



SPLIT OPERATIONS IN ORGANIC POULTRY PRODUCTION

Guidance

Split operations are operations that produce and/or handle both organic and non-organic agricultural products. In regards to a poultry operation, this would include an operation that has at least one organic house and one non-organic house at the same farm location, or a house that alternates between organic and non-organic production. It is common for split poultry operations to transition in and out of organic management several times per year, based on market conditions.

DEFINITIONS

- Split Operation— An operation that produces or handles both organic and nonorganic agricultural products. *7 CFR § 205.2*

NOP REGULATIONS AND PCO POLICY

The producer or handler must develop an organic production or handling system plan that is agreed to by the producer or handler and an accredited certifying agent. An organic system plan must meet the requirements set forth in this section for organic production or handling. An organic production or handling system plan must include a description of practices and procedures to be performed and maintained, including the frequency with which they will be performed. *7 CFR § 205.201(a)(1) Organic Production and Handling System Plan*

A poultry operation is required to describe the management of its split operation in its Organic System Plan, including which houses are expected to transition in and out of organic production during the year, an expected schedule and a description of the management practices and materials used during non-organic production.

A person seeking to receive or maintain organic certification must immediately notify the certifying agent concerning any change in certified operation or any portion of a certified operation. *7 CFR § 205.400(f)(2) General requirements for certification*

When a change to the Organic System Plan is anticipated, the operation must submit an update to its Organic System Plan to PCO prior to the changes occurring. The update must include information about houses that are transitioning in or out of organic management that were not described in the original Organic System Plan. Changes made to an operation's Organic System Plan without notifying PCO may result in a Notice of Non-Compliance, which may lead to suspension or revocation of certification.

A person seeking to receive or maintain organic certification under the regulations in this part must permit on-site inspections with complete access to the production or handling operation, including non-certified production and handling areas, structures and offices by the certifying agent as provided for in §205.403. *7 CFR § 205.400(c) General requirements for certification*

A certifying agent may conduct additional on-site inspections of applicants for certification and certified operations to determine compliance with the Act and the regulations of this part. *7 CFR § 205.403(a)(2)(ii) On-site Inspections*

An additional on-site inspection may be required if there are significant changes made to the management of the house during non-organic management or if inadequate information is submitted. If an additional on-site inspection is required it may be combined with the annual inspection.

All poultry operations must have an annual on-site inspection. All records must be made available to the inspector at the time of inspection, including records of non-organic production. PCO reserves the right to perform additional on-site inspections at any time.