

Organic Dairy 101

Dairy products sold, labeled, or represented as organic must be certified by an accredited certification agency to the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) regulations.



MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIC DAIRY LIVESTOCK

- **Living Conditions:** Organic farmers must accommodate the health and natural behavior of organic livestock. They must be provided year-round access to the outdoors, shade, shelter, exercise areas, fresh air, clean water for drinking, and direct sunlight, suitable to the species, its stage of life, the climate, and the environment. Continuous total confinement of any animal indoors or in yards, feeding pads, or feedlots is prohibited.
- **Pasture Access:** Organic ruminant livestock must be grazed throughout the entire grazing season for the geographical region, which must be at least 120 days per calendar year. Land for pasture must be managed according to the organic crop standards to ensure that sufficient quality and quantity of pasture is available for grazing.
- **Feeding and Grazing:** During the grazing season, organic ruminant livestock must consume at least 30% of their diet from grazing on organic pasture (measured by dry matter intake). The remainder of the diet, including the total feed ration, feed additives, and supplements, must be organic agricultural products. Feeds containing growth hormones, antibiotics, GMOs, or slaughter by-products are prohibited.
- **Health Care:** Organic farmers must manage livestock using preventive livestock health care practices, such as selecting species appropriate for site-specific conditions, providing healthy feed rations, safe and clean housing, and minimizing stress. Certain other health care medicines, including vaccines and some parasiticides, may be used if preventive health care practices are not sufficient. Antibiotics are prohibited.

FURTHER PROCESSING OF DAIRY PRODUCTS

Any further processing, handling, packaging, or labeling of organic milk or milk products must be done in an operation that has been certified to organic standards. Products labeled as "organic" must contain at least 95% certified organic ingredients. The remaining 5% may be composed of certain restricted non-organic food additives that are essential for food processing, such as nutrient vitamins and minerals for fortification, and dairy cultures for making cheese or yogurt.

In any product with organic label claims, GMOs and artificial flavors, colors, and preservatives are prohibited.

Organic delivers
BIG RESULTS 
from small seeds 

