



Organic Integrity Database Update

February 10, 2015

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program



Vision: The Organic Integrity Database



The NOP is responsible for the integrity of the USDA organic seal. The 2014 Farm Bill provided \$5-million funding for technology investments for the program.

The Organic Integrity Database will be a modernized certified organic operations database that will:

- Contain up-to-date and accurate information, deterring fraud
- Increase supply chain transparency
- Promote market visibility for organic operations

Business Case for Modernized System



- Deter fraud by providing updated and accurate information about all certified operations
- Reduce the hundreds of phone calls currently made to confirm certification status
- Enable market research and supply chain connections between buyers and sellers
- Support international verification of operator status to support import/export certificates
- Establish technology connections with certifiers to provide more accurate and timely data

User and Beneficiaries: Overview



Certifiers

- Primary data providers and consumers
- Provide and change data in the system
- Use to check on operation status

NOP

- Primary data provider and consumer
- Use for compliance and enforcement activities, research, and reporting

Trade, Industry, Public

- Data consumers of data to support market analysis, check the certification status of operators, and find partners

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator
Information

Certification
Changes

Product
Taxonomy

Operation
Mapping

Data Uploads
and Updates

Search and
Reporting

Certificate
Module

Permissions
Management

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator Information

Certification Changes

Product Taxonomy

Operation Mapping

Data Uploads and Updates

Search and Reporting

Certificate Module

Permissions Management

Key Operator Information



- All operators that produce, handle, label, sell, represent organic product (except exempt/ excluded) are to be certified and listed in the database.
- We will continue to collect all variables requested for the annual list of certified operations.
- We may propose limited new fields based on certifier and industry feedback – there will be a transition period for any new fields.
- **Key database considerations:**
 - Initial data set will be 2014 list you submitted.
 - We will implement address validation to confirm that locations exist (mailing and physical).

Database Will Capture Scopes



- Database will indicate scope(s) for each operation:
 - Crops
 - Wild crops
 - Livestock
 - Handling
 - Aquaculture (future)
 - Mushrooms (future)
 - Pet food (future)

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator
Information

Certification
Changes

Product
Taxonomy

Operation
Mapping

Data Uploads
and Updates

Search and
Reporting

Certificate
Module

Permissions
Management

Certification Changes Over Time



- Being able to search on operator history would save time for certifiers in the certification process, and serve as a check on operator reporting.
- **Key data and design considerations:**
 - In sending data to NOP, should we have certifiers include operators that withdrew before getting a certificate (but perhaps after getting a NONC)? Many certifiers say YES.
 - How do we handle operations that switch certifiers? (Likely a new certification record in the system, not a transfer between certifiers)

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator Information

Certification Changes

Product Taxonomy

Operation Mapping

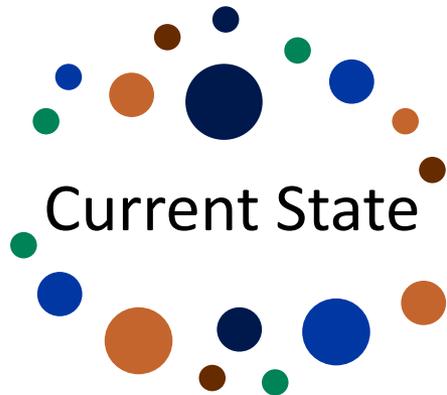
Data Uploads and Updates

Search and Reporting

Certificate Module

Permissions Management

Towards a Common Product Taxonomy



Transition
Plan



- Open free text fields
- Hard to search

- Text analytics will help build scope-driven taxonomy based on existing data
- We will align taxonomy with NASS and trade code lists

Standard
Taxonomy for
certifier
adoption

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator
Information

Certification
Changes

Product
Taxonomy

Operation
Mapping

Data Uploads
and Updates

Search and
Reporting

Certificate
Module

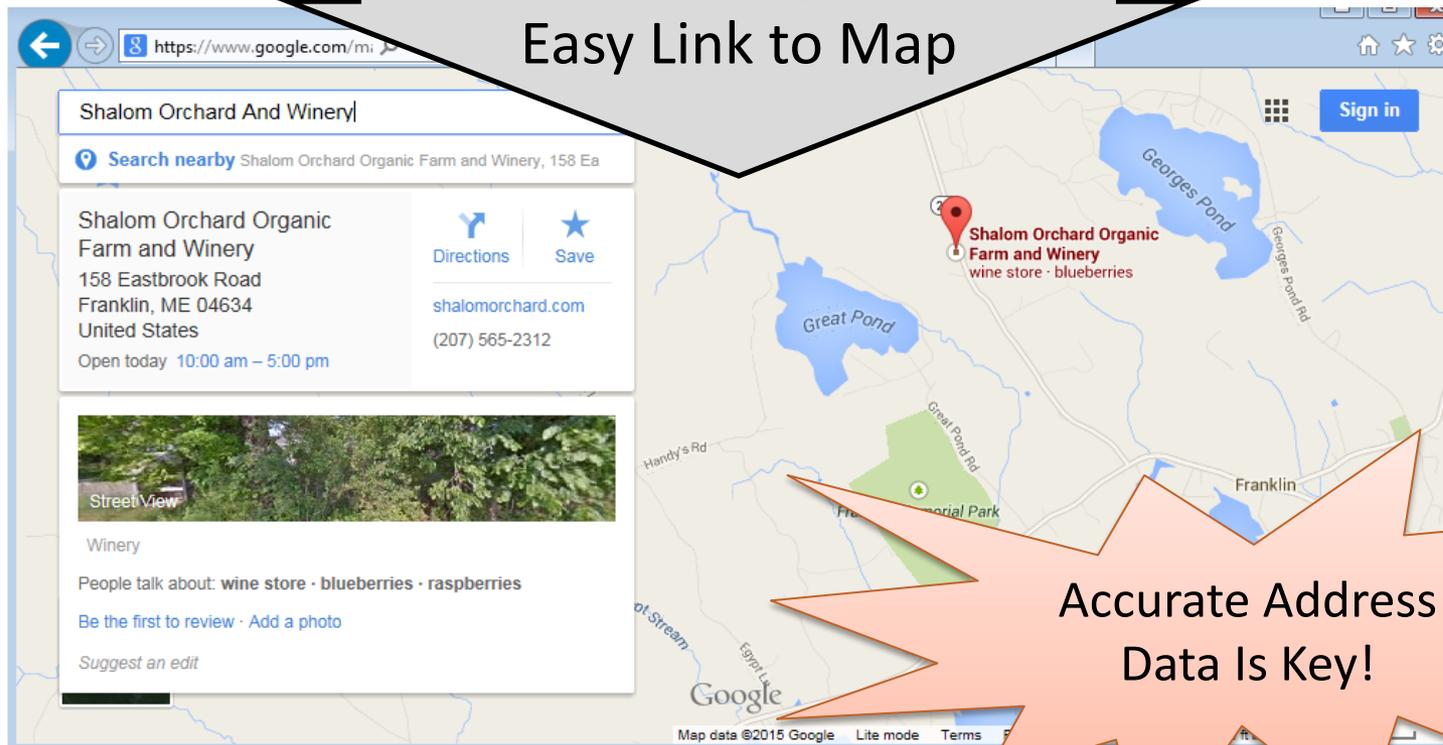
Permissions
Management

Operation Mapping



15693	MOFGA Certification Services	Shalom Orchard And Winery	0501	Certified
-------	------------------------------	---------------------------	------	-----------

Address Validation
Geocoding Tool
Easy Link to Map



Accurate Address
Data Is Key!

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator Information

Certification Changes

Product Taxonomy

Operation Mapping

Data Uploads and Updates

Search and Reporting

Certificate Module

Permissions Management

Data Uploads and Updates



- **3 likely options to feed new and updated data to NOP:**
 - Direct user data entry
 - Excel file uploads
 - Web services/API calls
- We will work closely with certifiers to understand your existing tools, so we can facilitate data transmittals as smoothly as possible.



Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator
Information

Certification
Changes

Product
Taxonomy

Operation
Mapping

Data Uploads
and Updates

Search and
Reporting

Certificate
Module

Permissions
Management

Search and Reporting (Set and Ad Hoc)



- **For Public**

- Search to confirm operator's certification
- Searches for specific product providers
- Search for operations meeting certain criteria in a State or Zip Code
- Pre-built reports on operations per State or other common requests.

- **For Certifiers**

- Search for same elements that public wants
- **AND/OR**
- Searches to research operator history (not on public list)
- Searches for operations that have surrendered or withdrawn (not on public list)

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator
Information

Certification
Changes

Product
Taxonomy

Operation
Mapping

Data Uploads
and Updates

Search and
Reporting

Certificate
Module

Permissions
Management

Optional Certificate Module



- **Goal:** Move to a shared certificate format that facilitates online verification of authenticity
- **Initial Feedback from Certifiers:**
 - Some would like the option if the system can generate the certificates (generally small certifiers using Word templates)
 - Some certifiers have significant concerns given diversity and number of certificates for a single operation.
 - There appears to be generalized support for a federated format that certifiers could build into their own systems....

Key Starting Point Capabilities



Key Operator Information

Certification Changes

Product Taxonomy

Operation Mapping

Data Uploads and Updates

Search and Reporting

Certificate Module

Permissions Management

Permissions Management



	Certifier A			Certifier B	
Operator Information	Operator 1	Operator 2	Operator 3	Operator 4	Operator 5
Operator Name					
Location					
Contact Information					
Certification Status					
Certification Scope					
OTHER FIELDS					
Grower Group Count					
Certification History					
List of Operations Surrendered/Withdrew					

General Information About All Certified Operations Viewable by Public, Certifiers, NOP/Appeals

Protected Information About All Certified Operations Viewable by NOP/Appeals and the Certifier Responsible for Operation

Only Certifier B and NOP can modify records for Certifier B operations

Certifiers must have multiple options for adding new operators and updating data within operator records:

- 1 – Hand Entry
- 2 – Batch Updates
- 3 – Real-Time Mirroring

Examples: Change operator from “Certified” to “Suspended;” Add “corn” to certified products list; Change contact name

Project Priorities



**Early User
Engagement**

*Agile
software
model*

**Certification
Knowledge**

*Team must
understand
organic*

**Sustainable
Operations**

*Design must
minimize
future costs*

**September
2015**

*Initial
system
delivery*

**Play Well
With Others**

*We are not
replacing
existing
systems you
like and use!*

Project Work To Date



- Needs Assessment and Business Requirements Document was posted in 2013; Funding was provided in the 2014 Farm Bill.
- **2014 Activities:**
 - Hired a full-time IT project manager
 - Convened a certifier user group (18 certifiers)
 - Met with interested vendors
 - Developed a list of key priorities and timeline
 - Posted a “Request for Information” to determine capabilities and interest – Over 40 responses
 - Developed contracting strategy

We Plan to Have Two Companies Support Development



**Business
Requirements and
Technical Advisory
Services**

Intact

**Technology
Development**

Harmonia

2015 Timelines



February 2015
Contracting;
Kickoff;
Certifier User
Group Meeting

Early May 2015
Development
“Sprints”
Certifier User
Group Feedback



**Early March
2015**
User stories and
requirements;
Certifier User
Group Meetings

**September
2015**
Initial system
deployment

What We Need from Certifiers



- Participate in the Certifier User Group!
Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov
- As we share updates and key proposed decisions/directions, send us your feedback and questions.
- Prepare for new process roll-out this Summer/Fall.