USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
National Organic Program

Origin of Livestock (OOL) Final Rule
Public Webinar

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Rule Overview
What does the rule do?
• Describes how and when nonorganic dairy animals can be transitioned into organic production
• Harmonizes the market by ensuring all organic dairy producers use the same transition practices

How will the rule benefit farmers?
• Ensures more consistent production and certification practices
• Promotes the ability to compete more fairly in the organic market

Who is affected?
- Producers
- Certifiers
- Inspectors
- Consumers
Why Is OOL Needed?

USDA organic regulations are interpreted differently:

• Some certified organic dairy producers source animals managed organically from the last third of gestation.

• Others continuously transition nonorganic animals into organic production.
What Does the Rule Do?
OOL: Key Takeaways

Allows new operations, or operations converting to organic, a one-time transition of nonorganic animals to organic production.

Prohibits certified organic dairies from sourcing any transitioned animals.
Transitioned animal:

- A dairy animal converted to organic milk production in accordance with § 205.236(a)(2) that has not been under continuous organic management from the last third of gestation.
- Offspring born to a transitioned animal that, during its last third of gestation, consumes third-year transitional crops.
- Offspring born during the one-time transition exception that themselves consume third-year transitional crops.
New operations or operations converting to organic may:

(a) Purchase or raise organic animals, or
(b) Transition nonorganic animals to organic production ONCE.

Once an operation is certified, all animals must be organically managed from the last third of pregnancy.
Once certification is complete:

(a) An operation may only source animals that have been under continuous organic management since the last third of pregnancy.

(b) An operation cannot source (purchase, sell, or transfer) transitioned animals from another operation.*

*Some small businesses may be granted limited exceptions by the AMS Administrator.

(a) Purchase or Raise

(b) NO Purchase or Transition

= Organic for Life

= Transitioned to Organic
Some small businesses may be granted limited exceptions by the AMS Administrator when

i. The certified operation selling the transitioned animals is part of a bankruptcy proceeding or a forced sale; or

ii. The certified operation has become insolvent, must liquidate its animals, and as a result has initiated a formal process to cease its operations; or

iii. The certified operation wishes to conduct an intergenerational transfer of transitioned animals to an immediate family member.

Requests for an exception must be submitted to an operation’s certifying agent and approved by the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.
Stakeholder Engagement
Who Is Affected?

Producers  
Certifiers  
Inspectors  
Consumers
This rule was developed with input from crucial stakeholders.

- Recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), a federal advisory committee to the NOP
- An audit from the USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG)
- Feedback from industry stakeholders during multiple public comment opportunities
This rule is **strongly supported by stakeholders across the industry.**

USDA values **stakeholder feedback** and used public comment to **shape the OOL rule.**

- **Producers**
- **Certifiers**
- **Trade Groups**
- **State Organic Associations**

**2,632** Public Comments

**3** Comment Periods

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Benefits and Costs
Summary of Benefits and Costs

Ensures more consistent production and certification practices

Promotes the ability to compete more fairly in the organic dairy market

The rule's costs are low and mainly affect producers who were continuously sourcing transitioned animals.

$615,000—$1,845,000 total annual cost, spread across the organic dairy industry.
Implementation and Enforcement
All certified organic dairy operations must comply with the OOL rule by April 5, 2023.

- Certified operations that began transitioning livestock before **April 5, 2022**, may complete these transitions. All transitions must be complete by April 5, 2023.

- Certified operations may source transitioned animals for one year until **April 5, 2023**.

- Certified operations may not source transitioned animals after **April 5, 2023**.
NOP Enforcement of OOL

NOP will review certifiers’ **systems of oversight and enforcement** for updates that reflect OOL’s new requirements, such as updated Organic System Plan (OSP) templates and inspection reports.

The **NOP surveillance** team will begin **auditing certifiers and operations** for compliance with the rule.
Next Steps

NOP will provide **training for certifying agents and producers** via the Organic Integrity Learning Center.

To read the rule, visit the **NOP website**: [www.ams.usda.gov/organic](http://www.ams.usda.gov/organic)