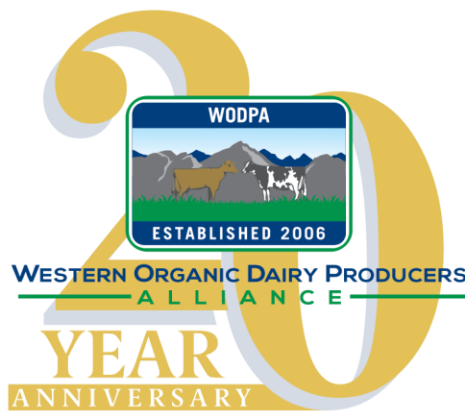




Executive Director's Report for August 2026

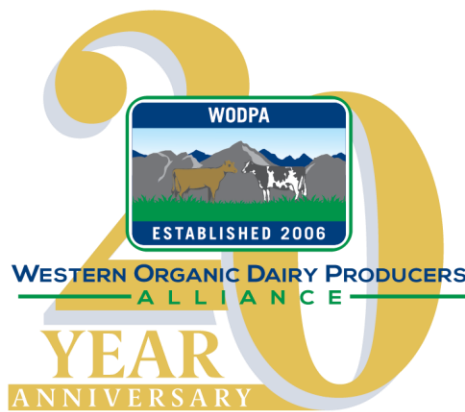
WODPA topics of focus this month

- ☐ Continuing to stay updated on Farm Bill updates
- ☐ WODPA Administrative Document revamp
- ☐ Preparations for 2026 Conference (Outreach, write-ups)
- ☐ Preparations for Maternity Leave

A. Legislative/Policy Work

1. Senate Farm Bill Fails Committee Vote

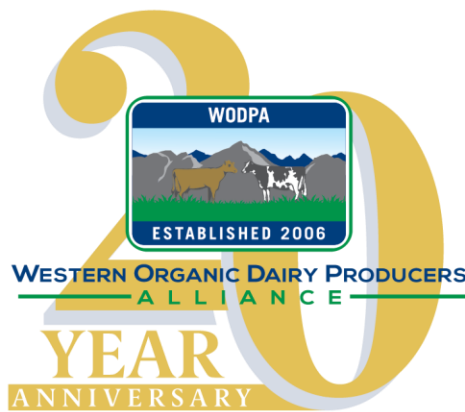
- i. On August 6, the Senate Agriculture Committee's latest Farm Bill proposal failed to advance after lawmakers were unable to reach a compromise over SNAP provisions. The committee is expected to revisit the bill following the August recess.
- ii. While the Senate proposal includes several positive provisions for organic agriculture, important priorities for organic dairy producers remain unfinished.
- iii. **Key organic provisions include:**
 1. Stronger testing of high-risk organic feed imports to help protect U.S. producers from fraudulent imports.
 2. Risk-based organic inspections aimed at reducing unnecessary burdens on lower-risk operations.
 3. Increased access to **EQIP conservation funding** for organic and transitioning producers.
 4. Modest funding increases for the **National Organic Program (NOP)** and additional support for **organic certification cost share**.
2. However, several priorities WODPA continues to support are still missing, most notably **statutory Organic Dairy Data Collection**, which would improve access to reliable information on organic milk prices, feed costs, production costs, and regional market conditions. Additional priorities include increasing certification cost-share reimbursement, providing EQIP payment parity for organic producers, and strengthening investments in organic research and domestic infrastructure.



3. If the bill advances out of committee in September, it will move to the Senate floor before eventually being reconciled with the House version. **WODPA will continue monitoring the Farm Bill process and advocating for provisions that strengthen the organic dairy industry.**

B. Government updates:

1. New World Screwworm
 - i. 45 confirmed cases as of 8/11/2026 (primarily in Texas with 1 in New Mexico)
 - ii. USDA continues its aggressive response to New World screwworm (NWS) through increased surveillance, sterile-fly production and other prevention efforts. USDA currently considers the overall risk to animals and people in the United States **very low**, but producers are encouraged to remain vigilant and routinely check cattle for wounds, unusual behavior, and signs of maggot infestations.
 - iii. Several treatment and prevention options have now received FDA conditional approval or Emergency Use Authorization, including options specifically for dairy cattle. **Organic producers should remember that FDA authorization does not automatically mean a product is allowed under organic certification.** WODPA encourages producers to work closely with their herd veterinarian and contact their organic certifier before using any product that is not already on their approved materials list.
 - iv. [Current Status of New World Screwworm | Screwworm.gov](#)
2. Temporary variances
 - i. Regarding the variance given to Aurora, they were the only farmers to request it up until mid- July.
 - ii. In Idaho, over 60 organic farmers requested a variance for grazing. Because of this, Certifiers submitted the requests together and NOP granted a statewide variance.
 - iii. Variance states: Ruminants must be provided with at least 10 percent average dry matter intake from pasture, or no more than 90 percent average of the ruminant's dry matter demand from dry matter fed, during the 2026 grazing season. All ruminants must be grazed on pasture throughout the grazing season for no less than 75 days during the 2026 grazing season.



- iv. Working with OFA and NODPA on creating a worksheet and outline to request a temporary variance from certifiers. NOP is reviewing.

C. Mercaris/ Argus update:

- 1. Q2 2026 statement survey just sent out.
- 2. Mercaris/Argus collecting statements for Q3 2026 (July, August, September)
 - i. Send statements to AgData@ArgusMedia.com
 - ii. All organic dairy producers can submit statements. Only paid- in WODPA members can see the survey results.

D. Farmer Resources & Financial Opportunities:

- 1. Organic Cost Share Program funds released for 2025 & 2026 program years – must apply by December 31st.
 - i. [Organic Certification Cost Share Program \(OCCSP\) | Farm Service Agency](#)
- 2. USDA Invests up to \$310 Million in Partnership Projects to Boost Farm Operations & Conserve Natural Resources
 - i. Applications due by August 24, 2026
 - ii. [USDA Invests up to \\$310 Million in Partnership Projects to Boost Farm Operations and Conserve Natural Resources | Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
- 3. Organic Dairy Exemption Request Form : [AMS-15 - Organic Exemption Request Form | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
- 4. National Organic Farmer Education Network (NOFEN)
 - i. <https://organicfarmersassociation.org/organic-events/>
- 5. Common Organic System Plan
 - i. [The Organic System Plan | Agricultural Marketing Service](#)
 - ii. August Lunch & Learn: The Common OSP - How It Happened and Why It Matters
 - 1. [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)
 - 2. August 18th @ 9am

E. Reminders:

- 1. The 26th Annual NODPA Field Days: September 24 – 25, 2026
 - i. [SAVE THE DATE for the 26th Annual NODPA Field Days, September 24 & 25, 2026 - Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance](#)
- 2. WODPA's 20th Anniversary WODPA Conference & Trade Show
 - ii. October 27 – 28, 2026 in Chico, CA – Register at: [CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW](#)