

## ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK FINAL RULE

On April 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 the USDA National Organic Program published a final rule to amend the requirements for dairy animals eligible to produce organic milk and milk products. The final rule narrows the allowance for converting non-organic livestock to organic milk production and clarifies how breeder stock must be managed on organic farms.

### OVERVIEW OF FINAL RULE

- Organic milk and milk products must be from animals that have been under continuous organic management from the last third of gestation. There is a **one-time exception** for operations to transition non-organic dairy animals to organic milk production by managing animals organically for 12-months. The transition must occur over a single 12-month period and all transitioning animals must end the transition at the same time.
- Once an operation uses its one-time transition opportunity, it cannot transition any additional non-organic animals and **cannot source any animals transitioned** by other operation. There are **additional flexibilities for small businesses** (less than \$1million in annual receipts) to request a “variance” (special allowance) to source transitioned animals from another operation in limited situations including bankruptcy, insolvency, or inter-generational transfer.
- Breeder stock must be managed organically from the last third of gestation of its offspring through the end of period that the breeder stock is nursing its offspring.

### COMPLIANCE DATES

Until April 5<sup>th</sup> 2023:

- ✓ Operations may source transitioned animals (buy, sell, or otherwise transfer) up until April 5, 2023.
- ✓ Operations may complete any ongoing transitions already approved by a certifier, provided that the 12-month transition is completed by April 5, 2023.
- ✓ Operations cannot start a new transition that would not be completed by April 5, 2023.

Starting on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2023:

- ✓ Operations must be in full compliance with the final rule.
- ✓ Operations must not purchase or source any transitioned animals for organic milk production.

### RESOURCES

- [NOP Final Rule & infographic](#)
- [NOP website](#) (NOP webinar on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 1pm ET)
- [OTA website](#) (OTA member briefing on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 3pm ET)
- OTA members can contact [jmirenda@ota.com](mailto:jmirenda@ota.com) for support