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14 August 2012, replaces 15 October 2011 version
Changes to this policy affect NOP certified Handlers only.

Important Update Message Regarding Trade With Canada.

This message contains **Important Information** for **ALL OTCO CLIENTS**.
On 4 November 2010 the National Organic Program (NOP) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) announced updates to the US Canada Equivalency Arrangement of 17 June 2009. There were two critical points made by both Programs:
1) ALL PRODUCTS crossing the Canadian (US to Canada or Canada to US) border MUST be accompanied by documentation containing the following statement:
"Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement"

2) ALL PRODUCTS (not just Raw-Fresh Produce as in the past) must be in compliance with the arrangement.

- ALL NOP CROP PRODUCTS going INTO CANADA must be produced without the use of Sodium Nitrate (a.k.a. Chilean Nitrate) and must not be produced by Hydroponic or Aeroponic methods.
- ALL NON RUMINANT NOP LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS going INTO CANADA must be produced in accordance with the livestock stocking rates set out in the Canadian Organic Regulations.
  Note: On January 27 2012, following implementation of the NOP Pasture Regulations, Canada exempted ruminant livestock from the stocking density requirement of the US Canada Equivalency Arrangement.
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- ALL COR LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS coming FROM CANADA must be produced without the use of antibiotics.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

ALL PRODUCERS; if you ship your products across the US-Canada border either directly or as ingredients, make sure that there is documentation accompanying each shipment that includes the statement in #1 above. Documentation can include an OTCO Certificate, Transaction Certificate, a statement on the Bill of lading or Purchase order, a letter or other similar documentation.

Note; you may not know if your products are crossing the US-Canada border as ingredients of further processed products, however, as organic clients on both sides of the border are audited and documentation verifying compliance to the Arrangement is not on file, notice will be given to the certifier of that product who will, in turn, notify the vendor/supplier.

Note; although Sodium Nitrate is allowed for NOP organic with restrictions, it is being debated for removal. We recommend that all NOP organic producers eliminate the use of Chilean Nitrate from their Production

System and Supply Chain as soon as possible. This material is prohibited in most other organic standards around the world and often impedes trade since verification all the way back to each farm can be a challenge.

ALL PRODUCERS; There are questions on your Organic System Plan (OSP) specific to the US-Canada Equivalency Agreement.

Crop producers: In order to comply with the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement, make sure your fertility materials do not contain Sodium Nitrate. If you do use Sodium Nitrate, be clear that the crops on which they are used are accurately documented. The Inspector will verify the information and we will list all products that comply with the US Canada Equivalency Arrangement on your certificate.

Livestock producers [non-ruminant only]: Make sure that the sections addressing Facility Maps and Numbers of Animals are answered accurately and thoroughly, AND, that any livestock or livestock products that you want evaluated for compliance to the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement are listed. We will use this information to verify compliance on case by case requests from Processors and Handlers but will only list US-Canada Equivalent Products on your certificate that are requested by you.

Processors and Handlers: There is a section in your OSP to list products for evaluation for compliance to the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement. Upon request we will list US-Canada Equivalent Products on your certificate that are in compliance.

To ensure that the U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement verification process is as simple and efficient as possible, OTCO has worked with other certifiers to create a list of crops that are at risk of being grown using one of the prohibited production techniques. For any of the crops listed below in the "high risk" category, you must verify that they were grown without the use of sodium nitrate and/or hydroponic or aeroponic production before we will list them as Canada Equivalent on your certificate.

OTCO will **not** seek additional documentation for crops and ingredients from crops **not** listed as High Risk.

All livestock products from non-ruminants (such as eggs from poultry) must be verified as having met the stocking density critical variance.

OTCO and other certifiers have identified the following crops as at risk of being grown using sodium nitrate, and will require additional information prior to verifying equivalency with Canadian requirements:

- Carrots
- Celery
- Cole crops, including kale, collards, etc.
- Fresh tomatoes
- Greenhouse crops, including tomatoes
- Leafy greens
- Livestock feed crops produced in the Midwest
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Winter citrus from the Southeast United States
- Winter vegetables, including broccoli, cauliflower, etc.

Crops considered high risk for hydroponic or aeroponic production:

- Greenhouse crops, including herbs and tomatoes

For NOP products going to COR certified operators.
Documentation can include any of the following:

- An NOP certificate with the products being supplied listed as in compliance with the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement
- A COR Certificate
- An EU Certificate in addition to NOP certification (for crop products, since the EU also prohibits the use of sodium nitrate and hydroponics)
- A signed Affirmation Statement of compliance to the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement

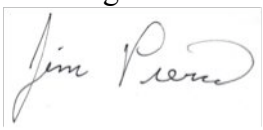
For COR certified products going to NOP certified operators.
Documentation is only required for products containing dairy (since dairy animals are the only ones allowed to be treated with antibiotics under COR) and can include any of the following:

- A COR certificate with the products being supplied listed as in compliance with the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement
- A signed Affirmation Statement of compliance to the US-Canada Equivalency Arrangement

How we can help; Please contact Jim Pierce, Global Program Manager for any questions, clarifications or further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

NOP Canada Equivalency site;
http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&navID=NationalOrganicProgram&page=USCanadaDeterminationofEquivalency&leftNav=NationalOrganicProgram&description=US-Canada%20Determination%20of%20Equivalency&acct=nopgeninfo
Canada NOP Equivalency site; http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/orgbio/orgbioimporte.shtml

Best Regards



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