Coming Clean on Sanitizers in Organic Production

All food production involves procedures for cleaning and disinfecting to maintain healthy plants and animals, avoid contamination, and to prevent the spread of food-borne illnesses. These practices begin on the farm.

Measures to prevent the spread of crop or livestock diseases as well as pathogen contamination of products intended for human consumption involve good sanitation protocols as well as materials for disinfecting. Likewise, post-harvest handling and processing demand adherence to sanitation standard operating procedures (SSOPs), many involving sanitizers and disinfectants, with the goal being the production of finished products that are safe to eat. Although enforcement of food safety regulations is left to state and federal inspectors, we do have a vested interest in certifying safe organic foods; foods produced in properly licensed facilities. The National Organic Program agrees.

Being Certified Organic adds another layer of care and diligence to producers’ food safety efforts. Sanitizers and disinfectants must meet National Organic Standards, especially if contact with organic food occurs. Simultaneously, materials and methods approved for organic SSOPs must also satisfy state and federal food safety regulators. This always generates lots of questions. We are publishing this guidance document to provide producers with our latest understanding of selecting and using disinfectant materials in organic food production.

Chlorine Materials: Calcium hypochlorite, chlorine dioxide, sodium hypochlorite.

American households were introduced to a less concentrated version of liquid bleach by the Clorox Chemical Company way back in 1917. Clorox bleach and its kin remain popular and effective sanitizers, still killing microbes after all these years. Bleach is by far the most common sanitizer agent we see on farms and in small processing facilities in Maine. We are therefore pleased that the NOP has issued guidelines for the use of chlorine materials in organic production and handling. These new guidelines help clear up questions about the initial concentrations of chlorine in solutions for various sanitizing applications. The following is a summary of the NOP guidance that is available at http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/NOPProgramHandbook.

New NOP Guidance for Chlorine Materials

• For crop operations an APPROVED chlorine material may be used up to maximum-labeled rates for disinfecting and sanitizing equipment or tools. A rinse step is not necessary before sanitized equipment is used.

• For livestock operations an APPROVED chlorine material may be used up to maximum-labeled rates for sanitizing equipment or tools (including dairy pipelines and tanks). Label instructions must be followed regarding requirements for rinsing prior to the equipment’s next use.

• For food handling facilities and equipment, APPROVED chlorine materials may be used up to maximum-labeled rates for disinfecting and sanitizing food contact surfaces. Rinsing is not required unless mandated by the label. Water used as an ingredient must be potable (4ppm or less chlorine). (continued on Pg 2)
Coming Clean on Sanitizers
(cont’d from page 1)

- Water used in direct crop or food contact is permitted to contain chlorine at levels approved by the FDA or EPA (please document this in your organic system plan), however, rinsing with potable water (4 ppm or less chlorine) must follow this step.

We have had numerous instances of certified operations using regular household bleach from the grocery store as a sanitizer. Regular household bleach contains surfactants and/or fragrances that are not allowed in organic production. We do allow Ultra Clorox Germicidal Bleach (EPA Reg. No. 67619-8), which is recommended by food safety experts at the University of Maine. It does not have these additional ingredients and it is labeled for a variety of commercial disinfecting uses. Inexpensive chlorine test strips are available which you should use to check the strength of your chlorine solution before each day’s use (this is necessary as chlorine molecules are unstable). Please contact MCS if you have any questions or concerns about the use of chlorine materials.

Peroxyacetic Acid or Peroxy Acid Compounds or Peracetic Acid. Like chlorine-based sanitizers, peracetic acid’s mode of microbe-killing action is through oxidation. It is a relatively new sanitizer in the US. Peracetic acid leaves no residues and readily breaks down into water, oxygen and acetic acid. This makes it a very attractive sanitizer for organic producers. Peracetic acid shows up in several places on the National List as an allowed synthetic substance for washing/rinsing/sanitizing product, seed, equipment and tools, without a rinse step. As with all material inputs, the brand name material or formulation needs to be OMRI listed or reviewed by MCS before you use it. There are peracetic acid formulations that include surfactants, making them unsuitable for organic producers.

Quaternary Ammonium Compounds or “Quat” sanitizers or QAC. Quats are odorless, non-corrosive, stable sanitizers that destroy a broad spectrum of pathogens and microbes. However, they are designed to leave a residual anti-microbial film on surfaces, which can then transfer to food. As you might expect, this is problematic for organic producers, as Quats are not on the list of permitted synthetic substances to be used on or in organic food. We could permit Quats in an organic SSOP if there is what we call “an intervening event,” such as a rinsing step with hot potable water that removes the film. This step is typically contrary to the label instructions on the Quat product and may not be permitted by state and federal food safety inspectors. In short, we would have to work with you and the other licensing officials involved in inspecting your operation to come up with an acceptable SSOP involving Quats.

Where can I buy it?

Ultra Clorox Germicidal Bleach: Home Depot. Staples. Sam’s Club. If not in stores, check online. ULINE.com

Test Strips for Chlorine: Use these inexpensive papers to check the initial concentration of your chlorine solutions (for example, a “restaurant test strip” with a 0-200 ppm total chlorine range), as well as the chlorine concentration in your final rinse water (a “residual test strip” with a 0 to 10 ppm range). Where to buy: SanitationTools.com, Indigo.com, Capraras Rest. Supply, Rt 202, Manchester, ME

Peracetic Acid: Johnny’s Selected Seed sells SaniDate 5 Liquid Sanitizer Ecolab.com sells Tsunami 100 OxoniaActive, contact Ecolab Check OMRI.org and type in ‘peracetic acid” for more product options.

Please remember that any material to be used as a sanitizer or disinfectant needs to meet the following MCS requirements: (1) It must be listed in your farm or processing plan and 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.

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Grace Keown - Certification Assistant
We have reproduced part of the Ultra Clorox Germicidal Bleach label below to illustrate how to read a sanitizer label. We suggest you follow these three steps:

1. Check the percent active ingredient in the product: here the active ingredient is sodium hypochlorite and its concentration is 6.15%, yielding 5.84% of available chlorine.

2. Check the recommended dilution for your intended use. For sanitizing food contact surfaces or equipment, the label indicates a dilution of one tablespoon of the product into one gallon of water. The dilution table on the label shows that this dilution gives a chlorine concentration of 200 ppm (parts per million).

3. Follow label instructions regarding use of the diluted bleach solution. For food contact work surfaces the instructions state: Wash, rinse, wipe surface area with bleach solution for at least one minute, let air dry. For food contact utensils the instructions read: Wash and rinse. After washing soak for at least one minute in bleach solution, drain and air dry. Following these instructions means that you will meet NOP requirements for the use of this chlorine sanitizer on equipment and tools.

Please remember that different chlorine materials contain different concentrations of chlorine and will likely need a different dilution to yield an acceptable sanitizing solution. Your sanitizing protocol should include the active ingredient concentration in your solution as well as how it is used in your facility. Do not hesitate to call MCS if you have any questions.

EPA Reg. No. 67619-8
Wildcrafting
As defined by the NOP

On May 9, 2011 the NOP released a guidance document on Wild Crop Harvesting. This guidance document clarifies what can and cannot be considered a “Wild Crop”. You can find the full document on the NOP website under Section A-8 of the NOP Program Handbook.(http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop)

Wildcrafting is the act of gathering plants or fungi in their native habitat; a Wild Crop is the actual material harvested; (e.g., leaves, berries, shoots, fruiting bodies).

While the definition of “wild crop” and the wild crop harvesting practice standard 205.207 in the NOP rule are very broad, the May 9th guidance document to certifiers is much more prescriptive of what can be considered a “wild crop” and what we as your certifier need to verify.

Firstly, to be eligible as a wild crop the species may be terrestrial or aquatic and must be fixed to a defined location by a species part. A species part being defined as a root, holdfast, mycelial thread etc.

Secondly, only minimal agricultural practices may be employed. By minimal the NOP lists re-seeding, pruning and removal of non-native species from the habitat. Management practices that go beyond these are indicators of crop production and the crop production standards for soil fertility and crop nutrient management practices (205.203), Crop rotation (205.205) and Pest, weed and disease control standards (205.206) must be implemented.

The guidance document lists the components of wild crop harvesting that need to be made a part of the Organic System Plan (your annual update/application). These include:

1. Map of the harvest area showing boundaries, borders, buffer zones if necessary and any point or non-point sources of contamination

2. Field History and Landowner Affidavit that the area has been free of prohibited materials for 3 years
3. You must have permission to collect on land that you do not own
4. Description of the natural environment (e.g. hardwood forest)
5. Proposed ecosystem management and harvesting practices
6. Statement of the impact of harvesting on the long-term viability of the wild crop
7. Information on any equipment used to manage or harvest the wild crop and ecosystem
8. What monitoring system will be used to document the sustainable harvest and maintenance of the habitat/ecosystem
9. List of any rare, threatened or endangered species that occur in the harvested area
10. Procedures employed to prevent contamination from adjoining land use
11. Training and monitoring procedures for all collectors of wild crops

We expect organic producers who want to certify their wildcrafted harvests to know their plants and mushrooms. There are toxic plants and mushrooms in Maine and these must not be mistaken for edible ones. If the State passes laws regulating wild mushroom collecting, certified organic wildcrafters must be in compliance with these laws. As a general rule, the majority of a population must not be harvested. The actual percentage of what is left behind - untouched - will vary by species. You must do your research and justify the percentage you plan to take. If you collect on public, state or federally owned lands, you must get a permit or written permission. Avoid collecting plants from areas with heavy use, such as along a popular dog walking path.
• **Organic Control Points**

**Prevention of Commingling and Contamination**

An Organic Control Point (OCP) is defined as an area of a farm or handling operation where there is potential for either the commingling of organic and non-organic or the contamination of organic product with prohibited materials.

There are 2 sections of the NOP rule that require organic producers to prevent the commingling of organic and non-organic products and the contamination of organic product with prohibited materials; Section 205.201(a)(5) and Section 205.272.

Although not a complete list, common OCPs for farm and livestock operations are: adjoining non-organic land and pest and disease management on that land, pest and weed management along roadways, origin of livestock, origin of off farm feed, reuse of boxes, use of custom operators and their equipment, borrowed equipment, harvesting and transport equipment, separation and storage of prohibited substances, and management of livestock treated with prohibited substances. While common OCPs for handling operations include cleaning and sanitation products, pest control storage and use, storage areas for ingredients and finished products and transport units.

**Your Organic System Plan, also known as your Application or Annual Update, must address all potential OCPs and what steps you take and records you keep for each OCP to prevent commingling or contamination.**

For example: if you borrow your neighbor’s tractor and rototiller or you have your neighbor “custom till” your fields, you must document that both the tractor and the rototiller were cleaned and/or purged prior to being used on your field. This is not only a good organic contamination practice but a disease control Best Management Practice. Another example: if you have a field of grain that abuts a neighbors non-organic field of grain you may either maintain an adequate grassed buffer strip between the fields or harvest an adequate buffer area and record either the disposal of the product or the sale of the harvested product as non-organic. One final example, if you buy in organic hay from an off-farm source you must maintain records of the amount received, usually an invoice, and of the organic status of the feed, usually a copy of the vendor’s most current certification certificate that states their hay is organic and they are currently certified organic.

On May 9, 2011 the USDA-NOP issued a guidance document on commingling and contamination to all accredited certifiers, MOFGA Certification Services (MCS) being one of them. In this document the NOP states that certifying agents must verify that all production and handling operations have adequately identified their OCPs and have implemented adequate practices and procedures to prevent commingling and contamination and that these practices are documented.

What this means for you the producer is that your inspector will verify that all OCPs have been listed in your Organic System Plan and that you have appropriate records or documentation to indicate prevention of any commingling or contamination.

**Common Misunderstandings about the Pasture Rule**

The “pasture” rule is a set of new organic livestock standards and is well known for the requirement that ruminant animals such as cows, sheep, and goats intake a minimum of 30% of their dry matter from pasture. The rule is very specific and detailed, and yet there are many commonly held misunderstandings about how a farm can meet this requirement.

**Misunderstanding #1: I only have to graze for 120 days.** The rule says that animals must be grazed for the entire grazing season for the farm’s geographical location, and no less than 120 days. That means that you are expected to make the pasture season last as long as possible based on your location, the year’s weather, the lay of your land, etc. Be prepared to justify the number of days your animals are grazed.

**Misunderstanding #2: If I graze at 100% DMI from pasture for one month, the next month I don’t have to turn the cows out, because that will average out to 50%.** The overall average for your farm is calculated as an average. But because the rule says that your animals need to be grazing every day, then you can’t keep the animals off pasture and average in 0%. The rule says that livestock must have daily access to pasture for the entire grazing season, so any days “missed” on pasture need to be made up in the fall before the season runs out. You can’t have animals on pasture less than 120 days total.

**Misunderstanding #3: If I graze for 60 days at “full time” (24hrs/day) that equals the same thing as grazing 120 days at “half time”.** The rule says that livestock must have daily access to pasture for the entire grazing season, so keeping them off pasture for half of the season is not in compliance. (Cont’d on Pg 8)
CROP INPUTS

The Vocabulary of Crop Inputs: Sul-Po-Mag and Muriate of Potash

Sul-Po-Mag / Langbeinite. Described in 1891 by A. Langbein in Leopoldshall, Germany, langbeinite is an evaporite mineral that formed a few hundred million years ago from marine salt deposits during the Permian Period.

The Association of British Scrabble Players offers “langbeinite” as a valid Scrabble word derived from a proper name (14 points!). A brittle, translucent looking mineral with the chemical formula K$_2$Mg$_2$(SO$_4$). Langbeinite can be tinged yellow, pink or orange. It dissolves slowly in water, especially if you apply a course grain size. The langbeinite we use comes from mines in New Mexico owned by the Intrepid Mining Corporation http://www.intrepidpotash.com/.

MOFGA farmers know langbeinite best as Sul-Po-Mag, and the elements Sulfur (S), Potassium (K) and Magnesium (Mg), all of which are plant macronutrients, are evident in langbeinite’s chemical formula. Langbeinite’s relatively low levels of chlorine salts and lower solubility makes it a valuable fertilizer for farmers. Farmer could give their crops Potassium (K) by applying the natural mineral fertilizer Muriate of Potash, but this material input could result in unwanted levels of soil chloride accumulation.

The natural, crushed mineral form of K$_2$Mg$_2$(SO$_4$) that organic farmers must choose is rarely sold as langbeinite. There was a time, not too long ago, when Sul-Po-Mag was the popular proper name of the approved input langbeinite. That does not appear to be the case anymore. Sul-Po-Mag seems to have become a common name for versions of K$_2$Mg$_2$(SO$_4$), not all of which can be permitted. Be careful. As an organic grower, you need to use the material that is natural and free from synthetic additives and processing aids, and, you need to have documentation on hand for your inspector to verify that this is case. Unfortunately, our research indicates that the packages of Sul-Po-Mag that are readily available at farm & garden centers and hardware stores are probably not the right stuff for organic growers. Some of the companies that supply these stores with bags of Sul-Po-Mag, like Green Mountain, can get you the approved stuff, but you need to special order it. Fedco has a version of langbeinite, called K-Mag from Mosaic (manufacturer name), which is also approved. The other name you may encounter when shopping for approved langbeinite is Trio™ by Intrepid (the aforementioned mining company) or as Intrepid Trio™ Sulfate of Potash Magnesia. On OMRI's list (www.omri.org), it appears as Intrepid Potash Granular Trio® 0-0-22 +11(Mg) +22(S) or Intrepid Potash Standard Trio® 0-0-22 +11(Mg) +22(S).

Organic Farm Plan. With as many as half a dozen aliases, the acquisition of the correct langbeinite by you and the verification of your action by us can be a little daunting. That is why we really need growers to provide very complete, detailed information in their farm plans (application paperwork) about the inputs intended to be used, to always get documents from your sources that describes the materials (supplier, manufacturer, OMRI status, etc), and to check with us when you change inputs or are not sure about the status of inputs you want to use. We’ve been doing quite a bit of detective work on inputs and we are ready to help.

Muriate of Potash / Potassium Chloride/ Sylvite. Potassium is an important plant macronutrient, essential to the movement of water and other nutrients within plants, to crop growth and maturity, and to disease resistance. Sylvite is a common mineral form of “potash” or KCl, and it, along with langbeinite, are ores that coexist in those ancient sea beds in New Mexico, where they are now mined for use as fertilizers, among other applications. Muriate of Potash is very soluble, which is not a desirable attribute for inputs in organic systems, and supplies a chloride ion. In solution in the soil, the chloride ion can be toxic to many plants. Salad greens, strawberries, peppers and potatoes are examples of crops that respond poorly to higher levels chloride. So, when you find an approved Muriate of Potash, use it conservatively to avoid chloride accumulation. Once again, you should not be purchasing potash on a whim if you haven't done your homework and checked in with us. We haven't reviewed all the brands available in local stores. OMRI lists three approved versions of Muriate of Potash 0-0-62 (Untreated) from Mosaic Crop Nutrition LLC. OMRI also lists several Potash options that are Potassium Sulfate (K$_2$SO$_4$), including Trio™ by Intrepid (a.k.a., langbeinite). By using an approved Sulfate of Potash, you avoid the problems associated with the chloride ion in Muriate of Potash.

Organic Farm Plan. If you write “potash” in your farm plan, we will need more information. What type of potash? Is it Muriate of Potash (KCl) or Sulfate of Potash (K$_2$SO$_4$)? What is the source/brand name? It is OMRI listed? If it isn’t, we are going to have to research the product to determine if it can be approved. Organic farmers must not use inputs that are not approved. Application rates for all inputs should be noted in the field histories and documents (detailed receipts, labels, OMRI certificates) need to be shown to your inspector.

Need help understanding what nutrients you should add to your soil? Determining the nutritional needs of your organic crops can be challenging. Applying materials you don't need can be expensive. (Cont'd on Pg 7)
**Vocabulary of Crop Inputs (Cont’d from Pg 6)**

It is also not in line with organic management, especially if the nutrients are prone to leaching. Getting regular soil analyses is an important first step. Increasing soil organic matter, building soil structure, and maintaining a proper soil pH are essential to keeping nutrients in your soil and making them available to your crops. Crop rotation and green manures are important organic management tools to achieve these goals. Discussing your cropping system and soil or tissue analyses with an organic crop expert like MOFGA’s Eric Sideman is another terrific option. You can contact Eric for a consultation by phone at 603-269-6201 or by email esideman@mofga.org.

**Chilean Nitrate Update**

Chilean Nitrate has been allowed in organic production since the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) went into effect. However, its use is regulated to assure that organic production is not based on that material that does nothing to improve the soil structure or long term fertility.

Chilean nitrate, although natural, is a simple soluble salt, sodium nitrate. The nitrate part of that salt is a plant nutrient. The sodium part is not, and in some situations, (e.g., high tunnels) may lead to salt build up in the soil. Chilean nitrate does not jive well with the fundamental principles of organic farming that include building the soil, as well as recycling and conserving nutrients.

Hence, the way Chilean nitrate is handled in the National Organic Program Rule is that it is listed in Section 205.602 (g) “Nonsynthetic Substances Prohibited for Use in Organic Crop Production”, except that it is listed with an annotation that makes an exception allowing Chilean nitrate to be used for no more than 20% of the crops total nitrogen requirement. Many growers use it, and some blended fertilizers (e.g., ProGro) have it as an ingredient.

**THIS MAY CHANGE.** At the April, 2011 meeting of the NOSB they recommended that the annotation be dropped. That would mean that Chilean nitrate would be in Section 205.602 (Nonsynthetic Substances Prohibited for Use in Organic Crop Production) with no exceptions. In other words, it would not be allowed any more. NOP may or may not take the NOSB recommendation. If NOP decides to adopt the recommendation to not allow Chilean nitratrate any more, they may do so with a phase in period, or something else to lessen the shock to growers that have unwisely become dependent on this quick and easy approach to fertility.

**Events & Training calendar**

**July**

**Livestock Management**

Weds, July 20th 5 pm at King Hill Farm, Penobscot & Thurs, July 21st 5 pm at Willow Pond Farm, Sabattus. Veteran farmers from King Hill Farm and Willow Pond Farm run diversified, pasture-based livestock operations and sell their animal products directly to consumers. For more info email education@mofga.org or call 568-4142.

**Highmoor Farm Field Day - Thursday, July 21, 2011, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM** 52 U.S. Route 202, Monmouth, ME  
Registration fee: $15.00. No pre-registration required.

**Farm Woodlot Management**

Wednesday, July 27, 5 pm, Dorolenna Farm, Montville. Join Andrew Marshall, woodlot owner and manager, Sam Brown, Consulting Forester, and a few local loggers for a teaching tour of Dorolenna Farm’s woodlot. Potluck supper to follow. For more info email education@mofga.org or call 568-4142.

**August**

**Ecological Weed Management**

Monday, August 1 5 pm at Crystal Spring Farm, Brunswick & Wednesday, August 3 5pm at Peacemeal Farm, Dixmont. Ecological and cultural approaches to weed management with experts from MOFGA and the University of Maine. For more info email education@mofga.org or call 568-4142.

**Maine Grass Farmers Network Pasture Open Farm Day at Martin Kilby Farm in Benedicta. Aug 21st - 806 Benedicta Rd.** For more information contact Rick Kersbergen at 800-287-1426 or richard.kersbergen@maine.edu.

**Farming with Horses. Tuesday, Aug 22nd 5pm, New Beat Farm, Knox.** Using animals for draft power has a number of economic, environmental, and social benefits. Come learn the basics of this genuinely solar-based system of farming. Potluck supper to follow. For more info email education@mofga.org or call 568-4142.

**PEST Reports ...are you getting yours?**

MOFGA Organic Crop Specialist Eric Sideman, Ph D., compiles a report every week or two during the heart of the season highlighting problems happening now or likely to show up soon. Eric hears about problems from growers all around the region so please help out and let him know if a big or unusual pest problem is happening in your area. To contact Eric and to sign up to receive the report via email send a request to: esideman@mofga.org or call the office at 568-4142. You can also access current year reports from www.mofgacertification.org, as well as reports for the past 5 years, archived at: http://www.mofga.org/Publications/PestReports/tabid/732/Default.aspx.
Pasture Rule (cont’d from Pg 5)

Misunderstanding #4: I don’t have to do any calculations for my dry cows, because they aren’t dry for the whole pasture season, they switch groups part way through. It may be true that individual cows are switching groups during the grazing season, but the averages done will be on a per-group basis. Rations fed to each group need to be recorded to show that you are not feeding them more than 70% of the dry matter that they eat to any group.

Misunderstanding #5: All my animals get 100% pasture. I don’t feed them any hay or baleage, only grain and pasture. Actually grain contains a lot of dry matter (about 90%) so you have to figure that into your pasture calculations. If a group is to be getting 100% pasture, that means they aren’t getting any feed from you, including grain.

Misunderstanding #6: I have to keep my cows dry matter intake above 30% for the whole summer. Any group’s dry matter intake can fall below 30%, but that will need to be averaged up by higher figures during different points of the grazing season. The overall season’s intake from pasture figure is a weighted average for the whole summer, so some low times can average out with times of higher intake. This is why ration records are essential to show compliance with the pasture rule.

Misunderstanding #7: My pasture is slowing down, so I’m keeping the cows off it so it can rest. The Pasture Rule is very specific about the situations that can be permitted for not pasturing an animal. These include:

- inclement weather (violent weather that can harm livestock)
- animals’ stage of life
- health/safety/wellbeing of the animals
- risk to soil or water quality
- treatment of illness or injury
- sorting or shipping
- breeding (until bred)
- 4-H (1 week prior and 24 hrs after. Bring organic feed to the event.)
- for drying off lactating animals (1 week)
- dairy cattle up to age 6 months
- shearing for fiber animals
- for short periods for milking time
- finishing beef animals need access to pasture but are exempt from the 30% DMI requirement

If you have any questions about the pasture rule, how to calculate pasture intake, or a specific situation on your farm, please call Katie Webb at MOFGA Certification. We are happy to help answer your questions, and we are happy to see farms doing their best to understand and meet the requirements of the pasture rule.

Livestock Material Review

For the past year, MOFGA Certification staff has been reviewing materials according to the National Organic Standards. Once we have reviewed a large number of products, we plan to publish a list of allowed and prohibited medications for a wide variety of applications. We hope this will be a helpful resource to certified farms, for clarity on what is allowed and prohibited in organic production. This article is a sneak-peak preview.

We ALLOW the following Udder Creams:

- DynaMint Udder Cream (Marabo Products Ltd)
- Superior Cow Cream S.C.C. (Synergy Animal Products, Inc.)
- Udder Comfort (yellow sprayable) (Udder Comfort)
- Udder Fancy (Crystal Creek)

There are likely many more products that will be allowed in organic production when reviewed. If you are using a product that is not among the 4 listed please call us immediately so we can review the product.

Ivermectin. Ivermectin continues to be a tricky issue for organic farms across the country. Ivermectins are confusing because there are similar drugs with names that sound alike, and vets may have the perspective that they are “all the same.”

But the organic standards make a distinction between Ivermectin and other related parasiticides. ONLY IVERMECTIN IS ALLOWED. The rule says:

NOP 205.603(a)(18) Parasiticides. Ivermectin—prohibited in slaughter stock, allowed in emergency treatment for dairy and breeder stock when organic system plan-approved preventative management does not prevent infestation. Milk or milk products from a treated animal cannot be labeled as organic for 90 days following treatment. In breeder stock, treatment cannot occur during the last third of gestation if the progeny will be sold as organic and must not be used during the lactation period for breeder stock.

If you plan to add dairy beef to your Farm Plan this year or in the near future, clear animal records showing the use of Ivermectin on your farm will be essential for us to certify dairy beef. Here are the Ivermectins that MCS is allowing so far and some that we aren’t:

(cont’d on Pg 9)
Material Review (cont’d from Pg 8)

ALLOWED Ivermectins

• Durvet Injectable 1% (ivermectin) Injection for Cattle & Swine
• Ivomec .08% Sheep Drench (Merial)
• IVMEC Pour-On for Cattle (Merial)
• Iver-On (Med-Pharmex Inc)
• Top Line (ivermectin) Pour-On for Cattle (AgriLabs)

PROHIBITED Ivermectins

• Ivomec Eprinex (Merial)
• All Avermecins
• All Moxidectins

Need Help?

MOFGA’s Agricultural Services Staff

All staff members can be reached by calling the MOFGA Office 588-4142 unless otherwise noted.

John Chartier, Aroostook County Coordinator
Phone: 521-1200 jchartier@mofga.org. John serves Aroostook county producers by helping with crop rotations plans, pest and weed management, crop fertility plans, as well as helping to connect farms to various markets.

Dave Colson, Agricultural Services Director dcolson@mofga.org. Dave has 35 years of experience in farming, primarily vegetable and hoophouse production. Farm systems including crop rotations, weed management, soil fertility, crop planning and record keeping are particular areas of expertise.

Katy Green, Organic Transitions Coordinator kgreen@mofga.org. Katy connects growers to conservation and cost-sharing programs for on-farm improvements. Katy also helps growers transition additional land or products.

Diane Schivera, Organic Livestock Specialist Phone: 785-5310 dianes@mofga.org. Diane provides information on livestock management, including: housing, nutrition, pasture management, health care prevention and treatments.

Eric Sideman, Organic Crops Specialist Phone: 603-269-6201 esideman@mofga.org. Eric works with farmers to develop soil and pest management plans, crop rotation using green manures and help solve disease and insect problems. Eric compiles weekly pest reports during the growing season.

CJ Walke, Organic Orchardist cjwalke@mofga.org. CJ manages MOFGA’s orchards and helps fruit tree growers build orchard health and establish methods of pest and disease control.

Melissa White Pillsbury, Organic Marketing Coordinator melissa@mofga.org. Melissa assists farms with market research and developing a marketing plan. She publishes the organic price reports and maintains the directories of Maine farmers’ markets and CSA farms.

Cheryl Wixson, Agricultural Engineer & Organic Marketing Consultant Phone: 947-0892 cheryl@mofga.org

Cheryl assists farms in developing Farm Food Safety plans, in bringing to market processed and value-added products, obtaining kitchen licensing, and strategic market analysis.

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

Small Fruits/Vegetables: David Handley david.handley@maine.edu 933-2100

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Steve Johnson stevenj@maine.edu 764-3361
Lowbush Blueberries: David Yarbrough davydi@maine.edu 581-2923
Dairy: Rick Kersbergen richard.kersbergen@maine.edu 342-5971
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Small Ruminants & Poultry: Dick Brzozowski richard.brzozowski@maine.edu 781-6099
Ann Lichtenwalner anne.lichtenwalner@maine.edu 581-2789
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Grains: Ellen Mallory ellen.mallory@maine.edu 581-2942
Rick Kersbergen Richard.kersbergen@maine.edu 342-5971
Forages: Rick Kersbergen Richard.kersbergen@maine.edu 342-5971
Pest Management: Jim Dill james.dill@maine.edu 581-3879
Compost: Mark Hutchinson mhutch@maine.edu 892-0343
Tree Fruits: Renae Moran rmoran@umext.maine.edu 933-2100
Glen Koehler gkoehler@maine.edu 581-3882

new faces

Jake Galle

MCS welcomes Jake as our in-house Organic Inspector and Materials Reviewer. Jake was raised on a sheep farm in Bowdoinham, ME and continues to farm there. Over the past two summers he was a seasonal inspector with MCS, and this May was hired as a full time staff inspector - primarily focusing on crops and livestock operations.

John Chartier

MCS welcomes John as MOFGA’s Agricultural Specialist in Aroostook County. John is a resource person who works with farmers, processors, retail, government and other non-profits to help them build a healthy and economically viable food system for the North Country. Contact John at 207-521-1200 or jchartier@mofga.org.
MCS has moved

MOFGA is growing! The number of staff working at MOFGA has doubled in the last decade and the main yellow building is too small. Certification Staff—all 7 of us—have moved just around the corner to new property that MOFGA owns. The street address is 210 Crosby Brook Rd, Thorndike. It’s a big house set back from the road at the corner of Route 139 and Crosby Brook Rd, just opposite of MOFGA's antique red barn and wind mill. If you come to MOFGA to visit with Certification Staff, that’s where you will find us. *Our mailing address and phone number have not changed.*