



2525 SE 3rd Street | Corvallis, OR 97333 | www.tilth.org | PH 503.378.0690 | FX 541.753.4924 | organic@tilth.org

Summary of Proposed Changes For Poultry & Swine

Proposed New Definitions:

There are a number of new definitions being proposed. These include:

- Definitions for a variety of physical alterations which are used in animal agriculture.
- Indoor space for poultry, including the different types of housing such as mobile (pasture) housing, aviaries, raised slats and single level (floor litter) housing.
- Outdoor space for all species, which includes 50% soil access, and excludes the use of porches or wintergardens to provide outdoor access for poultry.

Proposed Changes to All Livestock Healthcare:

- Many physical alterations prohibited for organic livestock production. Needle teeth trimming and tail docking in pigs may not be routinely practiced (only if alternative methods to prevent harm fail); beak trimming for poultry prior to 10 days of age, and toe trimming for turkeys if performed by infra-red at the hatchery, would be allowed.
- Producers are encouraged to provide pain control materials (such as anesthetics) as allowed on the National List when performing physical alterations.
- Ammonia levels in poultry houses must be regularly monitored and kept under 25 ppm, with producer taking action to improve air quality once it exceeds 10 ppm.
- Producers must have a comprehensive internal parasite prevention program, including preventative measures such as fecal monitoring and pasture management.
- Producers must have a written euthanasia plan, using allowed methods of euthanasia.
- Producers must keep records of the percent of the herd or flock suffering from lameness and the causes.

Proposed Changes to Mammalian Living Conditions:

- Clarification that animals must be kept clean through the use of clean, dry bedding and sufficient shelter, as appropriate for the species.
- Swine must be group-housed except for farrowing/suckling sows, boars, or in cases of recovery from illness or documented aggression.
- Swine must have access to rooting materials both indoors and outdoors.
- At least 50% of the outdoor access area for all animals must be soil, except in temporary conditions that threaten soil/water quality then outdoor access without soil contact must be provided. The definition of outdoor space only includes areas that are not under a solid roof.

Proposed New Standards on Avian Living Conditions:

- Natural lighting is required in all housing; artificial lights may be used to extend light up to 16 hours per day. Artificial lights must be gradually dimmed when turned off.
- Litter must be provided in scratch areas in the house, and maintained in dry condition.
- 6" per bird of perch space must be provided, except in aviary systems where 55% of birds must be able to perch at once. Species that do not perch are exempt.



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Proposed New Standards on Avian Living Conditions (Cont.):

- Stocking density requirements are calculated on pounds of bird per square foot. The numbers used assume that the average mature laying hen weights approximately 4.5 lbs. Indoor stocking density maximums:
 - In floor litter (single level) housing: 3.0 lbs hen/sq. ft. (~1.5 sq. ft./bird)
 - In slatted/mesh floor (raised slats) housing: 3.75 lbs hen/sq. ft. (~1.2 sq. ft./bird)
 - In aviary (multi-tier) and pasture (mobile) housing: 4.5 lbs hen/sq. ft. (~1 sq. ft./bird)
 - For turkeys, broilers, and meat bird species, 5.0 lbs bird/sq. ft.
- Outdoor access must be provided for all birds on a daily basis, and must provide suitable enrichment (e.g. shade, vegetation) to encourage bird use.
- Outdoor access will not include any roofed area that is attached to the indoor space (e.g. a porch or wintergarden). Exit areas must allow all birds within the house to exit within one hour.
- Outdoor stocking density maximums:
 - For layers, 2.25 lbs hen/sq. ft.
 - For pullets, 3.0 lbs bird/sq. ft.
 - For turkeys, broilers, and meat bird species, 5.0 lbs bird/sq. ft.
- Outdoor access may be temporarily denied for certain reasons, including:
 - Inclement weather, including temperatures <40°F and >90°F
 - Stage of life - meat birds less than 4 weeks of age, and pullets less than 16 weeks of age
 - Nest box training (2 weeks maximum)

Proposed New Standards on Organic Livestock Transport:

- Animals must be fit for transport to auction or slaughter – no sick, lame or injured animals may be transported (except for veterinary care).
- Transport vehicles must provide sufficient season-appropriate ventilation and protection against cold and heat stress.
- Bedding must be provided in livestock trailers (not required in poultry crates).
- Animals must be provided with organic feed and water if transport exceeds 12 hours, and transport must comply with the Federal Twenty-Eight Hour Law.
- Organic producers must have emergency plans in their Organic System Plan to address potential animal welfare problems that might occur during transport.
- Organic producers must provide records of any non-compliant actions during transport and the corrective actions taken to the organic inspector.

Proposed New Standards on Organic Slaughter:

- Organic mammalian slaughter facilities must be compliant with the Federal Meat Inspection Act (inspected by either a federal or state inspector).



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Proposed New Standards on Organic Slaughter (Cont.):

- Organic poultry slaughter facilities must be compliant with the Poultry Products Inspection Act, unless they are exempt; exempt facilities must ensure:
 - Lame birds are not shackled or hung by the legs;
 - All shackled birds are stunned prior to bleeding; and
 - All birds must be completely insensible prior to scalding.
- Organic slaughter facilities must provide records of any non-compliant actions and the corrective actions taken to the organic inspector.

Implementation Period:

- AMS is proposing that all provisions of this rule must be implemented within one year of the publication, except for outdoor space requirements for avian species.
- For avian species outdoor space, a non-certified facility would need to comply within three years after the publication to obtain certification.
- For avian species outdoor space, a facility certified prior to three years from the date of publication would need to comply within five years of the publication of the final rule.