



National Organic Program NOP Compliance & Enforcement (C&E) Division Overview and Update

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**USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program**



The Purposes of Enforcement



To protect the integrity of the organic standards so as to facilitate commerce

- Maintain consumer confidence
- Ensure a fair market for the great majority of organic operations that operate in compliance with the law

C & E Division: What We Do

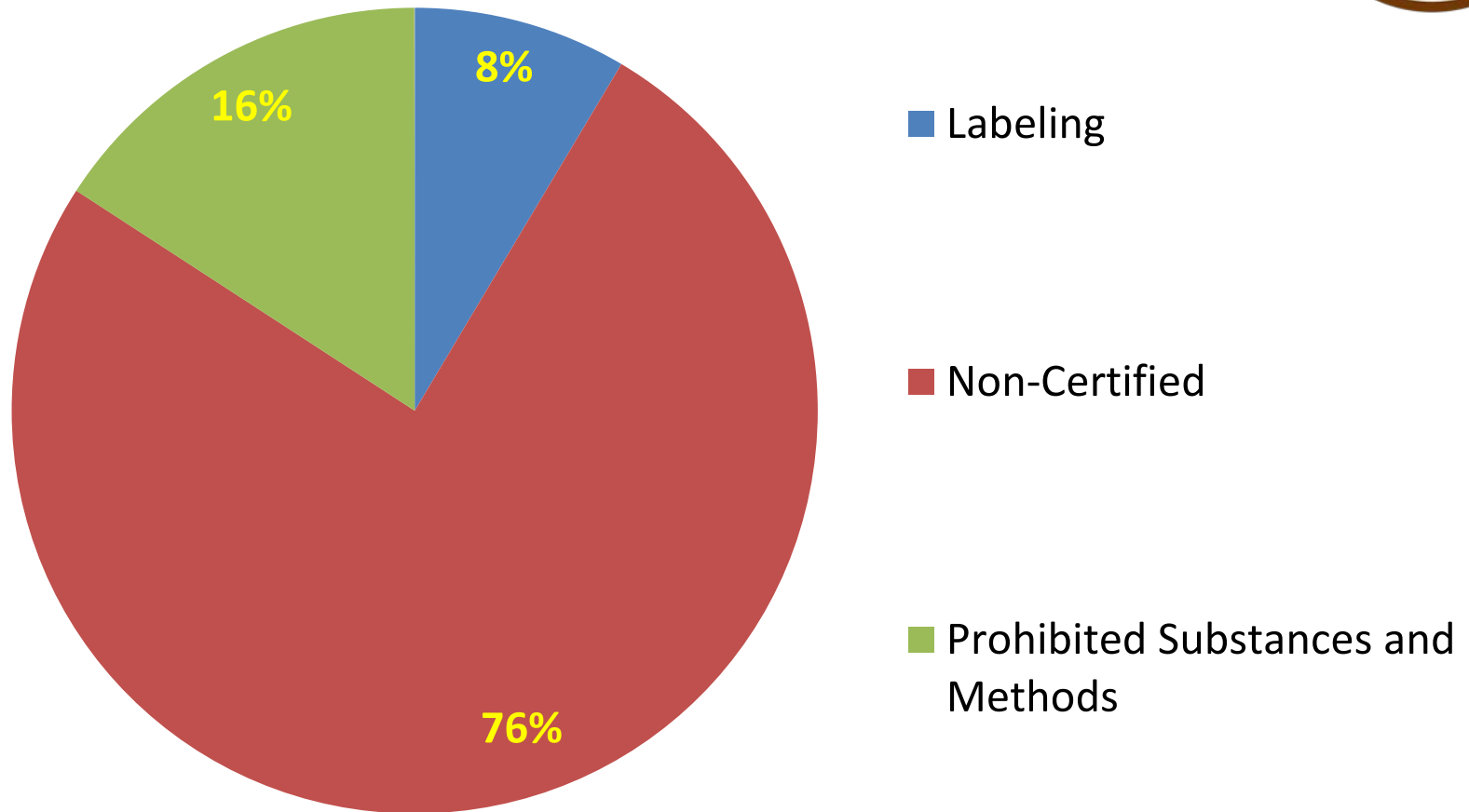


- Investigate complaints
- Work with operations to achieve compliance where possible
- Take enforcement actions as appropriate

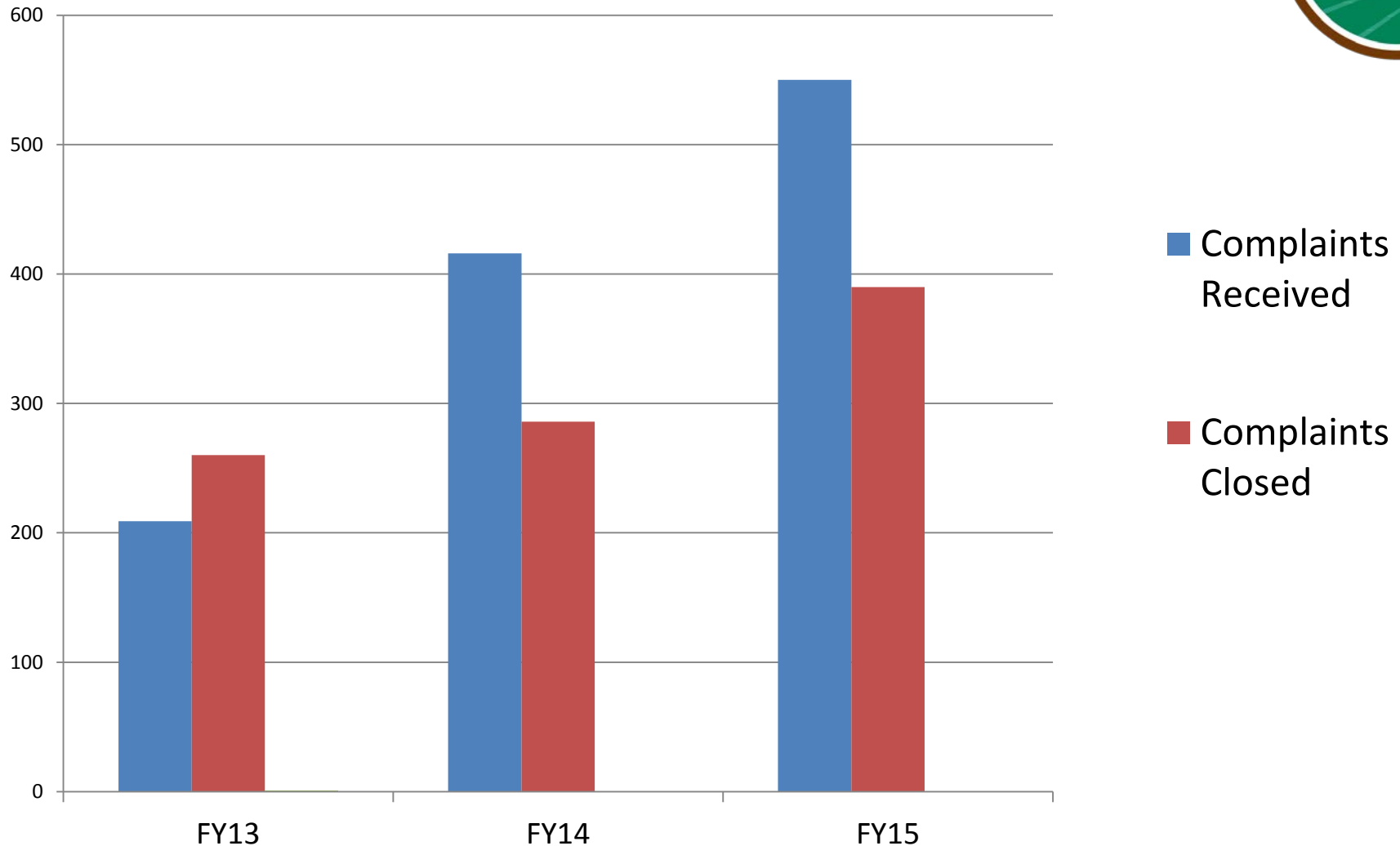
Additional Activity:

- Represent the USDA in administrative proceedings
- Work with ACAs, State Programs and Federal partners on enforcement of the OFPA and the USDA organic regulations

Incoming Complaints: FY15



Complaint Received and Closed: FY13-FY15



Initial Enforcement Actions: FY15



NOP investigations led to record number of initial enforcement actions, including:

- **36 Cease & Desist Orders**
- **121 Notices of Warning**
- **64 Investigation Referrals**



Combined NOP C&E Division and Appeals team enforcement

- 13 settlement agreements
- \$1,872,815 total levied civil penalties



Highlights

- Suspension of land owned by certified operation via administrative complaint proceeding
- Suspension of accreditation of certifying agent via consent decision and order
- Revocation of certification via administrative complaint proceeding and subsequent USDA Judicial Officer order
- State AG partners with NOP to investigate operation for securities fraud and owner accepts plea agreement; 15-year prison term and fines



2014 U.S. Farm Bill Subpoena Authority

- AMS issued **six subpoena orders** for records relevant to NOP investigations

Enforcement Reporting

- Compliance & Enforcement/Appeals reports
 - Civil penalties and settlement agreements
 - Enforcement actions

NOP Integrity Database

- Certification history, status of individual operations

Questions

