

Executive Director Report for June 2023

ODMAP update:

1. NODPA & WODPA created a template for farmers to use to submit with their application
2. Full NOFA is at [2023-11030.pdf \(federalregister.gov\)](#)
3. We signed on to a letter asking for the other 25% and more! (OFA & NOC created)
4. Spoke w/ Adam Warthesen

OFA Meeting Updates (4/17, 5/1, 5/8, 5/22, 6/1, 6/12):

1. Recap of House Ag Subcommittee hearing on General Farm Commodities, Risk Management, and Credit [“Producer Perspectives on the 2023 Farm Bill”](#)
Wednesday, April 26, 2023 - 10:00AM
 - Rep Scott’s opening statement:
<https://agriculture.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=7611>
 - Rep Shontell Brown’s opening remarks:
https://www.oklahomafarmreport.com/okfr/2023/04/26/ranking-member-shontell-brown-opening-statement-at-producer-perspectives-on-the-2023-farm-bill-hearing/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=ranking-member-shontell-brown-opening-statement-at-producer-perspectives-on-the-2023-farm-bill-hearing
2. Milk Pooling
 1. Background - summary in [congressional research service](#).
<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45044>
 2. Organic has tried to get out of it a few years ago, effort fell flat. If organic got out of the pool, we could form an organic pool or not. Conventional benefits from organic being in the pool, organic always pays in.
 - i. There are some benefits:
 1. FMMO collects the information so there is some data
 2. If you’re outside of the pool it will be hard to get in line for a new processor.
 - a. Pool plants gave message that if you’re out of the pool you’re out and you won’t have access to emergency processing etc. on fluid market this is a big deal.
 3. How will being out of the pool improve the pay price for producers?
 4. There is no way to stay in the pool but not always pay in.
3. Dan Smith – New England Compact, VT Task Force, FMMO, Former staff attorney for VT legislator, Maine Dairy Industry rep.
 1. Recap of conversations he’s had on the Hill with reference to DMC and the possibility of an organic margin insurance program. He was on the Hill 3 weeks ago.
 - i. Main Question: Is Congress open to any organic dairy programs and how can we create it?
 1. Does it make sense to work together going forward? What would that look like?
 2. Is WODPA interested in supporting?
 - a. Hesitancy given that \$\$ would have to come out of existing pots.

- b. Working to have organic dairy as a premium specialty product rather than a commodity. How would this impact that push?
- c. Look at an established program like CCC or ELAP.

Origin of Livestock Information Collection Notice

1. NOP is seeking public comment on the burdens, costs, and other effects of the information collection required by the final rule, which adds a process by which organic operations may request a variance, or exception, from certain livestock sourcing requirements. Online comments are encouraged. Information on how to submit comments can be found on Regulations.gov, and by clicking the link below. The 60-day comment period will close on June 26, 2023.
 - a. [Federal Register :: Origin of Livestock; New Information Collection](#)
 - b. NODPA has provided comments (attached) and offered that we could sign on to them in support.

Letter Sign- ons:

1. Signed on to a position statement regarding the fact that organic is soil based (against aquaculture claiming to be organic).
 - a. Letter attached.
2. Signed on to Opportunities in Organic Act
 - a. Introduced by Senator Welch
 - b. The bill is cosponsored by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Bob Casey (D-PA), John Fetterman (D-PA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Angus King (I-ME), Ed Markey (D-MA) Chris Murphy (D-CT), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Tina Smith (D-MN), and Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM).
 - c. Being introduced in the House very soon!
 - d. Reimburse up to \$1500 in organic certification costs
 - e. Provide flexible transition and resilience funding (from training and purchasing equipment to business planning and market development)
 - f. Ensures public institutions and NGOs provide regionally appropriate and organic relevant technical assistance to help farmers reduce reliance on costly inputs and build healthy soil to stabilize farm incomes and our food supply

Dairies out of business in the past 24 months:

1. We are trying to explain the severity of the situation in the organic dairy industry. We want to gather approximate information for the following:
 - a. Number of dairies in your region who have gone out of business
 - b. Number of cows on those dairies
 - c. Why did those dairies go out of business (economics, water issues, no succession, etc.)

Vote for change of Board Meeting time:

1. We will continue to meet at 6:30pm on the second Tuesday of each month

Financial Opportunities:

1. The Emergency Livestock Disaster Assistance Program (ELAP) deadline for 2022 has been extended
 - a. [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish \(ELAP\) \(usda.gov\)](#)
 - i. Applications have been extended to June 2, 2023
 - b. [Organic Market Development Grant | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
 - i. CCOF has a grant writer that can help if anyone is interested (lbenador@ccof.org)
 - ii. Applications are due August 8, 2023
2. Cost Share Announcement
 - a. [Organic Certification Cost Share Program \(OCCSP\) \(usda.gov\)](#)

Reminders:

1. Strengthening Organic Enforcement Rule goes into full effect March 19, 2024.
 - a. In anyone is in need of a certifier, please visit [Organic Integrity Database \(usda.gov\)](#)
2. TIMAB USA Lunchtime Learning Webinar
 - a. Link:
<https://csuchico.zoom.us/j/83599045325?pwd=MHI1bXZhWDdmdGRjWE4yVW9Ra00yUT09>
 - b. Every Board Member needs to please join!!
 - c. June 27, 2023 @ 11:30am