



National Organic Program

U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label.

Deputy Administrator's Corner

USDA Listening Session Summary

In September, the USDA held a listening session to receive public feedback on its activities and priorities related to organic agriculture and markets. Comments received through the event, which was hosted by the USDA Organic Working Group (a collaboration of USDA agencies supporting organic) and the National Organic Program, provided USDA with specific ideas about how it can continue to build support for the organic community.



As a program with a relatively modest budget—we currently operate on a \$6.9 million budget to support a \$29 billion industry—I was interested to hear different perspectives about how we could strengthen our regulatory efforts. I was pleased to hear that our initiatives and available resources have been helpful to the organic community. We received positive feedback about our increased efforts to clarify the regulations through the NOP Handbook and to enforce compliance under a case management system. Additionally, we received support for our improved responsiveness and management of certifying agents. Having served the organic community for more than two decades, I found the comments insightful and noted specific feedback in several key areas:

International trade. Commenters noted appreciation for our efforts, in collaboration with the Foreign Agricultural Service and the U.S. Trade Representative, to negotiate international agreements. We were urged to continue to support trade and increase market opportunities for USDA organic products. Along with increased trade, commenters also recognized the need for our enhanced compliance assessments and audits overseas.

Compliance and enforcement. Participants emphasized that NOP should enforce the standards more aggressively. While we have made progress in the “age of enforcement,” improvement is vital. To truly support this initiative, we need to respond more quickly to complaints and process appeals faster.

Certifying agent oversight. Additionally, commenters noted that the NOP needs to provide more guidance and training for certifying agents. We



Organic listening session, continued from page 1

recognize that NOP needs to take additional steps to ensure that all certifying agents apply the USDA organic regulations in a fair, consistent manner. Since certifying agents are now overseeing USDA organic products across six continents, consistency is especially important. The NOP will be conducting more than 50 audits of certifying agents in 2012 to yield greater uniformity in the certification process. We are also striving to provide greater clarity to our certifying agents.

Communication and outreach. The NOP has received positive feedback on the improved navigation and content on its newly streamlined website. Additionally, commenters noted that the NOP Organic Insider, our email notification service, helps inform the public of important updates. We recognize the need for continued efforts and are actively working on new initiatives in these areas.

Other USDA programs. In addition to the NOP, many other USDA programs and agencies support the organic community. Some of these include the Foreign Agricultural Service (e.g. market access), Natural Resources Conservation Service (e.g. EQIP grants and technical assistance), Risk Management Agency (e.g. organic crop insurance), National Agricultural Statistics Service (e.g. organic industry statistics) and Economic Research Service (e.g. organic market and economic trends). The USDA Organic Working Group was formed to bring together these and other USDA agencies that support organic agriculture. This approach facilitates collaboration among agencies to provide better, unified support to the organic community. Commenters would like to see additional efforts towards collaboration. They noted that a key benefit could be reduced paperwork and certification costs through streamlined application and reporting requirements among USDA offices. These benefits would reduce barriers for all organic operations, especially small and transitioning ones. Commenters presented an underlying need to centralize relevant, consistent information within USDA.

Organic research needs. Many commenters highlighted the need for USDA-funded research in key areas to solve current challenges. Such advances would provide science-based information and data to support the advancement of organic farming. This information would also inform the NOSB's review of substances listed on and petitioned to the National List. Towards this goal, the NOP is pleased to announce that USDA funded many organic research projects this year, including one to find alternatives to antibiotic treatment of fire blight in organic tree fruit production.

We have made a lot of progress and we are continuing to work in these and many other areas. To view the full transcript and public comments, please visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/2011organiclistening>. We appreciate your ongoing support as we continue to enhance our service to the organic community.

Miles McEvoy



NOSB in Savannah: Fall 2011 Meeting Summary

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) held their public meeting November 29 – December 2, 2011, in Savannah, Georgia. At the beginning, the NOP provided an update on its activities and priorities. Over the course of four days, the NOSB heard comments from over 100 members of the public on a wide range of issues. The NOSB then discussed these and other suggested changes to their proposals from about 1,000 written public comments. A summary of the NOSB's subsequent votes is provided below.

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Note: NOSB is an advisory body to the Secretary of Agriculture. NOSB recommendations are not NOP policy unless the NOP issues final rules, final guidance, final instructions, or a policy memorandum that adopts the NOSB recommendations. They are not part of the USDA organic standards unless such action is taken.

Petitioned Substances

The NOSB responded to several petitions to add, amend, and remove the listing of substances on the National List:

Substance	Section	Petitioned Action	NOSB Recommendation	Notes
Ammonium nonanoate	§ 205.601(b)	Add to list	Rejected	None
Indole-3-butyric acid	§ 205.601(k)	Add to list	Rejected	None
Propane (odorized)	§ 205.601(g)	Add to list	Rejected	None
Annatto extract color	§ 205.606	Remove from list	Remove	None
Arachidonic (ARA) single-cell oil	§ 205.605(a)	Add to list	Add to the list with the following annotation:	Arachidonic acid fungal oil (ARA), not hexane extracted; other ingredients that are agricultural must be organic
Beta-carotene color	§ 205.606	Amend listing	Amend annotation to read:	Beta-carotene extract color, derived from carrots or algae (CAS#7235-40-7)
Docosahexaenoic (DHA) algal oil	§ 205.605(a)	Add to list	Add to the list with the following annotation:	DHA from Algal Oil, not hexane extracted; other ingredients that are agricultural must be organic.
Potassium hydroxide	§ 205.605(b)	Amend listing	Amend annotation to read:	Potassium hydroxide—prohibited for use in lye peeling of fruits and vegetables except when used for peeling peaches.
Silicon dioxide	§ 205.605(b)	Remove from list	Amend annotation to read:	Silicon dioxide – for use as a defoamer. May be used in other applications when non-synthetic alternatives are not commercially available.
Sulfur dioxide	§ 205.605(b)	Amend listing	Rejected	None

Sunset 2013 Substances

The NOSB must review all National List substances every five years and recommend renewing, removing, or changing each listing. This process is commonly referred to as “Sunset” review. The NOSB made recommendations on the following National List substances as part of their Sunset 2013 review:

Substance	Section	NOSB Recommendation	Notes
Copper sulfate	§ 205.601(a)	Relist	None.
Copper sulfate	§ 205.601(e)	Relist	None.

Substance	Section	NOSB Recommendation	Notes
Ozone	§ 205.601(a)	Relist	None.
Peracetic acid	§ 205.601(a)	Relist	None.
Peracetic acid	§ 205.601(i)	Relist	None.
Calcium chloride	§ 205.602	Relist	None.
Animal enzymes	§ 205.605(a)	Relist	None.
Tartaric acid	§ 205.605(a)	Relist	None.
Tartaric acid	§ 205.605(b)	Remove from list	None.



NOSB Membership Update

Savannah was the last NOSB meeting for four of our current members (from left to right):

Steve DeMuri, Handling Committee Chair

Tracy Miedema, NOSB Chair

Katrina Heinze, Materials Committee Chair

Tina Ellor, Prior Crops Committee Chair

The NOP thanks Steve, Tracy, Katrina, and Tina for their five years of service to the organic community while on the NOSB. Each member has volunteered many hours each week to further the USDA organic regulations. We recognize the outstanding work they have done and look forward to future opportunities to collaborate.

We are also pleased to announce the new officers of the NOSB:

Barry Flamm, Chair

Mac Stone, Vice Chair

Wendy Fulwider, Secretary

In addition, we hope that you will join us in welcoming our five new NOSB members, whose five-year terms will begin January 24, 2012:

Harold V. Austin, IV, Handler

Carmela Beck, Producer

Tracy Favre, Environmentalist

Jean Richardson, Ph.D., Consumer / Public Interest

Andrea (Zea) Sonnabend, Scientist



NOSB in Savannah, Continued from page 4

Other Recommendations

Animal welfare. After making amendments based on public comments, the NOSB made recommendations to strengthen the animal welfare requirements in organic livestock production. The NOSB recommended new regulations on physical alterations and livestock living conditions for mammals and birds. The NOSB also recommended new language to cover animal handling and transit to slaughter. Additionally, the following stocking rates were recommended:

Livestock Species	Indoor Space	Outdoor Runs and Pens
Chickens		
Laying hens and breeders	2.0 square feet per bird	2.0 - 5.0 square feet per bird
Pullets	2.0 - 3.0 pounds per square foot	2.0 - 3.0 pounds per square foot
Broilers	1.0 - 5.0 pounds per square foot	2.0 - 5.0 pounds per square foot

Chlorine materials. The NOSB voted to amend the annotation for chlorine products used in food handling that is consistent with recent NOP guidance on chlorine use. This change will clearly permit use of chlorine up to maximum labeled rates for sanitation of equipment. Additionally, it permits labeled uses in direct contact with products like fruit or vegetables, as long as there is a potable water rinse with no higher than drinking water levels after use. Chlorine in water used as an ingredient must also not be used as levels higher than those permitted in drinking water.

Evaluation of material review organization. To facilitate consistent and uniform material review decisions, the NOSB recommended that the NOP actively regulate material review organizations. The NOSB recommended that material review organizations:

- Become accredited certifying agents. In the interim, request for guidance on the material review process. Use the NOP's material classification guidance (in development) when making synthetic versus non-synthetic determinations.
- Be accredited to ISO 65 standards, which require the development of detailed review protocols and policies. Use the NOP's guidance for permitted generic substances (in development). Be at least partially financed by manufacturers of products seeking review.
- Adopt the appeals process utilized by certifying agents and be subject to compliance and enforcement actions by the NOP.

Inspector qualifications. The NOSB recommended that the NOP develop guidance on baseline qualification criteria for organic inspectors to cover specific metrics in three areas (continued on page 6):



NOSB in Savannah, Continued from page 5

- Baseline pre-requisite expertise for initial “organic inspector” status.
- Continuing education requirements for inspectors.
- Accreditation criteria for certifying agents to ensure adequate monitoring and oversight.

Unannounced inspections. To uphold organic integrity, the NOSB recommended that the NOP develop guidance on unannounced inspections to address the following:

- Required unannounced inspections for at least five percent of their certified operations per year.
- Unannounced inspections may be random, risk-based, or the result of a complaint or investigation.
- Unannounced inspections may be limited in scope, depth, and breadth; samples may be collected. If a full inspection is conducted, it may be used as the annual on-site inspection.

Policy and Procedure Manual. The NOSB amended the following sections of their Policy and Procedures Manual:

- *Administrative team (Section IV).* The NOSB voted to add a description of the Administrative Team.
- *Committee transparency (Section I).* The NOSB amended the role of the Executive Director to include more regular updates with the public. This will include the posting of committee meeting minutes and other resources.
- *NOSB member and leadership transition (Section V).* The NOSB clarified transition procedures for officers, committee chairs, and new members.

International Trade Policies: European Union

Any United States organic products exported to the European Union must be certified in accordance with the European organic standards. This is typically accomplished by select certifying agents located around the world that are authorized to provide certification to the European organic standards. These products must also be accompanied by an organic import certificate. United States-based certifying agents authorized to provide certification to the European Union organic standards include:

CCOF Certification Services
Global Organic Alliance Inc.
Indiana Certified Organic LLC
International Certification Services, Inc.
Organic Crop Improvement Association
OneCert

Oregon Tilth
Organic Certifiers Inc.
Quality Assurance International
Quality Certification Services
Washington State Department of Agriculture



Overview of NOP's Japan Assessment

The United States has a recognition agreement with Japan, allowing the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) to accredit Japanese certifying agents to the USDA organic standards. These foreign certifying agents are authorized to certify organic farms and processing facilities, ensuring that USDA organic products meet or exceed all USDA organic standards. Products can then be imported for sale in the United States. Additionally, an export agreement with Japan allows USDA organic products produced in the United States to be sold as organic in Japan. In October 2011, USDA staff assessed each phase of Japanese production, certification, and accreditation systems to determine if the agency had necessary controls to ensure compliance with the USDA organic regulations.

Accreditation, auditing, and materials review. The assessment began with a review of operations at MAFF headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. USDA staff evaluated the Japanese agencies' processes for accrediting organic certifying agents and assessing their ability to properly apply the USDA organic regulations. During each certifying agent's annual audit, MAFF officials conduct a desk audit, witness an organic inspection, and perform residue testing for products destined for export. USDA staff interviewed MAFF personnel to determine their knowledge of the USDA organic regulations. They also evaluated the Food and Agricultural Materials Inspection Center, which handles audits and inspections.

During the assessment, USDA officials evaluated the government's compliance and enforcement functions. Much like the NOP's system, theirs includes managing complaints and consumer inquiries and conducting investigations. Using a proactive monitoring technique, the agency at one point hired 1,500 consumers to check food labels in supermarkets. Based on eight laws, the Japanese government also conducts inspections at various stages of the food chain. These tests address food quality, labeling, food safety, and the safety of fertilizers, chemicals, animal feed, feed additives, and soil improvement materials.

Certifying agents. USDA staff assessed both MAFF-accredited certifying agents: Japan Organic and Natural Foods Association and Center of Japan Organic Farmers Group. They also reviewed staff qualifications and looked for areas that would pose a conflict of interest on the part of certifying agents.

Certified operations. During their visit, USDA officials visited three operations certified to the USDA organic standards: a green tea handler, a tea producer/handler, and a miso processor. This enabled them to observe production, handling and labeling practices at each site, and to interview farmers and other staff.

Conclusion. Overall, the assessment demonstrated that Japanese authorities have the appropriate education, training and experience to carry out its role under the recognition agreement with the NOP. Additionally, their sound and documented quality management system meets the USDA organic regulations. Officials observed the need for continued technical discussions concerning interpretation of residue results and adverse action procedures. These steps will ensure consistent application and enforcement of the USDA organic regulations.

Currently, under an economic harmony initiative, both governments are discussing ways to harmonize their labeling systems to reduce trade barriers. Both countries are committed to regular, continued dialogue to increase understanding of each other's system.



USDA Works to Keep Korean Market Open

Korea's Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MIFAFF) recently published draft regulations covering organic certification and production requirements for fresh and processed organic products. These regulations are set to be implemented on January 1, 2013. After that date, unless a trade agreement is made, USDA organic products would require additional certification to Korea's standards.



The USDA is working to keep the Korean market open for USDA organic products. In August, USDA invited MIFAFF officials to Washington, DC to begin trade discussions. These meetings also gave USDA the opportunity to establish a positive relationship with the newly-appointed organic director of MIFAFF. With the help of the Organic Trade Association, USDA organized a tour of organic farms in Pennsylvania. In September, USDA staff from the NOP and Foreign Agricultural Service traveled to Seoul, Korea to continue discussions. The Korean officials also organized organic farm visits in the area. These meetings and tours provided valuable information on similarities and differences in each other's systems as these nations move towards formal recognition of each other's programs.

The United States organic industry is very interested in maintaining and growing the Korean market for USDA organic products. According to Korean import data, exports of USDA organic products totaled approximately \$13 million in 2010, up from \$10.5 million in 2009. From January-July 2011, United States import data shows that approximately \$400,000 of Korean organic pears were imported into the United States. We look forward to sharing additional updates in the future.

Effectively Communicating With NOP and NOSB

The members of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) and the National Organic Program (NOP) often receive letters and requests from people interested in our upcoming regulatory activities and meetings. In this note, we summarize the best way to direct your letters and requests.

As a Federal Advisory Committee, the NOSB has a well-defined scope of activity. If you have opinions and requests to share with the Board, please use the public comment period that is open before each NOSB meeting to submit your thoughts. Or, submit a formal National List petition for consideration using the guidelines provided in the link below.

The NOP is the best place to send your letters outside the NOSB public comment and petition process. In addition to formal public comment periods on specific regulatory actions, we are always open to comments on a variety of topics related to organic agriculture. While we cannot guarantee that every letter will receive a direct response, your letters do get an audience and help us identify and prioritize needs. We look forward to hearing from you!

Feedback to the NOSB

Please send information to the NOSB through the following channels only:

Public Comments, accepted before each NOSB meeting
www.ams.usda.gov/NOSBMeetings

National List Petitions, ongoing
www.ams.usda.gov/NOPFilingPetition

Feedback to the NOP

Public comments, information
www.ams.usda.gov/NOPComments

Other letters may be sent to the NOP:

USDA National Organic Program
1400 Independence Ave SW
Room 2648-S (Stop 0268)
Washington, DC 20250-0268



Organic Integrity Through Data Quality

Annual Call for Operator Updates

The online listing of certified organic operations has been a welcome addition to the NOP's website since its launch in 2010. Positive feedback confirms that the listing is of great value to the growing organic community and the general public. Certifying agents play a key role in gathering operator data each year.

As more visitors access the list, they often notice inconsistencies in how the data for different certified organic operators are presented. These inconsistencies make searches more difficult and leave some operators out of search results. In this year's request for certified operator updates, sent out in mid-November, we asked for all of the certifying agent's help in improving data quality and consistency. To accomplish this, we are asking certifying agents to ensure that their submitted data for each certified operation matches a core set of data standards.

Organic integrity across our industry demands data integrity across our systems. Receiving consistent lists of certified operations across certifying agents will significantly improve the ability of all our visitors to search the growing list of organic operations accurately and confidently. We thank you for your help in making it happen.

National List Update

National List Petitions. The following petitions to amend the National List were recently sent to the National Organic Standards Board for review:

- Ascorbyl palmitate, § 205.605
- Beta-carotene, § 205.605
- Curry leaf, § 205.606
- Kaffir lime leaves and fruit, § 205.606
- L-Methionine, § 205.605
- Lutein, § 205.606
- Lycopene, § 205.605
- Nucleotides, § 205.605
- Tartaric acid, § 205.605(b) (to remove)
- Taurine, § 205.605

View petitions and technical reports

www.ams.usda.gov/NOPNationalList

Technical Reports. Technical reports are now available on the NOP website for the following substances:

- Ammonium nonanoate, petitioned to § 205.601
- Arachidonic Acid (ARA) Single-Cell Oil, petitioned to § 205.605
- Color: Beta-Carotene, § 205.606
- Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) Algal Oil, petitioned to § 205.605
- Enzymes, § 205.605(a)
- Ferric phosphate, § 205.601 (petition to remove)
- Indole-3-butyric acid, petitioned to § 205.601
- Propane, petitioned to § 205.601
- Sulfur dioxide, § 205.605(b)
- Tartaric acid, § 205.605(a) and (b)



An Introduction to Market News for Organic Users

What is Market News?

Market News is near real-time agricultural market information, available at no cost to the public. Since everyone has access to the same information at the same time, this USDA service levels the playing field for all market participants.

Why Should I Use Market News?

Operating without market information is like being stuck in a room without a light. Timely, accurate, and unbiased market information provides a light to help navigate the marketplace. Lack of information can easily lead to uncertainty and increased risk when deciding when, where, and at what price to market products. In addition, settling trade disputes, establishing insurance prices, determining loss adjustments, and forecasting for the future would be nearly impossible without a reliable source of market information. Ultimately, reliable market information facilitates business planning, stabilizes markets, and opens doors to new paths and opportunities.

How Can I Use Market News Information?

The most widespread uses of Market News information for organic producers and handlers are direct price comparisons between conventional and organic products and price determination. For example, imagine that you produce organic sweet potatoes in the Southeast. You plan to market your products directly to retailers and directly to consumers. You'll need to determine what price to ask for the potatoes for both segments to maximize sales. Market News provides an indicator of what retailers and consumers are willing to pay for organic sweet potatoes in your area. This information gives you a starting point to begin price negotiations. In this case, USDA's Fruit & Vegetable Market News provides daily wholesale prices that retailers are willing to pay, as well as weekly advertised retail prices U.S. No 1, orange type sweet potatoes:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Sale Type</i>	<i>Production Method</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Price</i>
11/8/2011	Wholesale	Conventional	AL, MS, NC	40lb carton	\$16.00 - \$22.50
11/8/2011	Wholesale	Organic	MS	40lb carton	\$46.25
11/4/2011	Retail	Conventional	National	1lb	\$0.89
11/4/2011	Retail	Organic	National	1lb	\$1.47
11/4/2011	Retail	Conventional	Southeast	1lb	\$0.76
11/4/2011	Retail	Organic	Southeast	1lb	\$1.79

Where Can I Get More Information?

USDA's Market News has worked with key stakeholders over the last decade to address the lack of organic market information by increasing coverage. Today, Market News provides organic market information for hundreds of commodities on a daily basis, including prices, volume, quality, condition, and movement. Commodity-specific market and contact information can be accessed from each of the Market News Divisions: Cotton, Dairy, Fruit & Vegetable, Livestock & Grain, and Poultry. Market News also offers a number of reports specific to the organic sector. To access reports and learn more, please visit www.marketnews.usda.gov.



Spotlight: Southern University Ag Center

Southern University is one of eighteen Historically Black Land-Grant Universities, commonly referred to as “1890 Universities.” These institutions are committed to assisting smaller agricultural producers with limited resources. These efforts bring economic activity and skills to rural communities, generate ideas for agricultural practices, and create new market opportunities for specialized products.

Over the past several decades, Southern University has encouraged growers in the Southeastern United States to adopt organic and sustainable agricultural practices. These efforts were part of a collaborative effort funded by USDA Initiative for Future Agriculture and Foods Systems and involve 1890 universities and community-based organizations throughout the southeastern United States. The organic component of the project focuses on increasing the number of farmers who are certified as organic growers. Given the low number of certified organic African American farmers, Southern University’s efforts have been focused on these producers.

In 2005, Southern University Agricultural, Research and Extension Center conducted a series of workshops for prospective organic farmers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Savannah, Georgia; Columbia, South Carolina; and Tallahassee, Florida. These intense workshop provide technical training and help farmers complete their organic systems plans. The program covers the cost of organic certification for successful applicants. The University also hosts field days to highlight organic research and production in the area. Southern University staff also visit area farms upon request to help implement organic and/or sustainable agricultural practices.

As a result of these sessions, 40 farms in the southeastern region have become certified organic, most of which are owned by African Americans. These efforts were spearheaded by Dr. Owusu Bandele, prior member of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). These activities have been continued by Dr. C. Reuben Walker (current NOSB member). As a result of relationships established at these workshops, the Southeastern African American Farmers Organic Network (SAAFON) was formed under the leadership of Ms. Cynthia Hayes of Savannah, Georgia. This is the only organization of its kind in the nation.

On December 1, 2011, the Southern University Agricultural, Research and Extension Center held a USDA Natural Resource Conservation Services Organic Initiative Workshop. Participants included staff from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (USDA-accredited certifying agent) and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For additional information about Southern University Agricultural, Research and Extension Center’s other activities, please contact Dr. C. Reuben Walker at reuben33c@aol.com.

Staff Update: Welcome to the NOP!

The NOP is pleased to announce the addition of three new staff members. Please join us in welcoming them to our team!



Julie Hartley

Accreditation & International Activities Division

Julie grew up in Northeastern Oregon, where her family has been going 'round and 'round wheat fields and up and down steep hills for over a century. In 1998, she moved to California to attend graduate school. Most of her time since then has been spent either growing grapes or making wine. She enjoys going places where she can catch big fish, see large rocks, and watch cows eating guavas.

Jennifer (Jenny) Tucker, Ph.D.

Associate Deputy Administrator

Prior to joining USDA, Jenny was an organization development consultant and group facilitator. She served primarily scientific and technical organizations in both public and non-profit sectors, including multiple USDA programs. Jenny holds a B.A. in Environmental Science, an M.S. in Management, and a Ph.D. in Science and Technology Studies. She is the author of the booklet "Introduction to Type and Project Management" and has been a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) since 2005.



Scott Updike, Ph.D.

Standards Division

Scott grew up on a mixed livestock farm in Virginia, where he raised swine, ewes, and brood cows. He holds a B.S. in Animal and Poultry Science from Virginia Tech and a M.S. and Ph.D. in Animal Sciences from Ohio State University. For four years, Scott was an assistant professor in Animal and Avian Sciences at the University of Maryland, where he taught multiple animal science courses. He was also the faculty advisor to Wye Angus and the Extension Beef Specialist for the state of Maryland.

NOP Web Content Updates

As part of our ongoing NOP website content management, we have reorganized content for the following audiences:

Organic operations
Certifying agents
State Organic Program

International trade partners
Consumers

These revisions provide relevant information for each audience. This approach is especially helpful for prospective operations, certifying agents, international trade partners, and others considering the organic option.

We thank you for your feedback and look forward to sharing future web content updates. For additional information, please visit www.ams.usda.gov/nop.