



## **MCS Policy - Animal Purchase and Replacement on Organic Dairy Farms**

### **5.1 §205.236 ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK Animal Purchase and replacement**

#### Poultry

Poultry must be organically managed from the second day of life—for practical purposes, when chicks arrive from the hatchery. This applies to birds for egg and meat production. Poultry may be purchased from another organic operation, but cannot be transitioned from non-certified to certified organic production (even if they have been managed organically).

#### Slaughter Stock

Slaughter stock must be certified organic from the last third of gestation; that is, before the animal is born. Conventional animals cannot be “finished organically” and sold as organic. Organic slaughter stock may be sourced from certified organic operations.

#### Breeding Stock (non-dairy stock)

Breeding stock may be conventional, but must be managed organically from the last third of gestation for their offspring to be organic and throughout lactation if raising their organic offspring. Conventional practices for breeding stock while not lactating and not in the last third of gestation should be described in the organic system plan. Breeding stock that is managed conventionally cannot be sold as organic either live or slaughtered.

#### Breeding Stock (dairy stock)

Female livestock used for breeder stock on organic dairy farms must be brought to the organic farm/placed under organic management prior to the last third of gestation for young stock to qualify for organic meat or fiber. Milk from non-certified breeder stock can only be used to feed their young stock. If young stock are not receiving milk from their own mother, they must receive 100% certified organic milk. Breeder stock, bulls, boars or other male animals intended for breeding purposes do not have to be certified organic, but should be managed organically while on the farm. Breeder stock, etc. must be housed and pastured separately and should not be integrated into the certified organic dairy herd except for breeding purposes. See 5.5 for more information.

## Dairy Stock

Replacements must be managed organically from the last third of gestation—the dam is managed organically before the dairy animal is born. Dairy stock may be purchased from certified organic operations. Conventional dairy herds may be transitioned to organic production on a one-time, herd-wide basis. Dairy herd transition requires 12 months of organic management before milk can enter the organic market. During and after the transition period, all purchased animals must be certified organic. See 5.11 for more information.

Any livestock, including dairy animals that are removed from an organic operation and subsequently managed conventionally may not be sold or labeled as organic, and livestock products from these animals may not be sold or labeled as organic.

### **5.5 NOP §205.239 Living Conditions**

You must maintain living conditions for your organic livestock that promote the health and natural behavior of the animals, including adequate light, ventilation, and appropriate clean, dry bedding

#### **Housing**

MCS will not certify the following housing situations due to increased risk to the integrity of the organic product and the difficulty of verifying compliance. Please contact your specialist if you have questions.

- Dairy animals, including young stock, cannot be housed in a barn with conventional dairy animals fed non-organic or certified organic feed.
- Certified organic milking animals and non-organic milking animals cannot be housed in the same barn or pasture, as the chances of commingling organic and nonorganic milk are too high.
- Calves may not be individually housed after 6 months of age.

*\*\*See the MCS Practice Manual for more information about housing, bedding, and temporary confinement requirements.*