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NOTIFICATION

Please read closely; this affects all certified operations that purchase organic livestock.

Dear OTCO Client:

Oregon Tilth will be changing our requirements regarding the purchase of organic livestock through uncertified brokers. After October 1, 2017, Oregon Tilth certified organic operations may only purchase organic livestock from other certified organic operations. Purchase of organic livestock through uncertified brokers/traders will not be accepted and will result in noncompliance. Uncertified entities may still provide transportation services for organic livestock, but may not be involved in the purchase or sale of organic livestock.

The following documentation must be available for all purchases of livestock:

- A valid organic certificate from the operation who sold the livestock.
- Purchase documents, such as receipts and shipping records, that include the seller's name and the individual animal identification for each certified organic animal purchased, or the flock ID for each certified organic flock of poultry (e.g. pullets).
- Confirmation that payment for the livestock was made to the producer or handler identified on the valid organic certificate.
- Individual animal identification that is fully traceable through the supply chain, including but not limited to:
 - Regulatory animal health program tags, such as Bangs tags/USDA Silver Brite tags for Brucellosis in cattle, or Scrapie program tags in sheep.
 - Animal identification number tags, with or without RFID technology.
 - Breed registry identification numbers.
 - Other methods reviewed and approved by OTCO.
- Transportation records must be available showing the original location of pick up, total travel time on vehicle and delivery to the final destination. This could include, but is not limited to, copies of travel logbooks or similar official documentation.

Why was this change made?

Operations are increasingly purchasing livestock through uncertified brokers. Oregon Tilth is tasked with ensuring the origin of livestock and their eligibility for organic sale. We have found through multiple audits by Oregon Tilth inspectors and complaint investigations conducted that purchases made from uncertified brokers are not traceable enough to verify compliance. In 2016 the National Organic Program required all auctions selling organic livestock to be certified organic. They asserted that operations selling and handling livestock must be certified organic. Furthermore, with the implementation of the Organic Livestock and Poultry Production rule certifiers must confirm that animal welfare practices in transit are aligned with an operation's Organic System Plan. Brokers who are not certified are not operating under a legally binding Organic System Plan.

What is the implementation plan?

The implementation date is October 1, 2017. Prior to this date operations may continue to source livestock through brokers. After this date if purchases are made through brokers, noncompliances and/or adverse actions will be issued.

Is Oregon Tilth the only certifier requiring this change?

No, CCOF Certification Services and Oregon Tilth have collaborated on these requirements and they will be implementing a similar policy this year.

What if I have questions or want more information?

Please contact OTCO with any questions you have. Contact Farm Program Manager, Callyn Kircher, at (503) 378-0690 or by e-mail callyn@tilth.org.