

Proposed Rule for Certified Organic Livestock

Read about a USDA proposed rule that could affect producers of certified organic livestock. Comments are due by December 23, 2008.

12/2/2008

If you're involved in certified organic livestock--or thinking about starting--you'll want to read this.

This proposed new rule--published by the USDA--focuses on certified organic livestock operations.

According to the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance, the move is significant because the USDA's proposed rule goes "far beyond anything the organics community had requested."

You can read the full text of the proposed rule here.

There has been great interest by many in the organics community for the USDA to address the problem of "organic" factory dairy farms denying the cows access to pasture.

Organizations such as the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance and the Cornucopia Institute are concerned that newly released rule is too long and complicated and "contains several provisions that could cause problems for small family farms that are certified organic."

Comments on the proposed rule--on parts you support and the parts you believe are problematic--are welcome.

The deadline to comment is December 23, 2008.

You may submit your comments online, in person (December 4 in California and December 8 in Texas) or by mail.

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Here's How to Comment:

ONLINE
Submit comments online at: www.regulations.gov Use the search term "organic pasture," to find the regulations. Comments must be submitted online by Dec. 23, 2008.

If you wish to request an comment period extension, email a copy of the request to Secretary Ed Schafer at agsec@usda.gov

IN PERSON
Attend a listening session. The USDA's National Organic Program will gather input on the rule (A third session was held in Wisconsin on December 2, 2008.):

CALIFORNIA: December 4, 2008, 1:30-4:30 p.m.; California State University, Chico University Farm Pavilion, 311 Nicholas C. Schouten Lane, Chico, CA 95928

TEXAS: December 8, 2008, 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.; Extension Research Facility, 6500 Amarillo Boulevard West; Amarillo, TX

Mail
Mail written comments to the NOP.

Written comments must be received (not postmarked) by Dec. 23, 2008. They must be identified with, "Docket Number AMS-TM-06-0198; TM-05-14."

Mail written comments to:

Richard H. Mathews
Chief, Standards Development and Review Branch,
National Organic Program, Transportation and Marketing Programs
USDA-AMS-TMP-NOP
1400 Independence Ave., SW.
Room 4008- So., Ag Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250

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