

USDA Organic Policy Updates

National Organic Standards Board

April 29, 2014

San Antonio, TX

Mark Lipson

Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Policy Advisor

USDA-OSEC-MRP

Mark.lipson@osec.usda.gov

USDA Organic – Big Picture

- **Dept.-wide integration, beyond NOP**
- **Congressional drivers**
- **2010 Strategic Plan Goal (+25%)**
- **OSEC Policy Advisor**
- **USDA Organic Working Group**
- **USDA Organic Literacy Initiative**
- **Secretary's Departmental Guidance**

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance

- **Five areas of organic integration:**
 - **Regulatory reciprocity w/in USDA**
 - **Research**
 - **Data**
 - **Training and Outreach**
 - **Encouraging growth of sector**
- **Organic Working Group teams for each area.**

A photograph of several baskets of fresh berries, including strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries, arranged on a wooden surface. The image is slightly faded to serve as a background for the text.

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance: Reciprocity w/in USDA

- **Focus is on coordination of NOP requirements with NRCS conservation program requirements.**

A photograph of several wooden crates filled with fresh berries, including strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries, arranged on a wooden surface. The image is slightly faded to serve as a background for the text.

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance: Data Collection

- **Master data inventory**
- **Support for expanded int'l trade codes**
- **Collation of stakeholder data needs**

A background image showing several green plastic crates filled with fresh organic produce, including strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries, arranged on a wooden surface.

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance: **Training and Outreach**

- **New USDA Organic Topic Page**
- **Updated Organic Resource Guide**
- **Continue Organic Literacy Initiative**

Organic Agriculture | USDA - Google Chrome

www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=organic-agriculture

Apps Gmail Thou shalt not com... USDA EPP eauth Lo... An Illustrated Guide... New IPCC Report: Cl... Food Politic: Journal... Welcome to NextSp... NAME YOUR PRICE ...

About USDA Ask the Expert Contact Us En Español

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Topics Programs and Services Newsroom Blog

You are here: Home / Organic Agriculture

Overview


- Organic Agriculture
- Benefits of Organic Certification
- Is Organic an Option for Me?
- Organic Fact Sheets
- Organic 101 Blogs

Programs and Services

- View Organic Standards
- Become Certified Organic
- Find Financial Resources for Farmers
- Learn About Research and Education
- Get Production and Conservation Assistance
- Buy Improved Crop Insurance

What the USDA Organic Label Means

Organic certification requires that farmers and handlers document their processes and get inspected every year.



4/4 ◀ ▶


Organic Agriculture

USDA is committed to helping organic agriculture grow and thrive. To help meet Secretary Vilsack's goal of increasing the number of certified organic operations, USDA is [delivering results](#) through its many programs which serve the growing organic sector. October 2012 marked the 10th anniversary of the USDA Organic Seal, and we are proud that it has become a leading global standard.

What is Organic Agriculture?

Organic agriculture produces products using methods that preserve the environment and avoid most synthetic materials, such as pesticides and antibiotics. USDA [organic standards](#) describe how farmers grow crops and raise livestock and which materials they may use.

Organic farmers, ranchers, and food processors follow a defined set of standards to produce organic food and fiber. Congress described general organic principles in the Organic Foods Production Act, and the USDA defines specific organic standards. These standards cover the product from farm to table.

A photograph of several wooden crates filled with fresh organic berries, including strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries, arranged on a wooden surface. The image is slightly faded to serve as a background for the text.

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance: Growth of Organic Sector

- **On-line “town hall” discussion**
- **Collation of transition resources**

Secretary's May 2013 Guidance: **Research**

- **Assessment by OWG of NOSB 2012/13 research priorities recommendations.**
- **Review of NOSB doc by NIFA, ARS, ERS and NRCS, with NOP's Dr. Lisa Brines.**
- **Comments and recommendations of OWG team go to USDA research programs and also feed back to NOSB.**
- **Will be posted with minutes of this mtg.**

A background image showing several wooden crates filled with fresh berries, including strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries, arranged on a wooden surface.

OWG Research Team Comments to NOSB: Highlights

- **Whole farm systems, antibiotic alternatives, methionine alternatives, livestock herd health all continue to be prioritized by OREI. Strength of proposals is a concern.**
- **Board should provide more specific info on questions about aquaculture and GE vaccines.**

2014 Farm Bill!

- Restores funding for Organic Research and Extension Initiative (\$20M/yr)
- Restores and increases National Certification Cost-share (\$11 Million/year)
- Restores Organic Data Initiative (\$5M)
- Organic Crop Insurance mandate
- Organic Research and Promotion
- “Checkoff” exemptions and options

A photograph of several green plastic crates filled with fresh organic produce, including strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries, arranged on a wooden surface. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid.

THANK YOU!

Mark Lipson
USDA Organic Policy Advisor

mark.lipson (at) osec.usda.gov

(202) 720-4256