

Poultry Conditions, cont'd

Doors Must Be:

- Sufficient and appropriately distributed around the building to ensure all birds have ready outdoor access.
- Large enough for more than one bird at a time.
- Ample enough to allow all birds to exit in an hour.

Temporary confinement allowed, if documented each time:

- 4 weeks for broilers.
- 16 weeks for pullets.
- 2 weeks for nest box training.
- Outside temperatures below 40 or above 90 for the part of day birds were confined (with documentation).
- Avian Influenza (or similar diseases), but the threat alone is not enough to justify confinement. There must be a documented occurrence in the region or migratory path-way.
- 4H/FFA events.

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Processing News

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Cleaning and Sanitizing Food Contact Surfaces and Equipment in Organic Operations

Cleaning and sanitizing are important components of organic operations. This article will provide a brief overview of a typical cleaning and sanitizing process and the materials allowed under the USDA National Organic Program (NOP). The usual process for cleaning/sanitizing food contact surfaces and equipment is a liquid process and follows this sequence: clean, rinse, sanitize:

1) Clean – Cleaning agents such as soaps or detergents are used to remove dirt, microbes and other residues. Cleaning materials do not need to be approved for organic production. Any cleaner may be used provided that it is disclosed in your organic system plan, approved by MOFGA Certification Services (MCS), and is rinsed from food contact surfaces before organic products are handled.

2) Rinse – A potable water rinse must be sufficient to prevent contamination of organic products with cleaning material residues.

3) Sanitize – Finally, sanitizers are applied to ensure that cleaned surfaces and equipment are free of pathogenic microbes. Typically there is no rinse step following sanitizer use, therefore, there are restrictions on the types of sanitizers allowed in organic production.

The following types of sanitizers appear on the NOP National List (7CFR 205.605) and are therefore allowed in organic operations with no following rinse step:

- Chlorine materials
- Peracetic/peroxyacetic acid
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Phosphoric acid
- Potassium hydroxide
- Sodium hydroxide

Please remember that all sanitizers need to meet the following requirements: (1) The particular product must be approved by MCS prior to use, (2) It must be labeled for the intended commercial use, and, (3)

It must be used according to label instructions. Sanitizers other than those on the above list may be used, provided measures are taken to prevent contact with organic food products. Please contact MCS if you have any questions.

Chlorine Materials - Sodium hypochlorite is the active ingredient in what is commonly known as bleach or chlorine bleach. If using bleach, you must use a product that is labeled for use in commercial food production. Regular household bleach contains surfactants and/or fragrances that are not allowed in organic production. We do allow *Ultra Chlorox Germicidal Bleach (EPA Reg. No. 5813-100/102)*, which is recommended by food safety experts at the University of Maine. It does not have these additional ingredients and is labeled for a variety of commercial sanitizing uses. Inexpensive chlorine test strips are available to check the strength of your chlorine solution before use. Please contact MCS if you have any questions about the use of chlorine materials.

Peracetic or peroxyacetic acid - Peracetic acid leaves no residues and readily breaks down into water, oxygen and acetic acid. It is an environmentally friendly choice for organic producers. Several SaniDate (peracetic/peroxyacetic acid) products are OMRI-listed and therefore allowed for organic production with no following rinse step.

Please contact MCS when developing or changing your organic production cleaning and sanitizing protocols. We can also direct you to University of Maine and Maine Dept. of Agriculture experts who can provide additional guidance. *If a sanitizer is not OMRI-listed then MCS must review it before you use it. This is necessary as products sometimes contain inert ingredients that are not listed on the label, yet may present a contamination risk to organic integrity.*