

April 29, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary Rollins:

**Re: Retaining animal welfare as a critical component of the National Organic Standards**

We write as retailers of organic products, organic animal agriculture stakeholders, and commercial users of organic animal ingredients, including companies and farms across dairy, eggs, broilers and poultry, beef, and brands that rely on organic animal ingredients in finished products. We appreciate your focus on supporting American farmers and ranchers, improving affordability for consumers, and ensuring that consumers have access to meaningful food choices that align with their values.

We respectfully urge USDA to retain animal welfare in the organic regulations, preserve the Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards (OLPS), and avoid any wholesale rollback that would diminish the meaning of the USDA organic seal in organic animal agriculture. Organic is a voluntary, market-based standard. Its value depends on remaining meaningful and differentiated in the marketplace. For producers, that differentiation helps justify the added work, investment, and compliance required to serve the organic market. For consumers, it is what makes the USDA organic seal credible and worth choosing. In both cases, it is a key reason consumers often pay more for organic and producers can realize greater value from organic production.

That is especially true in organic animal agriculture. A wholesale step away from animal welfare in organic would not be read by the market as a narrow technical revision. It would be understood as a retreat from a core expectation tied to organic livestock products. That would create risk not only for poultry, but across dairy, eggs, beef, broilers, and other organic animal agriculture sectors, as well as for the brands and retailers that depend on the strength of the USDA organic seal in the marketplace.

USDA's own analysis has already recognized the stakes. In issuing OLPS, the Department concluded that inconsistent application of organic livestock standards contributed to consumer confusion, information asymmetry, market failure, unfair competition, and risk to the integrity of the organic label. USDA also recognized the need for a more consistent standard that supports fair competition and protects consumer confidence. That analysis remains sound.

For organic producers and farmers, market damage quickly becomes producer damage. If consumers no longer believe the organic seal carries a meaningful and consistent standard for animal agriculture, the value of that differentiation declines. That weakens returns to farmers and ranchers who choose to produce to the organic standard and undermines the brands, retailers, and supply chains built around it.

This is also consistent with the priorities of today's marketplace. Consumers looking for healthier, more transparent, and more values-driven food choices want voluntary standards to mean something real. Organic can continue to meet that demand, but only if the standard remains credible and clearly differentiated. Wholesale removal of animal welfare in organic would move in the opposite direction.

We recognize that, as with any regulation, there may be opportunities over time to ensure standards work well in practice for producers and the marketplace and to make continuous improvements where needed. But fully rescinding OLPS is the wrong tool. A broad retreat would create uncertainty, invite confusion, and weaken producer value in a sector where trust and differentiation are essential.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of America's farmers, ranchers, and rural businesses.

Sincerely,

Alexandre Family Ecodairy Farms

Applegate Farms LLC

Aurora Organic Dairy

Azure Farms

Bilinski Sausage Manufacturing Company

Bobby Baby, Inc.

ButcherBox

Chino Valley Ranchers

Cold Springs Organics Farm

Danone US

Diestel Turkey Ranch

Farmer Focus

Happy Family Brands  
Handsome Brook  
Maple Hill  
Niman Ranch  
Horizon Organic  
Once Upon a Farm  
Organic Valley  
Organic Trade Association  
Oyster Bay Farm  
Painterland Sisters  
PCC Community Markets  
Perdue Farms  
Pete & Gerry's Organics, LLC  
Prairiesun Organics LLC  
Stonyfield Farm, Inc.  
Straus Family Creamery  
Wallaby Organic  
Whole Foods Market

cc:

Kelly Loeffler, Administrator, US Small Business Association  
Dudley Hoskins, Under Secretary, Market and Regulatory Programs  
John Boozman, Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee  
Amy Klobuchar, Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture Committee  
G.T. Thompson, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee  
Angie Craig, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee