

**National Organic Standards Board
Handling Committee
2013 Sunset Proposal
Cellulose on § 205.605(b)**

March 20, 2012

List: 205.605 Nonagricultural (nonorganic) substances allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as “organic” or “made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s)).”

(b) Synthetics allowed

Cellulose—for use in regenerative casings, as an anti-caking agent (non-chlorine bleached) and filtering aid.

Committee Summary

Cellulose, in its natural form, is the main component of plant cell walls and one of the most abundant organic substances on earth. However, most commercially available cellulose is produced from wood pulp or other plant sources through a delignification process that results in sufficient chemical change to render the substance synthetic. While there are many uses for cellulose in food production, the 2002 Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) report focused on the petitioned uses for and forms of the substance – as a filtering aid, as a component of processed meat casings, and as an anti-caking agent. The current annotation restricts the substances use to these specific areas. While the production of non-synthetic (and even organic) cellulose is technically possible, no commercial sources of non-synthetic cellulose are currently known.

Review of the original recommendation, the 2001 TAP review, historical documents, the 2007 sunset recommendation, and public comments does not reveal unacceptable risks to the environment, human, or animal health as a result of the use or manufacture of this material. There is no new information contradicting the original recommendation which was the basis for the previous NOSB decisions to list and again re-list this material.

Committee Recommendation(s)

The handling committee recommends the renewal of the following substance in this use category as published in the final rule:

Cellulose—for use in regenerative casings, as an anti-caking agent (non-chlorine bleached) and filtering aid.

Committee Vote

Motion: Harold Austin Second: Zea Sonnabend
Yes: 5 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Recuse: 0 Absent: 1