Executive Director's Report for November 2026

WODPA topics of focus this month

- Conference wrap-up
- Ivermectin next steps & NWS updates
- Catching up from Maternity Leave

A. Policy Work

1. New World Screwworm & Ivermectin — Advocacy Milestone
    a. Key update: NOSB voted 11–2 (one abstention, one absent) to recommend restoring ivermectin for limited New World Screwworm treatment in organic dairy cattle. Proposed conditions include a 90-day milk withholding period and exclusion of slaughter stock.
    b. WODPA's role: Collaborated with OTA's NWS Task Force; supported the September petition; submitted written and oral NOSB comments; shared producer education and updates.
    c. Status / next steps: NOP is pursuing an interim final rule. FDA has raised efficacy, residue, and resistance concerns. WODPA will monitor rulemaking, support public comments, and communicate final requirements. The recommendation is NOT yet an enforceable organic allowance.
2. FMMO Organic Litigation — CODE
    a. Key update: An August administrative ruling found USDA had not adequately considered organic dairy market differences when applying the 2025 FMMO changes to similarly situated organic handlers and producer-handlers.
    b. Status: USDA appealed September 24; CODE appealed unfavorable portions; NMPF supports USDA's appeal. Written responses expected November 2026; Judicial Officer decision anticipated first half of 2027. Related constitutional litigation continues.
    c. Producer impact: Encouraging recognition of organic dairy's distinct economics, but no final lasting relief yet.
3. Farm Bill & USDA Operations
    a. Farm Bill: Extended 2018 Farm Bill expired September 30. Congress faces a December 11 funding deadline and must address expiring dairy authorities

before December 31 to avoid potential dairy-cliff disruption. A funding continuing resolution does not itself extend Farm Bill provisions.

b. USDA reorganization: An October 13 court order temporarily paused certain closures, consolidations, and relocations. Funding restrictions expire December 9; legal and congressional outcomes remain uncertain.

4. Other Fall 2026 NOSB Highlights
    a. Farm Bill: Livestock health: NOSB recommended retaining substances reviewed in the 2028 sunset process.
    b. Testing and imports: Recommendations emphasize risk-based residue testing, transparency and stronger supply-chain oversight; potential implications for certifier documentation and organic feed integrity.
    c. Organic seed: Further documentation and sourcing requirements under discussion, especially field corn; proposal anticipated spring 2027.
    d. Certification / transition: NOP is developing standardized Organic System Plans and inspection forms. TOPP is scheduled to end December 2026.
    e. Next meeting: May 4–6, 2027, Alexandria, Virginia; public comments expected late April.
5. Harvest Fuel Relief — Producer Data Needed
    a. **Key update:** Proposed fuel relief uses a commodity-focused framework that omits organic dairy and livestock operations.
    b. **Producer action:** Encourage farms to submit verified 2026 diesel gallons, prices and expenses; 2025 comparisons; dairy and feed-production fuel uses; and supporting invoices or records to HarvestFuel@usda.gov.

B. Mercaris/ Argus:

1. Renewal negotiations are underway.
2. Mercaris/Argus collecting statements for Q4 2026 (October, November, December)
    a. Send statements to AgData@ArgusMedia.com
    b. All organic dairy producers can submit statements. Only paid- in WODPA members can see the survey results.

C. Financial Opportunities & Events

1. **Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC)**
    a. Enrollment Dates: October 5th - December 18th, 2026
    b. Enrollment for 2027 is open. The program provides protection when milk-feed margins decline. Tier 1 coverage now extends to 6 million pounds of production, and qualifying multi-year participants can receive a 25% premium discount.

c. Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC) | Farm Service Agency

2. **Organic Certification Cost Share (OCCSP)**
    a. Enrollment Dates: NOW – December 31st, 2026
    b. Applications for both the 2025 and 2026 program years are due December 31. Eligible costs include organic certification, inspections, and certain related expenses.
    c. Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) | Farm Service Agency
3. **EQIP and CSP Funding**
    a. Enrollment Dates: NOW – December 31st, 2026
    b. Conservation funding can support grazing management, water infrastructure, irrigation efficiency, and other eligible improvements.
        1. Upcoming FY 2027 ranking deadlines:
            a. Oregon: November 13
            b. Texas: November 13
            c. Colorado: November 20
            d. Washington: December 18
            e. California's initial November 6 cutoff has passed. Applications are accepted year-round for consideration in future funding cycles.
    c. Application Cutoff Dates | Natural Resources Conservation Service
4. **Harvest Fuel Relief – Producer Cost Documentation**
    a. Organic dairy and other livestock producers should document rising diesel, feed production, transportation, and other fuel-related expenses to support efforts to include non-Title I operations in relief discussions.
    b. WODPA action: Encourage producers to compile verified cost information and send information to HarvestFuel@usda.gov. This is a potential relief opportunity.