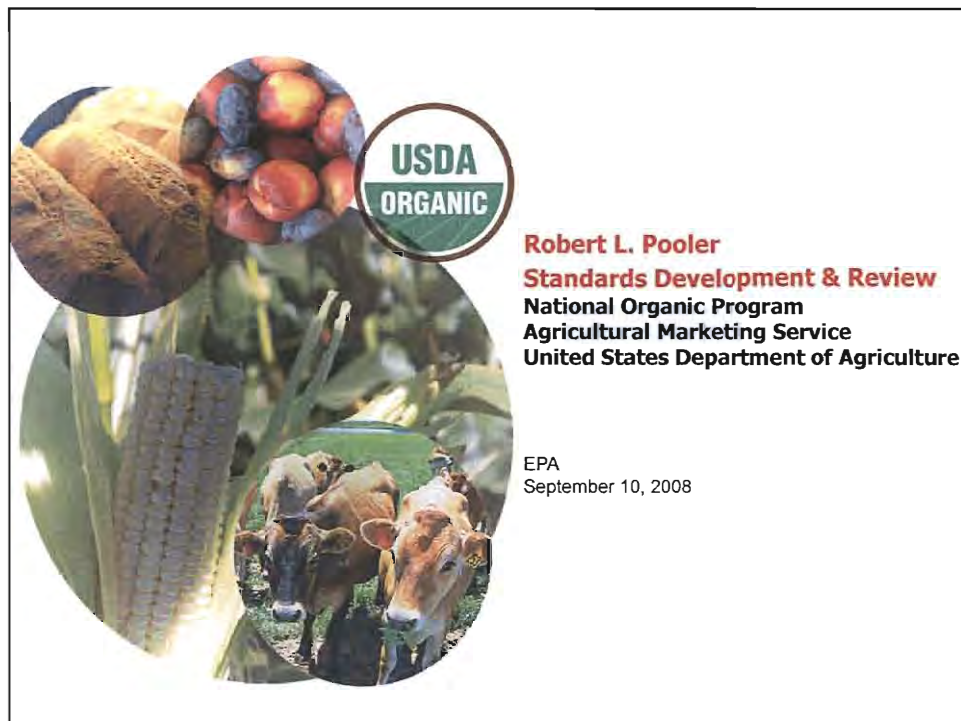


US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Why National Organic Standards?

- Consumers: more transparent and responsive food supply chain
 - Environmental Concerns
 - Certain food attributes
- Producers: higher prices / economic share
- Standards would bring:
 - Uniformity among organic standards
 - Reciprocity among certifying agents
 - Assurance of organic integrity

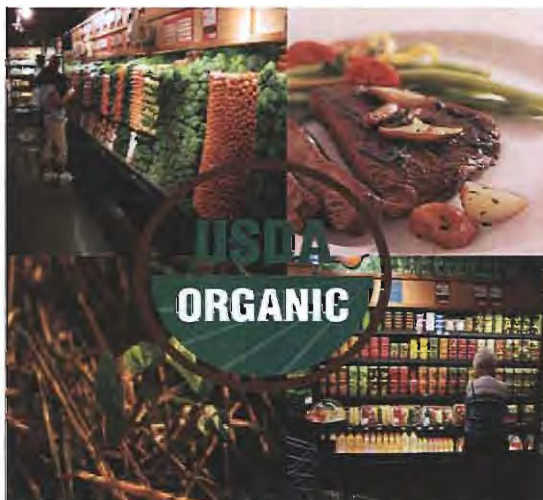
Road to the National Organic Program

- 11/90 Organic Foods Production Act
- 1993 National Organic Standards Board convenes
- 12/97 USDA publishes first proposed rule on regulations
- 03/00 USDA publishes second proposed rule on regulations
- 12/00 USDA publishes final regulation
- 04/02 USDA accreditations begin
- 10/02 Full regulation implementation



Benefits

- One Uniform National Standard
- Reciprocity Between Certifying Agents
- Appeal Rights on Certification Decisions
- Increased Consumer Confidence and Awareness



Organic: Fact & Fiction

- Organic is a production claim
 - how food is produced and handled.
- Organic is not a content claim
 - It does not represent that a product is “free” of something
- Organic is not a food safety claim
 - Not a judgment about product quality and safety
 - Does not mean a product is superior, safer, or more healthy than conventionally produced food

National Organic Program Organization



USDA's Role

- Accreditation: Accredit certifying agents, Approve State Organic Programs (SOP)
- Compliance and enforcement: Compliant processing
- Standards Development: Promulgate, amend, and implement regulations
- International Agreements: Recognition Agreements, Equivalency, Export Arrangements
- National Organic Standards Board




National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)

- 15-member advisory board appointed by the Secretary
- Board composition:

Producers	Consumers
Handlers/processors	Environmentalists
Retailers	Certifying agents
Scientists	
- Review and recommend materials to be added to or deleted from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances
- Advise on other standards or policies for implementation of the NOP regulations




Accreditation/Recognition

- 55 domestic certifying agents
- 40 foreign certifying agents
- 8 recognition agreements
 - British Columbia
 - Denmark
 - India
 - Israel
 - New Zealand
 - Quebec
 - Standards Council of Canada
 - United Kingdom
- 1 export arrangement
 - Japan
- Equivalency in progress



Accreditation Qualifications

Certifying Agents should show some combination of

EDUCATION

TRAINING

EXPERIENCE



NOP Regulations: Certification

- Organic systems plan
 - Crops: organic seeds, build soil fertility, preventive management practices
 - Livestock: origin, feed, healthcare, living conditions
 - Handling/processing: pest management, prevent commingling
- Use only approved substances/practices
 - No genetic engineering, irradiation, sewage sludge
 - National List: synthetics allowed in crops/livestock production; synthetics and nonsynthetics allowed for handling/processing
- Mandatory verification through inspections
 - Initial site inspection
 - Annual site inspection
 - Unannounced inspections to determine compliance



NOP Regulations: Crop Production

- No prohibited substances on land/fields for 3 years
- Establish buffer zones
- Maintain or improve soil condition
- Minimize soil erosion
- Rotations, cover crops, and application of plant and animal material
- No contribution to environmental contamination through application of plant and animal material



NOP Regulations: Livestock Production

- **Origin of livestock**
Organic management from last third gestation
(exceptions: poultry or new dairy operations)
- **Livestock feed**
100% organic feed – agricultural ingredients
Feed additives/supplements – nonsynthetics
or synthetics on National List
No synthetic hormones or growth promoters
No antibiotics
- **Animal health and living conditions**
Establish and maintain preventive health care
Accommodate the health and natural behavior of the animal
Access to the outdoors/pasture for ruminants



NOP Regulations: Handling/Processing

- Mechanical or biological methods for processing organic agricultural products
- "Organic" products: non-organic ingredients or processing aids must be on the National List
- Maintain organic integrity
- Preventive facility pest management
- USDA seal/labeling



NOP Regulations: Organic Labeling

- “100% Organic”

Ingredients must be organic
Processing aids must be organic
May use USDA seal

- “Organic”

At least 95% organic agricultural ingredients
Remaining 5% on the National List
May use USDA seal

- “Made with Organic (Ingredients)”

At least 70% organic agricultural ingredients
May contain nonagricultural ingredients on the National List
May contain conventional agricultural ingredients
May **NOT** use USDA seal



NOP Regulations: National List

- Allowed synthetic substances & prohibited natural substances in organic crop or livestock production
- Allowed synthetic & non-synthetic substances for organic handling/processing
- Sunset process – 5 year review to renew National List substances
- Petition process – Guidelines to either add or delete substances from the National List: Federal Register Notice, 72 FR 2167, January 18, 2007



Organic Industry Statistics

- Fastest growing U.S. food segment (15-20% annually)
- 2006 U.S. sales about \$14.0 billion
- Organic Markets
 - 44% mainstream grocery stores/supermarkets
 - 47% natural food stores
 - 9% farmers markets, CSAs, restaurants, etc. (direct marketing)
- More than 8,500 farms and 2,900 handlers certified
- 4.0 million acres of certified cropland and pasture (2005)



For Further Information

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 - Fax: (202) 205-7808
- NOP Web Site
 - www.ams.usda.gov/nop

