance, USDA and over 30 organic farms in Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin and New York.

Through NOVIC, researchers, farmers, plant breeders and seed growers collaborate to breed and perform variety trials to select vegetable cultivars best adapted to organic growing conditions and traits conducive to fresh markets with a focus on season extension. A primary project goal is to increase the amount of organic seed available to farmers. Access to quality organic seed is a challenge. Currently, many certified organic farmers use conventional seed because their preferred varieties are not available organically.

The NOVIC breeding goals include developing an open-pollinated broccoli that can thrive in summer heat; a weed-competitive, cold-tolerant 'Nantes'-type carrot; a disease-resistant, heat-tolerant stringless snap pea; a cold-tolerant, sugar-enhanced sweet corn and a butternut squash with good storability. There is a sixth slot open as a "farmers' choice" where collaborating farmers in each region chose a crop to work on. Farmers and researchers collaboratively determine varieties (commercially-available varieties as well as material local breeders have developed) to be included in NOVIC trials. Development of the evaluation criteria for each crop is also a collective effort.

Outreach goals of NOVIC include hosting field days; participatory organic plant breeding, on-farm variety improvement and organic seed production workshops; developing materials to promote participatory plant breeding; variety testing under organic conditions; and high-quality organic seed production.