

**Aquaculture Working Group Final Report  
February 6, 2001**

**Aquatic Livestock Health Care Practice Standard**

(a) The producer must establish and maintain preventive livestock health care practices, including:

- (1) Selection of species with regard to suitability for site-specific conditions and resistance to prevalent diseases and parasites;
- (2) Provision of a source of nutrition or feed ration sufficient to meet nutritional requirements, including vitamins, minerals, protein and/or amino acids, fatty acids, and energy sources
- (3) Establishment of appropriate containment and sanitation practices to minimize the occurrence and spread of diseases and parasites including pathogens introduced vertically through eggs or parents, water inflows, feeds, or other vectors including mammals, birds, and humans;
- (4) Provision of conditions that allow for minimal stress from adverse water quality, and human, Intraspecific or interspecific interactions, appropriate to the species and stage of development;
- (5) Maintenance of healthy water quality appropriate to the species and stage of development; including prevention, where possible, of unnatural rapid environmental changes (e.g. temperature, pH, oxygen, toxins)
- (6) Performance of physical alterations as needed to promote the animal's welfare and in a manner that minimizes pain and distress; and
- (7) Administration of vaccines and veterinary biologics
  - (i) When preventive practices and veterinary biologics are inadequate to prevent sickness, producer may administer synthetic medications: provided that, such medications are allowed under §205.603.
  - (ii) Parasiticides allowed under § 205.603 may be used on brood stock

(b) The producer of an organic livestock operation must not:

- (1) Sell, label, or represent as organic any animal or edible product derived from any animal treated with antibiotics, any substance that contains a synthetic substance not allowed under §205.603, or any substance that contains a non-synthetic substance prohibited in § 205.604.
- (2) Administer any animal drug other than vaccinations in the absence of illness;
- (3) Administer hormones for growth promotion;

(4) Administer animal drugs in violation of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or biologics in violation of the Virus, Serum, and Toxin Act; or

(5) Withhold medical treatment from a sick animal in an effort to preserve its organic status. All appropriate medications must be used to restore an animal to health when methods acceptable to organic production fail. Aquatic livestock treated with a prohibited substance must be clearly identified and shall not be sold, labeled, or represented as organically produced.

**To insert within general organic livestock section of Final Rule:**

**§ 205.239 Livestock living conditions.**

(a) The producer of an organic livestock operation must establish and maintain livestock living conditions that accommodate the health and natural behavior of animals, including:

- (1) Access to the outdoors, shade, shelter, exercise areas, fresh air, and direct sunlight suitable to the species, its stage of production, the climate, and the environment;

*Except that:*

- (2) *Recirculating systems for aquaculture are permitted if the system being used supports the health, growth, and well-being of the species*

**NOTE:** We understand that the general organic livestock section that requires access to the outdoors will not be changed. However, the Aquaculture Working Group highly recommends that (a)(2) would be inserted to include the option for recirculating systems for aquaculture. The stipulations for what constitutes the qualifier of the recirculating system supporting the health, growth, and well-being of the species are as follows:

- a) Minimization of disease organisms being introduced vertically through eggs or otherwise from parents, from water inflows, from feeds, from vectors including birds, and humans, or other sources.
- b) The maintenance of healthy water conditions with respect to control of toxins (ammonia, carbon dioxide, etc.), optimum temperatures, adequate levels of metabolic inputs required (oxygen and feed), and pH, all within certain acceptable ranges depending upon the species, with the prevention of excursions to stressful extremes.
- c) Prevention of other health compromising stresses.
- d) Stocking density must take into consideration animal health and overall well-being.

**Aquatic Livestock Living Conditions**

(a) The producer of an organic livestock operation must establish and maintain livestock living conditions which accommodate the health and natural behavior of animals, including:

- (1) Access to an aquatic environment operated within the tolerance limits characteristic of the species, stage of development, climate, and the environment;
- (2) Appropriate water quality conditions;

(3) Containment areas that allow for:

(i) Comfort behaviors, freedom of movement and opportunity to exercise within the culture system;.

(ii) Water quality, including temperature, pH, salinity, photoperiod, and dissolved oxygen, ammonia, and nitrite concentrations within established tolerance limits of the species; and

(iii) Minimal potential for injury;

(b) The producer of an organic livestock operation may provide temporary confinement for an animal because of:

(1) Inclement weather

(2) The animal's stage of development ;

(3) Conditions under which the health, safety, or well-being of the animal could be jeopardized; or

(4) Risk to soil or water quality

(5) Transport to another organic operation, where transport of livestock should be done under water quality conditions appropriate to the species and in such a manner to minimize stress and harm

(c) Post harvested aquatic animals transported to slaughter/processing or live haul market should be transported under water quality conditions appropriate to the species and in such manner to minimize stress and harm.

(d) The producer of an organic livestock operation must manage inputs

and manure in a manner that does not contribute to contamination of crops, soil, or water by plant nutrients, heavy metals, or pathogenic organisms and optimizes recycling of nutrients. nutrients

### **Feasibility of organic standards for bivalve shellfish:**

Although we do not suggest that organic standards be developed at this time for bivalve shellfish, we urge the NOSB to keep the option open for the future, pending new developments and innovations in that industry that support organic production practices.

Modification in November 17<sup>th</sup> Aquaculture Working Group Report to the NOSB:

Within "Breeding" section: insert 'bivalve' to describe specific type of shellfish, to read: "For hatchery produced bivalve shellfish organic management would start with spat."