

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM

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WILD-CAUGHT FISH VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

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THURSDAY
MARCH 18, 2021

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The Town Hall met via Videoconference,
at 2:00 p.m. EDT, Jennifer Tucker, Deputy
Administrator, presiding.

PRESENT

JENNIFER TUCKER, Deputy Administrator, National
Organic Program

DAVID GLASGOW, Associate Deputy Administrator,
National Organic Program

ERIN HEALY, Acting Director, Standards Division,
National Organic Program

VALERIA FRANCES, Standards Division, National
Organic Program

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (2:00 p.m.)

3 DR. TUCKER: My name is Jennifer
4 Tucker. I am the Deputy Administrator for the
5 National Organic Program here in Washington, D.C.
6 I'm very, very pleased to have you all with us.

7 As you are joining feel free to type
8 in your name and your affiliation into the chat
9 box. The chat box is also how you're going to
10 communicate with us during the meeting,
11 particularly when we get into the question and
12 answer period. So if you haven't already
13 introduced yourself in the chat box feel free to
14 do that to get muscle memory on where the box is
15 and how to use it for this particular meeting.

16 All the chats will be recorded as will
17 this verbal presentation. So afterwards we'll be
18 able to post on the Agriculture Marketing Service
19 or AMS website the slides, the audio
20 transcription, and the chat transcription. So
21 just full disclosure, everything on this meeting
22 will end up being public for those who are not

1 able to attend with us today. So we are very,
2 very happy to have you here.

3 And so let's go ahead and get started.
4 The format here is that we're going to do a brief
5 presentation. We have a very interesting and
6 diverse range of participants in this listening
7 session. Some are from existing organic
8 communities. Some are from the aquiculture
9 community, and many are from the wild-caught fish
10 community. It is a very wide representation
11 which we're really, really pleased about.

12 Because of that we are going to do a
13 bit of an introduction and setting the stage and
14 the context for the Organic Standards and Control
15 System so we're kind of all on the same page as
16 to what organic means.

17 So we'll start with why we're doing
18 the listening session. And then we're going to
19 provide a brief history of wild-caught fish in
20 the NOP. So, for folks who have not been part of
21 this conversation in the past we want to bring
22 everybody into the conversation now.

1 We're going to get some background on
2 organic certification, accreditation, and
3 enforcement because any wild-caught fish
4 standards in the organic program would need to
5 align with that existing framework. And we know
6 that framework is new for some folks who are on
7 the line with us. We want to spend a little time
8 going through that.

9 We're also going to talk about
10 existing certifications and the USDA AMS
11 definition of wild-caught fish. When we get the
12 standards definitions are always a very, very
13 important part of any conversation. So we'll
14 talk about what existing definitions already
15 exist.

16 And then we're going to move into the
17 question period where you will use the chat box
18 that people are getting used to now using by
19 chatting in their names and affiliations. That's
20 the forum that we'll be using to gather your
21 feedback during this session. So we'll be using
22 chat for responses and feedback.

1 It's going to be a structured question
2 session, so you'll be able to type in any of your
3 thoughts, but we also do have some specific
4 questions that we're going to ask you to respond
5 to.

6 And just as again a reminder, your
7 names and your chats will be published on the AMS
8 website. So this will be a public set of
9 documents that will end up being posted online
10 through the AMS website. So again, happy to have
11 you all here. Appreciate your joining us today.

12 Before I get into the content I want
13 to thank the team that got us to here today. And
14 so I think if you click on cameras you'll be able
15 to see them. We have Valeria Frances is with us.
16 Valeria has done a lot of the heavy lifting to
17 get you all registered, to get you here, and to
18 prepare all of the contents. Valeria, you want
19 to wave if you didn't already do that? And I
20 didn't see you.

21 I also want to introduce and thank
22 Erin Healy who is our acting standards director.

1 So any work on standards lives in the Standards
2 Division and so Erin, I want everyone to kind of
3 see and hear Erin.

4 Then I also want to thank Dave Glasgow
5 who is my deputy, associate deputy administrator
6 for the National Organic Program. So the three
7 of them were real pivotal in getting us here
8 today at this shared event.

9 We have other NOP folks on the line as
10 well. Devon is helping us in managing
11 participants. So Devon, thank you for the behind
12 the scenes work there. So again, many thanks to
13 the NOP team for all the work that went into
14 this. And many thanks to all of you for giving
15 us your time and input on this topic today.

16 So, why are we here today? And so why
17 a listening session on wild-caught fish?
18 Congress has urged the National Organic Program
19 to assess the feasibility and appropriateness of
20 developing organic production, handling, and
21 labeling standards for wild-caught seafood. So
22 that's what brought us here today. Congress has

1 urged us to really take a look at this topic.

2 And so we are reaching out to wild-
3 caught fish stakeholders, the organic community,
4 and other interested stakeholders to invite your
5 feedback. And this is a very important event as
6 part of gathering that input in a public process.

7 So for folks who might be new to this
8 topic I want to give a brief history of wild-
9 caught fish and the National Organic Program.
10 And so it might be brief, but it goes back almost
11 20 years here. So we're actually going to start
12 in May 2001.

13 At that time the National Organic
14 Standards Board which is an advisory board to
15 USDA on organic standards and issues, at that
16 time the board proposed that only a discrete
17 population of aquatic animals analogous to a herd
18 of ruminants or a flock of poultry are suitable
19 for organic certification.

20 And so in April 2003 Congress amended
21 the Organic Foods Production Act or OFPA to
22 provide for the certification of wild-caught fish

1 as organic. And so the Farm Bill is the
2 mechanism through which the Organic Foods
3 Production Act is modified by Congress. And so
4 Congress did that amendment in 2003.

5 In 2005 the Secretary of Agriculture
6 appointed 12 aquatic animal and wild fisheries
7 experts to the Aquiculture Working Group or AWG.
8 And in fact, we've got some members of that
9 original aquiculture working group on the call
10 with us today.

11 And their mission was to recommend
12 standards for aquatic animals and aquiculture,
13 including considering wild-caught fish as
14 organic.

15 In 2007 the board held a symposium on
16 the topic of feeding wild-caught fish to fish
17 being raised as organic in aquiculture facilities
18 as well as the use of open net pens.

19 Between 2008 and 2010 based in large
20 part on the work of the Aquiculture Working
21 Group, the NOSB, National Organic Standards
22 Board, submitted multiple recommendations on

1 aquiculture to the National Organic Program. So
2 those did not include wild-caught fish standards.
3 So it included aquiculture standards.

4 Between 2012 and 2016 the National
5 Organic Program drafted a proposed rule for
6 aquiculture. Again, it did not include wild-
7 caught fish. That proposed rule was not
8 published. And so it is a proposed rule that was
9 written but was never released for public
10 comment. And it is not on the current regulatory
11 agenda at this time.

12 So for folks new to this the
13 regulatory agenda is generally the tool that the
14 government uses, the federal government uses to
15 communicate what its rulemaking priorities are
16 over the next year. And so right now this is not
17 on -- aquiculture and wild-caught fish is not on
18 the regulatory agenda. That's an important step
19 for any rulemaking activities to happen.

20 So examples of what right now is on
21 the regulatory agenda just for that compare and
22 contrast is we have rules underway called

1 Strengthening Organic Enforcement which is to
2 revise the regulations based on the fast growth
3 of the industry, Origin of Livestock which is a
4 livestock-specific rule, and a number of National
5 List rules to maintain the existing regulations.
6 So a quick look at the regulatory agenda.

7 Again, I know we have some folks for
8 whom this will be a repeat, the next couple of
9 slides here. And because we have such a broad
10 range of stakeholders on the call we want to make
11 sure that we all have a common understanding of
12 the organic framework, the organic governance
13 model of how organic works because that's an
14 important part of how any wild-caught fish
15 standards would fit in. How does it fit in
16 within this broader framework.

17 And so organic certification and
18 oversight is ultimately a form of a public-
19 private partnership. At the top middle here we
20 have the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service or
21 AMS, National Organic Program. The National
22 Organic Program accredits independent third party

1 organizations to certify that farms and
2 businesses meet the national organic standards.

3 And so those certifiers, and I know we
4 have a few on the call with us today, are very,
5 very critical members of the organic control
6 system because they are the ones that directly
7 certify organic farms and businesses. So if
8 there were aquiculture or wild-caught standards
9 the certifiers would actually be the ones that
10 would be doing the actual certification and that
11 would be setting up certification programs that
12 would be aligned with the Organic Foods
13 Production Act and the organic regulations. So
14 certifiers are an essential part of the organic
15 system.

16 So for certified organic operations
17 there are farmers and ranchers, processors and
18 handlers. And those are the businesses that are
19 most directly connected with retailers and
20 consumers.

21 The organic community is a very
22 engaged community. And what we do is public,

1 like this webinar. Anyone was allowed to sign up
2 for this webinar and everyone will have access to
3 the materials from it. And so feedback and
4 transparency and open public debate is an
5 important part of the organic system which means
6 that there is feedback from all levels both to
7 the National Organic Program and through the
8 National Organic Standards Board which I already
9 mentioned is a vital advisory board to the USDA
10 when it comes to organic issues.

11 And I know that we've got some board
12 members and past board members on the call with
13 us. So welcome, and thank you for your service.

14 Also in the upper right we have
15 organic trade partners. So it's also important
16 to know as you're learning about the organic
17 system that we do have organic trade arrangements
18 with other governments. So for example, the
19 European Union, Canada, our two largest examples.

20 And some of those trading partners do
21 have aquiculture standards. And so understanding
22 what the world stage is with respect to organic

1 production and what are the different scopes that
2 different programs around the world administer is
3 an important part of understanding the entire
4 partnership.

5 Moving to within this framework what
6 actually happens. Certification and enforcement
7 are vital parts of the organic control system.
8 So we've talked about accreditation of
9 certifiers. We've talked about standards, that
10 we would be establishing a new set of standards
11 with wild-caught fish. So standards and
12 accreditation are vital parts of the organic
13 control system.

14 The other parts of the organic control
15 system include certification and enforcement.

16 And so for example, every organic operation must
17 have an organic system plan that demonstrates how
18 they are compliant with the organic regulations.

19 And certifiers review those organic
20 system plans every year and then come onsite to
21 the operation to determine whether the practices
22 align with the approved plan. So is the plan

1 consistent, and then is the implementation of
2 that plan compliant both with the plan and the
3 regulation. And that is really the heart of
4 certification.

5 As part of that is annual and
6 unannounced inspections. Many people don't know
7 this, but every organic farm under the USDA
8 system is inspected every single year. And so
9 every farm is inspected every year as part of the
10 organic control system.

11 And so this includes residue testing
12 as part of the regulations. When things appear
13 to have gone awry and there may be compliance
14 issues certifiers and the National Organic
15 Program conduct complaint investigations to
16 investigate alleged violations of the standards,
17 and may issue non-compliances or even suspensions
18 or revocation of certification for businesses
19 that are not playing by the rules.

20 Certifiers also do mediation and
21 settlement agreements in order to bring
22 operations into compliance.

1 Now, why do we do all of this? Why is
2 certification enforcement important? It is to
3 support what organic management is and to make
4 sure that organic management is being done in
5 accordance to the regulation.

6 So, when we're talking about organic
7 agriculture and what all of these things support
8 it really is the application of a set of
9 cultural, biological, and mechanical practices
10 that support the cycling of on-farm resources,
11 promote ecological balance, and conserve
12 biodiversity. So that's a central tenet in the
13 organic regulations. I just read that from the
14 regulations. That's what organic management is.

15 And so any time we're considering a
16 new scope of certification the question is well,
17 how does it align with that particular set of
18 organic management criteria and principles.

19 So, how does an operation in the
20 current system become organic? Operation
21 develops an organic system plan. Already
22 mentioned that as a critical part of what the

1 certifier does is making sure that plan is
2 compliant with the USDA organic regulations.

3 Once an organic system plan is
4 approved the operation implements the organic
5 system plan. The certifier continuously reviews
6 it every year to make sure that it remains
7 compliant.

8 The onsite inspection. I mentioned
9 the role already of the annual and unannounced
10 inspection. The initial inspection confirms that
11 the operation is not only compliant, but has
12 every indicator that it can remain compliant over
13 time. So that's an important part of
14 certification.

15 Once the certifier reviews the
16 inspection report and any non-compliances are
17 corrected, then the certifier decides whether to
18 grant certification or not. And so an operation
19 at that point becomes certified, or is denied
20 certification.

21 Once an operation is certified then
22 that operation maintains its certification until

1 it surrenders, or is suspended, or revoked. And
2 so every year the certifier reviews compliance
3 and does the inspection to confirm ongoing
4 compliance. They can take non-compliance
5 actions, or remove an operation from the system
6 that is non-compliant.

7 Again, part of our goal here is for
8 folks who are really new to the organic framework
9 and the organic control system to give everybody
10 kind of the lay of the land of how this works.

11 So now let's turn to the specific
12 topic at hand which is wild-caught fishery
13 certifications and definitions. And so just to
14 highlight two existing certification bodies. The
15 Marine Stewardship Council is one certification
16 body as is the Responsible Fisheries Management
17 Certification. So, again for folks who are now
18 familiar with organic but not necessarily
19 familiar with wild-caught fish we wanted to
20 highlight the existence of those certification
21 systems.

22 And we also wanted to take a look at,

1 okay, well, what has USDA and AMS said about this
2 in other programs. So alignment across agencies
3 is always a key question, how have we dealt with
4 this in other programs.

5 And so AMS country of origin label
6 definition for wild-caught fish. I am not going
7 to read it to you, but these four bullets do sort
8 of lay that out.

9 And so I've been talking now for about
10 17 minutes so I'm going to actually take a break
11 and take a glass of water, give you a break from
12 listening to my voice, allow you to read this
13 definition. And that's actually going to then
14 lead us into sort of a more interactive part of
15 this. So we're going to take a pause for me to
16 take a break and take water. You read the
17 definition and I'll be right back.

18 As I have been talking I'm seeing a
19 very interesting array of folks who have joined
20 us. This really is a very, very diverse audience
21 base and so we appreciate all of you joining in.

22 If you would like to introduce

1 yourself and you've not yet done so you can do so
2 through the chat box. As a reminder we will be
3 publishing the chat log along with the audio
4 transcription of this discussion and the slides.
5 So just an interim reminder that all of this will
6 be public including your chat. So if you have
7 not yet introduced yourself and you would like to
8 do so please feel free to go ahead in the chat
9 box.

10 So we are moving to the chat phase
11 now. I just want to give a little bit of
12 background on the process here. There are a
13 whole lot of ways of doing sort of interactive
14 data gathering in these types of sessions.

15 And so when, for example, the National
16 Organic Standards Board which is a federal
17 advisory committee -- a board under the Federal
18 Advisory Committee Act, with them we do very
19 formal three-minute public comment sessions.

20 For this webinar we are at a very
21 early stage of exploration which gives us a lot
22 of flexibility in how we gather information from

1 a lot of people in a fast and interactive kind of
2 way.

3 And so the process we're going to use
4 for the next 40 minutes. And we're actually
5 right on time. We specifically left a lot of
6 time in order to get your feedback and to go
7 through a range of questions.

8 The approach that we are using with
9 you today is the same approach that we used in
10 early development sessions when we were building
11 the Organic Integrity Database. And so for folks
12 who were involved in that, that was about six
13 years ago when we first kind of launched this
14 approach to data gathering in a formal webinar
15 session.

16 So we used this approach to get early
17 feedback to inform the development of the Organic
18 Integrity Database which continues to be the gold
19 standard of organic public registries around the
20 world.

21 The Organic Integrity Learning Center
22 which we launched a couple of years ago. It is

1 online free training for all organic
2 professionals. Anyone can get an account in the
3 learning center. We also did this type of data
4 gathering webinar early in the growth of the
5 learning center to get folks' feedback.

6 And then we did this before we started
7 writing the rule for Strengthening Organic
8 Enforcement. That proposed rule was published
9 last fall and we're now in the development of a
10 final rule here.

11 So we have found this approach to be
12 kind of a proven way to get great feedback early
13 in a process. And so we appreciate your being
14 here and thank you in advance for engaging in the
15 process.

16 We have developed four main questions
17 in order to facilitate flow. We're going to see
18 how we do with those main questions. So what
19 we're going to do during this period is I'm going
20 to show you all the questions. But we're going
21 to take them one at a time, and so just so we can
22 organize things a little bit easier later on I

1 will be copying the question that we're working
2 on at any given time into the chat box.

3 I'm going to ask you to if you're
4 answering that question just include the number.
5 So when we start with question 1 if you're
6 responding to question 1 type in 1 and then dash
7 and then your thought. It will help us match
8 your responses.

9 Now, if you want to jump ahead even
10 though I've only pasted in question 1, you
11 really, really care about question 4 and want to
12 start typing about that you're welcome to do
13 that. Just it will help us if you type a 4 in
14 front of it so we know that you've kind of jumped
15 ahead to the next question. So this provides a
16 certain amount of structure for us in organizing
17 the content after if we take them in sequence,
18 but it also allows you the freedom to engage with
19 the questions that you most care about.

20 What will happen is as we're doing
21 this I'm going to paste in question 1. We're
22 going to probably see a lot of chats coming in on

1 question 1. Once those start to peter off a
2 little bit I'm going to move on to question 2,
3 and so on through the four questions.

4 Now, if we run out of energy, we've
5 got four more questions to go. So there are
6 actually a total of eight questions that we could
7 ask. If there's so much energy over questions 1
8 through 4 then we may not need to. Just for full
9 transparency once we get to the end of question 4
10 I am going to type in questions 5 through 8 and
11 give you time to answer those if you want to take
12 that kind of 201 questions if you're interested
13 in answering those.

14 So that's how we're going to proceed
15 here, but we are starting with the four
16 foundational questions that we want to make sure
17 we get good answers to before we move to the sort
18 of extra credit questions.

19 As a reminder your name and your chat
20 are going to be published in the chat record. So
21 your name and chat will be published in the chat
22 record.

1 So, here are the questions. And
2 again, as you're answering them I am going to ask
3 you to put the number in. And so I'm about to
4 follow the process I just wrote. And so in the
5 chat box I'm putting the number 1, and I am
6 pasting in the question, and I'm going to push
7 return. And that for me marks. So in our chat
8 record we know that at 2:24 we started the
9 process of gathering input on question 1.

10 And so go for it, folks. This is
11 where the chat starts. And so this is where it
12 would be very helpful to understand what the
13 industry's definition of wild-caught fish is.
14 How do you define that term.

15 So I'm going to let folks chat in a
16 bit on that. This may be one where we're going
17 to have some specialized folks who will be able
18 to answer what is actually a very important, but
19 industry-specific question. So I want to give
20 folks a chance to weigh in on that.

21 For those who don't want to weigh in
22 on that, or don't have an answer for that start

1 thinking about what your answers might be for 2,
2 3, and 4 because we're going to be moving to
3 those next. But for right now I'm going to stop
4 talking and give a couple of minutes for some
5 chats to start generating on question 1. So
6 please go ahead and feel free to start chatting
7 in your responses. Again, I'm going to be quiet
8 so you have a chance to concentrate on what
9 you're typing.

10 And so as I'm monitoring the chat I do
11 see a question that came in which is an
12 interesting one. Would this include, and then
13 there's some examples.

14 I think what I'd be interested in
15 response is what your thought would be and why.
16 And so do you think it should include. So you've
17 listed a couple of examples there. If you
18 believe that a definition should include those
19 things it would be helpful to know if yes, why,
20 and if not, why. And so the important part of a
21 definition is often kind of the criteria. And so
22 if you can provide we think such and such should

1 be included because that would be helpful.

2 So if you're asking a question and
3 actually have an opinion on what the answer to
4 your question should be we're interested in
5 knowing what that would be, and we're
6 particularly interested in knowing what your
7 thought process is. How would you decide. What
8 would the criteria you would apply in order to
9 make that.

10 This is always an interesting question
11 in standards and in definition. What's in,
12 what's out. What are the boundary conditions.
13 We ran into that working with aquiculture, what's
14 in, what's out. And so that's why we asked the
15 question first.

16 Got some great responses on number 1,
17 some great responses on question 1. So I see a
18 couple of people have taken me up on my offer to
19 move ahead. So I think we're going to go ahead
20 and also start in on question 2. And so if you
21 want to continue to chat in on question 1 feel
22 free to do so. Again, what we're trying to do is

1 balance structure so we can easily organize stuff
2 later, and openness, and allowing people to hop
3 around based on both what they want to provide,
4 but also how they're reacting to other content.

5 Part of the -- the cool part about
6 this is you get to react to each other. And so
7 as people type things in it might spark other
8 ideas for you. So continue to feel free to type
9 in answers to question 1. I am going to
10 delineate now the start of question 2 in the
11 chat. So I'm going to paste that in.

12 And this is a pretty general question
13 for question 2. What's your feedback? So what
14 is your feedback about the development of organic
15 production and handling regulations for wild-
16 caught fish? What do you think? So what's your
17 feedback?

18 So again, you can continue to answer
19 question 1 if you have more to say on that. You
20 can turn to question number 2. If you want to
21 hop ahead to 3 or 4 you can do that. But for
22 right now I'm going to keep us focused primarily

1 on 2 in the chat box. So please go ahead.

2 Again, I'm going to be quiet for a little bit,
3 drink my water, and have you guys keep going.

4 So, lots of different perspectives
5 coming in on the chat. If you get a chance you
6 should be able to scroll up in the chat and read
7 what other people are writing. If somebody asks
8 a question and you have some feedback on that
9 feel free to type in your perspective on that
10 question.

11 So it is okay to generally sort of
12 react to other comments that are coming in.
13 We're asking you to react to the topic, not the
14 person. And so typing in your perspective in
15 response to where there might be statements of
16 support or concern, if you want to weigh in on
17 how you view that other perspective feel free to
18 do so. We don't want it to be -- so no comments
19 on somebody's personal statements. So, keep it
20 on the topic, not the person.

21 I'm very, very pleased by the range of
22 comments coming in.

1 It looks like some of the answers on
2 2 are sort of asking about the question on answer
3 3, and saying the question on answer 3 are going
4 to be really important. So let's go ahead and
5 you can continue to type in responses now to
6 questions 1 and 2, if you want to continue to
7 talk about that. But I am going to go ahead and
8 type in question 3 as just kind of a starter,
9 again a marker in our own chat log on where in
10 the conversation we started each question. It
11 will help us in tracking and grouping later on.

12 So I've just typed in question 3. And
13 so what types of provisions might differentiate
14 organic wild-caught fish from conventional wild-
15 caught fish in the production phase. And then
16 during the processing and handling phase.

17 And I think some of the comments have
18 started to sort of get to this question of, for
19 consumers, differentiating conventional from
20 organic. What are the provisions, for example,
21 that somebody might put in an organic system plan
22 that would differentiate organic wild-caught fish

1 from conventional wild-caught fish, both during
2 production -- some of the comments have started
3 to preview that question which is why I started
4 us on that -- but also during the processing and
5 handling phase.

6 A number of comments coming in about
7 the fact that organic is a process standard.
8 This is why we spent time right up-front talking
9 about the organic control system as being
10 standards, accreditation, certification, and
11 enforcement. All of those are process
12 activities. It is indeed a process-based
13 standard. And so inspections, organic system
14 plans, that is why we went through that framework
15 was to communicate that, the starting conditions
16 of what the organic standards, how they are
17 organized. And so it's interesting to see
18 comments coming in on what that could look like.

19 Continue to see a lot of great chats
20 coming in with many, many different perspectives.
21 Really appreciate how well-written and thought-
22 through these chats are. So, thank you very,

1 very much.

2 As normally happens in these sessions,
3 as we get later in the questions we start seeing
4 a mix of all the different questions up to this
5 point. So I'm going to go ahead and type in our
6 final fourth question, which is number 4 here. A
7 couple of you have already started weighing in on
8 this.

9 And, again, you can continue to
10 comment on 1, 2, and 3, if you'd like. But in
11 the chat log we're going to kind of mark the
12 beginning of question 4. And so if you have
13 specific thoughts on question 4 please go ahead
14 and start chatting those in. And of course you
15 can continue to chat on 1, 2, and 3 as well.

16 I have to say, I'm so appreciative
17 that people are actually using the numbers. Some
18 of our early webinars we hadn't quite trained
19 everybody to do that and it's going to make it so
20 much easier to sort through to have the numbers.
21 I want to thank everybody for following that
22 protocol because it looks like the vast majority

1 of chats are doing that. It's enormously helpful
2 for us. When we have this many people chatting
3 in it really does help a lot so thank you.

4 Okay. A lot of, again, very good
5 comments coming into the chat box on all four of
6 these questions. We're getting a range of
7 different perspectives on this topic. And so
8 we're doing very, very, very well on time.

9 I am going to, about five minutes
10 before the top of the hour I am going to review
11 next steps. And so that gives us about 10 more
12 minutes here.

13 So what I would like to do is first
14 I'm going to give everyone about 15 seconds that
15 if you would like to copy and paste these
16 questions somewhere on your desktop or in some
17 other document. They are still in the chat box
18 because I pasted them individually into the chat
19 box. In fact, let me just do that. I'm going to
20 go ahead and copy all four of these questions
21 into the chat box. And I'm going to write so end
22 top line questions.

1 So these were the four questions that
2 we most wanted to get your feedback on. So these
3 are the four key questions. If you feed them on
4 your list you have them now, you can reference
5 them.

6 And I'm going to -- I'm going to stop
7 sharing for just a second. And I will start
8 sharing again in just a second. Stand by. You
9 guys are doing really well so I want to give you
10 now a chance to weigh in on the next topics.

11 Okay, so I am about to -- you can
12 continue to chat in on questions 1 through 4 if
13 you'd like to do that. Again, they're pasted
14 into the chat box if you want to do that. But
15 now I'm about to share my screen again and this
16 time I'm going to give you questions 5 through 8.

17 Now these start getting into a little
18 bit more detail. So if you are interested in
19 just sticking with questions 1 through 4 that's
20 really where we really wanted the bulk of the
21 conversation to be.

22 But if you're interested in getting

1 into more of the details then you may want to
2 weigh in on questions 5 through 8. And so here
3 are the follow-up questions. Now, we have really
4 10 minutes to do these four questions.

5 Now on these because they are a bit
6 more detailed I am not going to go sequentially
7 in the chat box here. So now we are kind of at
8 an open forum where you can type in either
9 questions 1, 2, 3, 4, or if you want to weigh in
10 on 5, 6, 7, or 8 you are free to do so in the
11 chat box. These are the bonus round questions if
12 you want to start getting into these more
13 specific.

14 And these build on the previous
15 questions. They build on the questions we've
16 already asked you. Question 5, how could wild-
17 caught fish be regulated and enforced for organic
18 labeling. Six, how does the wild-caught fish
19 industry control the origin of harvested fish,
20 control what is fed to their harvested fish, and
21 treat medical conditions of their harvested fish.
22 So that's question 6.

1 Question 7, and a couple of comments
2 have kind of previewed this as a question. What
3 is the location that an inspector would use for
4 announced and unannounced inspections in these
5 types of systems.

6 And then sort of a good question about
7 organic system plan. So we introduced in the
8 background the organic system plan as a really
9 key tool in the organic control system. And so
10 what could an organic system plan look like for
11 wild-caught fish production or wild-caught fish
12 processing?

13 Again, these are advanced questions.
14 If you're interested in weighing in on any of
15 these four we're going to spend about eight more
16 minutes. Feel free to type in on any of these --
17 your answers to any of these.

18 I am going to copy and paste the full
19 set into the chat box and so hopefully if you
20 would want to be able to copy those yourself so
21 you have them. Again, we will be posting the
22 slides on the AMS website, but just so you have

1 them if you want to be able to copy and paste
2 them. I know you can't copy and paste the
3 PowerPoints as is, so trying to make that
4 available to you.

5 Feel free to go ahead and type in
6 responses to questions 5 through 8, or continue
7 to chat on questions 1 through 4. We're going to
8 continue to let this be an open forum for the
9 next several minutes.

10 If there are other topics that you
11 would like to -- things we didn't ask that you
12 wish we had type in the question that you wish we
13 had asked and your answer. So that's the -- the
14 double bonus is what question should we have
15 asked and what is your answer. And I'm going to
16 stay quiet so you can think and type.

17 Again a really interesting range of
18 perspectives on this topic. And so as you have
19 typed in your thoughts you should be able to
20 scroll up and see what other people have typed
21 in.

22 I think as we sort of showed on the

1 history slide here it's been awhile since we
2 engaged in this specific dialogue. So I think
3 just getting the range of perspectives in and
4 kind of hearing where folks are, where the
5 industry is at this point in time is really
6 helpful.

7 Again, we're going to -- in about four
8 minutes we're going to start wrapping it up with
9 some next steps. In the meantime you can
10 continue to type in your responses to questions 1
11 through 8, or again double bonus round is what
12 question should we have asked you, and what's
13 your answer. By the way, it's my favorite
14 interview question. What question should I have
15 asked you and what's your answer.

16 And we're now at kind of the two-
17 minute warning here. So in two minutes I am
18 going to start wrapping it up. So I'll move away
19 from the question slides in order to talk through
20 what happens next. You can continue to type all
21 the way up to the top of the hour. We won't
22 terminate the session until right at 3 o'clock

1 Eastern.

2 So you've got six more minutes about
3 to type, but in a minute or so I'm going to
4 transition to talking about next steps so that
5 folks who are interested in next steps can hear
6 about it before the top of the hour and their
7 next meeting. Give you a bit of a breathing
8 minute between meetings.

9 Okay. And according to my computer we
10 are right at five minutes of the hour. So,
11 please do feel free to continue to type in your
12 responses to the questions that we have chatted
13 in. And we are going to, however, move to next
14 steps.

15 And so, next steps. Earlier I
16 introduced you to Valeria. So you may send
17 written input by March 26, 2021 to Valeria. And
18 so do note the difference on the screen between
19 Valeria on Zoom. Her email actually has an E.
20 So more traditionally Valerie. I don't want
21 anyone to get tripped up by the email address.
22 So if you have input please feel free to send it

1 to Valerie.Francis@usda.gov.

2 Now, if you have already chatted in
3 don't feel like you need to repeat the chatted
4 content. We don't need you to re-send your
5 chatted content. The written input, that option
6 was -- really we wanted to provide the
7 opportunity for people who could not be on the
8 webinar to send us any thoughts.

9 If you feel like you really want to
10 get your voice in the mix in that forum feel free
11 to do it. But if you've chatted in here we don't
12 actually need you to do it. So please don't feel
13 like you need to repeat what you already said on
14 the webinar. We just wanted to provide another
15 avenue for folks who were not able to be on the
16 webinar with us today, listening session with us.

17 Our next steps is that we are as I
18 said right at the very beginning, we will be
19 posting on the Agricultural Marketing Service
20 website. Sorry, I was reading and talking at the
21 same time. I've got to stop doing that.

22 So NOP is going to post on our agency,

1 Agricultural Marketing Service website these
2 slides. We will post the chat record. And then
3 we've had a transcriptionist on the phone with us
4 so Toby, big shout out to Toby. Thank you. Who
5 will be capturing mostly me talking to you in the
6 form of a transcript that will also be posted on
7 the AMS website.

8 And then we will take all of these
9 inputs to prepare a report for Congress. So this
10 was part of the appropriations language. And so
11 we owe Congress a report that will synthesize
12 everything that we have heard.

13 Now, there will also be -- we have a
14 new administration and so we will be briefing
15 them on what happened during this webinar. As
16 part of that we will also be giving them the
17 history of the aquiculture standards, so a lot of
18 the history we gave you up front for
19 administration officials who don't have that
20 background. We'll be bringing them up to speed
21 on all of these fish-related topics. So that's
22 the next step here.

1 This was very much a data gathering
2 session, not a decision session. And so we
3 appreciate very, very much all the contributions
4 today in helping us understand all the different
5 perspectives out there on this topic.

6 And so it is about two minutes of, so
7 for folks who have meetings at the top of the
8 hour this officially ends our formal session. I
9 did get a question what's the expected timeline.

10 We plan on writing it fairly quickly,
11 and then it needs to go through a USDA clearance
12 process which will likely include some of the
13 briefings I was just talking about.

14 So one of the things I've learned
15 since becoming deputy administrator is never
16 promise timelines on getting things out of the
17 building, especially a report to Congress that a
18 lot of people will want to review in USDA before
19 it goes out. So I can't commit to a time frame
20 on that, but appreciate the question.

21 And that ends our formal program. So
22 for folks who need to move to other meetings at

1 the top of the hour whatever time zone you are in
2 we appreciate your joining and being part of the
3 conversation with us. Again, I want to thank all
4 the National Organic Program folks who supported
5 this event. And I want to thank all participants
6 for being part of it and adding your voice to the
7 conversation.

8 I'm going to end the meeting at about
9 the top of the hour so you have about one more
10 minute. I'll give you a final warning before I
11 terminate chat. But appreciate your being part
12 of the conversation today. Again, thank you to
13 you and thank you to the team.

14 We hope whatever your time zone is
15 that you have a productive morning, afternoon,
16 evening, or night. Thank you so, so much for
17 being with us.

18 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
19 went off the record at 3:00 p.m.)
20
21
22

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