

Application Objective

After completing this module you will be able to understand the concept of organic production of livestock and the specific requirements of certification for livestock producers.

Learning Objectives

After completing this module you will understand

The requirements for organic livestock production including transition period, breeding stock, feed, vaccines and allowed and prohibited substances for health and nutritional purposes. What constitutes access to pasture.

Topics

Types of livestock, Dairy vs. slaughter herds
Other livestock
Conversion of herds
Production of breeder stock
Handling of replacement stock
Feeds and feed supplements and additives
Health care and pest control
Housing and living conditions

Relevant Sections of the National Organic Standards

205.236 Origin of livestock
205.237 Livestock feed
205.238 Livestock health care practice standard
205.239 Livestock living conditions
205.306 Labeling of livestock feed
205.603 Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic livestock production
205.604 Synthetic substances prohibited for use in organic livestock production
205.672 Emergency pest or disease treatment

Additional Reference Materials

Sustainable Pasture Management (<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/sustpast.pdf>)
Integrated Parasite Management for Livestock (<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/livestock-ipm.pdf>)
Dairy Farm Sustainability Check Sheet (<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/dairychecksheets.pdf>)
Beef Farm Sustainability Check Sheet (<http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/beefchec.pdf>)

Keywords

Animal drug. Any drug as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as amended (21 U.S.C. 321) that is intended for use in livestock, including any drug intended for use in livestock feed but not including such livestock feed.

Biologics. All viruses, serums, toxins and analogous products of natural or synthetic origin, such as diagnostics, antitoxins, vaccines, live microorganisms, killed microorganisms, and the antigenic or immunizing components of microorganisms intended for use in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of diseases of animals.

Breeder stock. Female livestock whose offspring may be incorporated into an organic operation at the time of their birth.

Disease vectors. Plants or animals that harbor or transmit disease organisms or pathogens which may attack crops or livestock.

Feed. Edible materials which are consumed by livestock for their nutritional value. Feed may be concentrates (grains) or roughages (hay, silage, fodder). The term, "feed," encompasses all agricultural commodities, including pasture ingested by livestock for nutritional purposes.

Feed additive. A substance added to feed in micro quantities to fulfill a specific nutritional need; i.e., essential nutrients in the form of amino acids, vitamins, and minerals.

Feed Supplement. A combination of feed nutrients added to livestock feed to improve the nutrient balance or performance of the total ration and intended to be:

- (1) Diluted with other feeds when fed to livestock;
- (2) Offered free choice with other parts of the ration if separately available; or
- (3) Further diluted and mixed to produce a complete feed.

Forage. Vegetative material in a fresh, dried, or ensiled state (pasture, hay, or silage), which is fed to livestock.

Livestock. Any cattle, sheep, goat, swine, poultry, or equine animals used for food or in the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products; wild or domesticated game; or other nonplant life, except such term shall not include aquatic animals or bees for the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products

Pasture. Land used for livestock grazing that is managed to provide feed value and maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetative resources.

Routine use of parasiticide. The regular, planned or periodic use of parasiticides.

Slaughter stock. Any animal that is intended to be slaughtered for consumption by humans or other animals.

Activity 1: A Virtual Conversion with Two Livestock Producers

Look over the relevant sections of the National Organic Standards. Your trainer will take you on a virtual tour of two farms. Use what you understand about organic farming and the relevant sections

of the Standards to help these farmers figure out what they need to do to be able to use the USDA organic label.

Closure

Review the document “Key Point about Organic Livestock Production.”

Key Points about Organic Livestock Production

All organic livestock must be fed 100% organically grown feeds.

All organic livestock must have access to outdoors and ruminants must have access to pasture.

Livestock products that are sold, labeled or represented as organic must be from livestock under continuous organic management from the last third of gestation or hatching except that poultry must be under continuous organic management beginning not later than the second day of life.

Nonsynthetic substances and synthetic substances allowed under Section 205.603 may be used as feed additives and supplements.

No animal drugs, including hormones can be used to promote growth.

No mammalian or poultry slaughter by-products can be feed to mammals or poultry.

The producer must establish and maintain preventive livestock health care practices.

The producer must not administer any animal drug, other than vaccinations in the absence of illness, administer hormones for growth promotion and synthetic parasiticides on a routine basis.

The producer must not withhold medical treatment from a sick animal in an effort to preserve its organic status.

The producer may provide temporary confinement because of inclement weather, the animal's stage of production, conditions that could jeopardize animal's health or safety, risk to soil or water quality.

Manure must be managed so that it does not contribute to contamination of crops, soil or water by plant nutrients, heavy metals or pathogenic organisms and optimizes recycling of nutrients.

Organic milk production must come from animals that have been under organic management for at least 12 months.