2024 NOP Program Handbook Update

Stakeholder Reference Document

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has published an updated version of the National Organic Program (NOP) Handbook. This public resource provides USDA-accredited certifiers and certified organic operations with guidance, instructions, and other policy documents that can help them comply with the USDA organic regulations. Several previous NOP Handbook documents have been archived because they have been replaced by new regulations, such as the Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) rule. Other documents have been revised with minor edits to keep the content up to date with current regulations. In addition, USDA has relocated some general education resources from the Handbook to more relevant locations on NOP's website and in the Organic Integrity Learning Center.

This document summarizes the changes made to the Handbook in this 2024 update. Its purpose is to communicate clearly to stakeholders in the organic community what has changed, and to identify the new locations of relocated documents. Please see below for descriptions and the list of documents for each types of updates: **Revised Documents**, **Archived Documents**, and **Relocated Documents**.

Revised Documents

NOP has conducted minor edits and technical corrections to the following documents to ensure they are up to date and align with current regulations and policy. These revisions do not create new policy, procedures, or interpretations of the USDA organic regulations, nor do they change or expand any existing policy, procedure, or interpretation. The table below lists these documents and briefly summarizes the changes.

Document Title	Document Number	Summary of Revisions
Table of Contents	N/A	Updated to reflect the changes made to the Handbook in this most recent update; archived and relocated documents are no longer listed.
Archived NOP Documents	Notice 11-4	Updated to include documents that have been archived or relocated as part of this Handbook update (see tables below for additional details).
Introduction	N/A	Updated references, contact information, links, and language regarding frequency of updates.
Peer Review of National Organic Program (NOP) Accreditation	NOP 1031	Updated Accreditation Division title.
General Accreditation Policies and Procedures	NOP 2000	Updated to align with **SOE**: certification offices; information submission.
Information Submission Requirements for Certifying Agents	NOP 2024	Updated to align with **SOE**: information submission in the Organic INTEGRITY Database (OID).
Annual Report Checklist	NOP 2024-1	Updated to align with **SOE**: information submission in the OID; information sharing among certifiers; risk assessment criteria; mediation acceptance criteria.
Internal Program Review Requirements	NOP 2025	Updated to align with **SOE**: internal program review.

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Personnel Performance Evaluations	NOP 2027	Updated to align with **SOE**: performance evaluations; personnel qualifications; witness inspections.
Auditor Criteria	NOP 2500	Updated Accreditation Division title.
Evaluating Auditor Performance	NOP 2501	Updated Accreditation Division title.
The Organic Certification Process	NOP 2601	Updated to align with **SOE**: personnel qualifications, fraud prevention, producer groups, annual updates, on-site inspections.
Organic Certificates	NOP 2603	Updated to align with **SOE**: generate organic certificates from the OID.
Responsibilities of Certified Operations Changing Accredited Certifying Agents	NOP 2604	Updated to align with current practice related to the use-up of existing supplies of labels.
Reinstating Suspended Organic Operations	NOP 2605	Updated to align with **SOE**: responsibly connected persons.
Responding to Noncompliances	NOP 2608	Updated Accreditation Division title.
Unannounced Inspections	NOP 2609	Updated to align with **SOE**: unannounced inspections.
Sampling Procedures for Residue Testing	NOP 2610	Updated to align with **SOE**: testing as part of supply chain traceability audits; authority of interagency partners to conduct sampling on behalf of NOP.
Responding to Results from Pesticide Residue Testing	NOP 2613	Updated to align with **SOE**: testing as part of supply chain traceability audits; information sharing among certifiers.
Organic System Plans, Organic System Plan Updates, and Notification of Changes	NOP 2615	Updated to align with **SOE**: fraud prevention; annual updates.
Material Review – Interim Instruction	NOP 3012	Updated links and reference to § 205.501(a)(23).
Enforcement of the USDA Organic Regulations: Penalty Matrix	NOP 4002	Updated to align with **SOE**: mediation and appeals.
Who Needs to be Certified? (Instruction)	NOP 4009	Updated to align with **SOE**: exemptions from certification.
Who Needs to be Certified? (Q&A)	N/A	Updated to align with **SOE**: exemptions from certification.
Adverse Action Appeal Process	NOP 4011	Updated to align with **SOE**: appeals.
Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic"	NOP 4012	Updated to align with **SOE**: enforcement action authority; civil penalty.
Natural Resources and Biodiversity Conservation	NOP 5020	Updated links.
Substances Used in Post-Harvest Handling of Organic Products	NOP 5023	Updated links and references to new SOE terms defined.
Chlorine Materials in Organic Production and Handling	NOP 5026	Updated to align with **National List**: new annotation for chlorine materials at § 205.601 and § 205.605; and additions of hypochlorous acid and potassium hypochlorite.
Products in the "Made With Organic ***" Labeling Category	NOP 5032	Updated links.

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Materials for Organic Crop Production	NOP 5034	Updated links and reference to NOP 3012.
Appendix of Prohibited Materials for Organic Crop Production	NOP 5034-2	Updated to align with **National List**: Polyoxin D Zinc Salt added to § 205.601; Rotenone added to § 205.602.
Treated Lumber – Draft Guidance	NOP 5036	Updated links.
Sulfur Dioxide in Wine "Made With" Organic Fruit	PM 10-2	Updated links and contact information.
Use of Natural Flavors	PM 11-1	Updated to align with **National List**: new annotation for flavors at § 205.605(a).
Labeling of Alcoholic Beverages	PM 11-3	Updated links.
Reporting Health and Safety Violations	PM 11-6	Updated reference to § 205.501(a)(23).
Humic Acid Extraction	PM 13-2	Updated links.
Synthetic Algicides, Disinfectants, and Sanitizers Allowed in Organic Crop Production	PM 13-3	Updated links and reference to NOP 3012.
Aquatic Plant Extracts	PM 14-1	Updated links.
Chlorine Use in Egg Breaking Facilities	PM 14-2	Updated links.
Nanotechnology	PM 15-2	Updated links.
Impact of Fumigation and Irradiation Requirements on Organic Imports	PM 18-1	Updated to align with **SOE**: importer requirements. Updated references to APHIS.
Impact of Prohibited Grain Seed Regulations on Organic Imports	PM 18-2	Updated to align with **SOE**: exemptions. Updated references to APHIS.
Petitions for Inert Ingredients under the National Organic Program	Notice 11-6	Updated links and contact information.
Response to Comments	Notice 11-7	Updated links.
Sodium Nitrate Use in Organic Crop Production	Notice 12-1	Updated links.
Noncompliance and Adverse Actions Flow Chart	N/A	Updated to align with **SOE**: adverse actions.
Periodic Residue Testing of Organic Products	N/A	Updated links.

Archived Documents

NOP has archived the following documents (removed them from the Handbook and stored them for recordkeeping purposes). In most cases, the documents have been replaced by final regulations such as SOE or the Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards (OLPS). Other documents were archived because they are obsolete due to trade arrangement updates, or otherwise are no longer needed for the conduct of day-to-day activities. The table below directs stakeholders to the applicable section(s) of the USDA organic regulations or to other resources.

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Accreditation Assessment Checklist	NOP 2005	Replaced by **SOE**. Refer to the current USDA organic regulations and the SOE final rule (88 FR 3548) for regulatory requirements related to accreditation.
Witness Audit Checklist	NOP 2005-4	Replaced by **SOE**. Refer to the current USDA organic regulations and the SOE final rule (88 FR 3548) for regulatory requirements related to accreditation.
Review Audit Checklist	NOP 2005-6	Replaced by **SOE**. Refer to the current USDA organic regulations and the SOE final rule (88 FR 3548) for regulatory requirements related to accreditation.
List of Certified Organic Operations Template	NOP 2024-2	Replaced by **SOE**. Refer to NOP 2024 Information Submission Requirements for Certifying Agents and related resources in the Organic INTEGRITY Database: https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/About.
Submitting Annual Lists of Certified Operations	NOP 2026	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.501(a)(15), SOE preamble (88 FR 3548; begins on p. 3577), and related resources in the Organic INTEGRITY Database (OID): https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/About.
Recognition and Monitoring of Foreign Government Conformity Assessment Systems	NOP 2200	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.511 and SOE preamble discussion on Foreign Conformity Assessment Systems (88 FR 3548; begins on p. 3585).
Certifying Agent Acronyms for TM-11 Export Certificates	NOP 2403	Document is obsolete. Refer to certifier abbreviations in the OID and the NOP International Trade Partners webpage: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade.
Recordkeeping of Certified Operations	NOP 2602	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.103, § 205.201, § 205.406(a) and OILC Course NOP-140 Recordkeeping.
Disclosure of Information: USDA-Accredited Certifying Agents and Certified Operations to the National Organic Program	NOP 2607	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.501(a)(10), §§ 205.504(b)(4)-(5), and § 205.662(e)(3).
Maintaining the Integrity of Organic Imports - Interim Instruction	NOP 4013	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.273 and SOE preamble discussion on Imports to the United States (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3563).
Certification Requirements for Handling Unpackaged Organic Products / Response to Comments	NOP 5031 NOP 5031-1	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.101 exemptions from certification, § 205.2 definition of handling, and SOE preamble discussion of applicability and exemptions (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3553).
Calculating the Percentage of Organic Ingredients in Multi-Ingredient Products – Draft Guidance	NOP 5037	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.302 and SOE preamble (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3600) and OILC Course NOP-210 Keep it Organic When Handling and Processing.
Sample Calculation Worksheet (xls) - Calculating % OG Ingredients	NOP 5037-1	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.302 and SOE preamble (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3600) and OILC Course NOP-210 Keep it Organic When Handling and Processing.
Access to the Outdoors for Livestock	PM 11-5	Replaced by **OLPS**. Refer to OLPS final rule (88 FR 75394) for regulatory requirements related to livestock

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		access to the outdoors. See § 205.239 and § 205.241 for outdoor space requirements and limitations on temporary confinement for organic livestock and poultry.
Calculating the Percentage of Organically Produced Ingredients	PM 11-9	Replaced by **SOE**. See § 205.302 and SOE preamble (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3600) and OILC Course NOP-210 Keep it Organic When Handling and Processing.
Electrolyzed Water	PM 15-4	Replaced by **National List** final rule (83 FR 66559). See § 205.601(a)(2)(iii), § 205.603(a)(10)(iii), § 205.605(b)(12)(iii), and NOP Guidance 5026.
Certification of Operations Based in Canada	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to NOP International Trade Partners webpage for Canada: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade/Canada.
Impact of U.S. - EU Organic Equivalency Arrangement	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to NOP International Trade Partners webpage for the EU: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade/european-union.
Exporting European Union Organic Products to the United States	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to NOP International Trade Partners webpage for the EU: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade/european-union.
Exporting USDA Organic Products to the European Union	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to NOP International Trade Partners webpage for the EU: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade/european-union.
Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic" (Version Listed in Notices to Certifying Agents – 2014)	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to NOP Instruction 4012: Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic."
Criteria and Qualifications for Organic Inspectors	N/A	Replaced by **SOE**. See §§ 205.501(a)(4)-(6) and SOE preamble (88 FR 3548 begins on p. 3578). See also OILC course Growing the Organic Workforce for resources for developing Inspector community.
Organic INTEGRITY Database Launch (September 2015)	N/A	Document is obsolete. Refer to current Organic INTEGRITY Database and related resources: https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/About.
Implementation of the Access to Pasture Rule (October 2010)	Notice 10-1	Document is obsolete. The **Pasture Rule** (75 FR 7154) has been fully implemented.

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Relocated Documents

NOP has removed general education resources from the Handbook and relocated them to more appropriate webpages on the AMS website or in the Organic Integrity Learning Center (OILC), which have both expanded since the last Handbook update. This relocation will streamline the Handbook and ensure that stakeholders can more easily access and use these resources. The table below indicates each document's new location. In addition, most relocated resources can be accessed from https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/organic-records.

Document Title	Document Number	New Location
NOP Organization Chart and Stakeholder Map	NOP 1001	AMS Webpage: "Contact NOP" https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/national-organic-program/contact-us
NOP Import Certificate & Instructions for Completing an NOP Import Certificate	NOP 2110-1	AMS Webpage: "NOP Import Certificate" https://www.ams.usda.gov/resources/nop-2110-1
National List Petition Guidelines	NOP 3011	AMS Webpage: "How to File a Petition" https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic/national-list/filing-petition
National List Sunset Dates	NOP 5611	NOSB Work Agenda (PDF) downloadable from the AMS Webpage: "National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)" https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic/nosb
Calculating Dry Matter Intake from Pasture	NOP 5017-1	AMS Webpage: "National Organic Program: Farms & Operations" https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/farms-operations
Dry Matter Demand Tables for Classes of Dairy Cattle	NOP 5017-2	
Dry Matter Demand Tables for Classes of Beef Cattle	NOP 5017-3	
Dry Matter Intake Calculation Worksheet & Example Using National Research Council (NRC) Values	NOP 5017-4	
Dry Matter Intake Calculation Worksheet using Body Weight Values	NOP 5017-5	
Pasture Worksheet: Rotational/Stocking Grazing Systems	NOP 5017-6	
Dry Matter Demand Tables for Classes of Dairy Goats	NOP 5017-7	
Pasture for Organic Ruminant Livestock: Understanding and Implementing the Organic Pasture Rule	N/A	
Documentation Forms Intro	N/A	
Crop Documentation Forms	N/A	
Livestock Documentation Forms	N/A	
OSP Template – Organic Production	N/A	AMS Webpage: "The Organic System Plan"
OSP Templates – Crop Production	N/A	

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OSP Templates – Livestock Production	N/A	https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/organic-system-plan
Resource Inventory Supplements for Producers Participating in USDA NRCS Conservation Activity Plan 138	NOP 2616	
USDA NRCS Conservation Activity Plan 138 for Organic System Plans and Requirements for Certifying Agent Technical Service Providers	NOP 2617	
CAP 138 Resource Inventory Supplement – Crop Production	N/A	
CAP 138 Resource Inventory Supplement – Livestock Production	N/A	
CAP 138 Resource Inventory Supplement – Organic Production	N/A	

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