

Livestock Recommendations -- 1994

NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD FINAL RECOMMENDATION THE USE OF ANTIBIOTICS IN ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Adopted: June 4, 1994
Location: Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Antibiotic Use in Organic Slaughter Stock

The use or application of antibiotics as medication or growth promoters in organically produced slaughter livestock that is labeled or sold as organically produced, is prohibited.

Should an antibiotic be administered for whatever reason, to otherwise organically produced livestock, that livestock and any products derived therefrom shall not be labeled or sold as organically produced.

Antibiotic Use in Organic Breeder Stock

The use or application of antibiotics as medication or growth promoters in animals labeled or sold as organic breeder stock, the progeny of which is intended to be labeled or sold as organically produced, is restricted.

Organic breeder stock may receive application of antibiotic in the event of a healthcare emergency. In such instance, the progeny may be sold or labeled as organically produced provided that the application to the breeder stock does not occur in the last third of gestation or while nursing the progeny, and the application is prescribed by a licensed veterinarian. The organic breeder stock, having received an application of antibiotics, is not disqualified from having its future progeny sold or labeled as organic.

Antibiotic Use in Organic Dairy Stock

The use or application of antibiotics as medication or growth promoters in dairy animals, whose milk or milk products are intended to be labeled or sold as organically produced, is restricted.

Should an antibiotic be administered for whatever reason to otherwise organically produced dairy stock, milk or milk products derived from that dairy stock may not be sold or labeled as organically produced for 90 days following the date of application or use and furthermore must satisfy all five conditions listed in the addendum to the recommendation on the use of antibiotics in organic livestock production. This policy to be reevaluated in two years.

ADDENDUM TO THE RECOMMENDATION ON THE USE OF ANTIBIOTICS IN ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

1. Organic farmers and ranchers shall practice preventative health maintenance through quarantine for incoming stock, sound nutrition, good breeding practices, proper sanitation and manure management, appropriate vaccination programs for the region, reduction of animal stress, well managed pastures and other sound health management practices.

2. Any use or application of antibiotics in organically produced livestock will be the last resort after all appropriate organic management practices have been utilized and documented in the Farm Plan. Antibiotics should only be used for medical emergencies requiring treatment and where effective alternative treatment are not yet available, in order to save an animal's life, to prevent unnecessary suffering, and to restore the animal to full health.

3. Any use or application of antibiotics in organically produced livestock is restricted to those substances which have been reviewed by the technical advisory panel according to the criteria and process required under the Act, placed on a National List by specific use, application and/or species, and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture. Any use or application of antibiotics in organically produced livestock shall occur within the context of a valid veterinarian client patient relationship as defined by the Food and Drug Administration Compliance Policy Guide #7125.06.

4. Any use or application of antibiotics in organically produced livestock will require a written justification for each use during the annual farm plan review and an evaluation of practices in place in order to eliminate the need for antibiotic use in the future.

5. If used, antibiotic treatments must be subject to record keeping and observation of strict withdrawal periods. Any treated animal must be individually identifiable during the drug withdrawal period. Subtherapeutic or routine use of any antibiotics and administration of any antibiotics in the absence of illness is prohibited.