

Executive Director Report for September 2025

WODPA topics of focus this month

1. Common Organic Systems Plan
2. 2025 Conference Preparations and Producer Outreach
3. Staying up to date with government shutdown, Farm Bill, etc.

Legislative/Policy Work

1. “The Organic Dairy Data Collection Act” – H.R. 4110 (attached)
 - a. Introduced by Congresswoman Pingree (D - ME), Congressman Langworthy (R - NY) and Congressman Wied (R - WI)
2. “The Organic Dairy Assistance, Investment, and reporting Yields Act of 2025” – Senate 2442 (attached)
 - a. Introduced by Senator Welch (VT), Senator Gillibrand (NY), Senator Sanders (VT) and Senator Booker (NJ)
3. Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act – S. 222, H.R. 649
 - a. Reintroduce whole and 2% milk to school lunch programs, challenging long-standing USDA guidelines.
4. Responsible Oversight and Integrity Act (ROI)
5. Common OSP Conversation
 - a. WODPA & NODPA met with Connie Carr who is working with Quick Organics.
 - b. NOP is involved, but not driving the common OSP creation.
 - i. They heard the call to action from Jenny Tucker last year. What they are creating is a completely digitized OSP- all criteria for Livestock, Crops, Handling. Checkboxes. Room for interpretation. Going to be a subscription-based service.
 - c. Quick Organics working with OTA, CCOF, ACA, Rodale Regenerative, and a couple certifiers (unclear who)
 - d. Our idea was NOP would create templates that were available for download (electronic or print). Now it’s looking like it will be 100% digitized. Users would have to pay a subscription service, monthly fee to have access. Users would have to continue to pay a subscription service for any updates. No clarity around who owns it once it’s uploaded to their site. It is unclear who owns the information. There is no clarity on who will keep it updated from here on out.
 - e. Certifiers are not going to be required to use this OSP. NOP cannot mandate certifiers to use such a template, but they can strongly encourage it and make it part of approved forms for use.
 - f. “Not-So-Common OSP”

6. Impacts to organic dairy of the government shutdown:

- a. **NOP staff:** All NOP employees will be furloughed. All activities they oversee will be paused.
- b. **Certifiers:** Certification agents, which are independent of USDA, should be able to continue activities that do not require direct USDA involvement. However, activities like new certification, certification changes (new products, more acreage, suspensions, etc) that require interaction with the USDA Organic Integrity Database (OID) will be contingent on its continued operation.
- c. **OID access:** The OID itself may become unavailable, disrupting certification, verification of certified operations and import certificates.
- d. **Imports:** Import certificates will be impacted if the USDA Organic Integrity Database (OID) is unavailable, however, [USDA's Continuity of Operations Plan](#) allows for paper certificates if the system goes down.
- e. **Websites:** Federal websites hosting organic regulations, the NOP Handbook, and related guidance may become inaccessible.
- f. **NOSB meeting:** The National Organic Standards Board meeting scheduled for November 4–6 in Omaha, Nebraska and public comment the week prior may be modified, cancelled, or delayed depending on the shutdown's duration.
 - i. If NOP staff return by opening of business (9 am Eastern) on October 16, 2025, the Board meeting will take place in-person in Omaha, NE. The meeting and the public comment webinars will also be livestreamed.
 - ii. If NOP staff return after opening of business October 16 and before opening of business (9 am Eastern) October 22, 2025, the meeting and public comment webinars will take place virtually.
 - iii. If NOP staff do not return by opening of business (9 am Eastern) October 22, 2025, the NOSB Fall meeting and public comment webinars will be canceled.
- g. **TOPP:** Transition to Organic Partnership Program activities should continue as long as they operate independently of USDA oversight, though reimbursements will likely be delayed.
- h. **OMD:** Organic Market Development Grant activities should continue as long as they operate independently of USDA oversight, though reimbursements will likely be delayed.

- i. **Other USDA programs:** Programs that support organic, including crop insurance, ERS data reports, NRCS programs, may also experience delays. Data reports by USDA Market News are expected to continue.

Letter Sign-Ons and Comments:

1. NOSB Comments Attached.
2. NODPA & WODPA Statement Position on Exemption from Organic
3. Atlantic Corp. Letter of Support Attached.

Farmer Resources & Financial Opportunities:

1. National Organic Farmer Education Network (NOFEN)
 - a. [Organic Events - Organic Farmers Association](#)
2. Organic Dairy Exemption Request Form
 - a. AMS-15 - Organic Exemption Request Form | Agricultural Marketing Service (usda.gov)
3. Mercaris/ Argus update:
 - a. Mercaris/Argus collecting statements for Q3 2025 (July, August, September)
 - i. Send statements to AgData@ArgusMedia.com
 - ii. All organic dairy producers can submit statements. Only paying WODPA members can see the survey results.
 - iii. SEND IN YOUR STATEMENTS NOW PLEASE

Reminders/ Resources:

1. Save the Dates:
 - a. WODPA Conference & Trade Show
 - i. October 28–29, 2025 in Santa Rosa, California
 - ii. In person WODPA Board meeting on October 28th @ 12pm at the Americana Restaurant (205 5th Street Suite A, Santa Rosa, CA)
2. NOSB Fall 2025 Meeting
 - a. Public comment: October 28th & 30th from 9am to 2pm
 - b. Public meeting: November 4 – 6 in Omaha, NE
 - c. [National Organic Standards Board \(NOSB\) Meeting - Omaha, NE | Agricultural Marketing Service](#)