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## **Guidance for Off-Farm Livestock Boarding**

PCO certifies livestock according to NOP requirements, see 7 CFR Part 205, and will allow boarding of livestock off-farm under certain circumstances. Boarding means relocating certified livestock to another farm location that is not part of the client's certified operation for a temporary time period. A certified client wishing to include livestock boarding as part of his/her Organic System Plan must have his/her plan approved by PCO *prior* to boarding the certified livestock.\* The operator/manager of the boarding facility must be certified organic for pasture. The boarding site may need to be included in the client's annual inspection and additional inspection fees may be required.

If a client intends to board certified organic livestock off-farm s/he must:

1. Submit an Organic System Plan or an amendment to his/her Organic System Plan that contains:
  - Map and directions to the boarding farm
  - Number and type of livestock to be boarded, including appropriate ID numbers/names, and dates of birth
  - Intended duration of boarding, including dates to be moved and returned
  - Name and address of person responsible for managing boarded livestock
  - Plan for managing health care, including: livestock health monitoring, administration of health treatments, availability and storage of medications, and physical alterations
  - Plan for managing livestock breeding
  - Plan for feeding the boarded livestock, including: availability of organic pasture/organic feed, purchase of organic feed, emergency feed plan, and storage of organic feed
  - Plan for ensuring that livestock have year-round access to the outdoors, appropriate housing and pasture conditions, and proper sanitation practices
  - Plan for pest control and pest management
  - Plan for preventing commingling of boarded livestock and livestock products with prohibited substances in all stages of production, including: storage and transport, establishing buffers or other methods to prevent contamination in pasture, and maintaining equipment cleanout records or other documentation, as needed
  - Plan for keeping all required records for boarded livestock.
  - Current Organic Certificate and Organic Product Verification or other documentation verifying the boarder is certified organic for pasture. In the event that boarded livestock will not be managed by their owner, the manager of the boarding facility must be certified for organic livestock production.
2. Ensure that all records related to the boarded livestock are available for inspection

\* If a client's boarding plan is approved by PCO, that client is responsible for any consequences to organic certification occurring as a result of boarding livestock. Noncompliances that result from off-farm boarding are the client's responsibility.

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USDA National Organic Program Regulation:

§ 205.236 Origin of livestock.

(a) Livestock products that are to be sold, labeled, or represented as organic must be from livestock under continuous organic management from the last third of gestation or hatching: *Except*, That:

(1) *Poultry*. Poultry or edible poultry products must be from poultry that has been under continuous organic management beginning no later than the second day of life;

(2) *Dairy animals*. Milk or milk products must be from animals that have been under continuous organic management beginning no later than 1 year prior to the production of the milk or milk products that are to be sold, labeled, or represented as organic, *Except*,

(i) That, crops and forage from land, included in the organic system plan of a dairy farm, that is in the third year of organic management may be consumed by the dairy animals of the farm during the 12-month period immediately prior to the sale of organic milk and milk products; and

(ii) That, when an entire, distinct herd is converted to organic production, the producer may, *provided* no milk produced under this subparagraph enters the stream of commerce labeled as organic after June 9, 2007: (a) For the first 9 months of the year, provide a minimum of 80-percent feed that is either organic or raised from land included in the organic system plan and managed in compliance with organic crop requirements; and (b) Provide feed in compliance with §205.237 for the final 3 months.

(iii) Once an entire, distinct herd has been converted to organic production, all dairy animals shall be under organic management from the last third of gestation.

(3) *Breeder stock*. Livestock used as breeder stock may be brought from a nonorganic operation onto an organic operation at any time: *Provided*, That, if such livestock are gestating and the offspring are to be raised as organic livestock, the breeder stock must be brought onto the facility no later than the last third of gestation.

(b) The following are prohibited:

(1) Livestock or edible livestock products that are removed from an organic operation and subsequently managed on a nonorganic operation may be not sold, labeled, or represented as organically produced.

(2) Breeder or dairy stock that has not been under continuous organic management since the last third of gestation may not be sold, labeled, or represented as organic slaughter stock.

(c) The producer of an organic livestock operation must maintain records sufficient to preserve the identity of all organically managed animals and edible and nonedible animal products produced on the operation.