

# Organic Dairy

## A Recordkeeping Checklist



### Animal Origin & Identification



- Keep a list of your animals – these are identification records for each animal using ear tags, digital IDs, etc. (dam/source of animal, organic slaughter eligibility, breeding dates, animals entering or leaving the herd, etc.)
- Record births
- Record purchased/sold animals (itemized receipt)
- Documentation proving each dairy animal was under continuous organic management since the last third of gestation
- Records showing breeder stock arrived before last third of gestation if offspring are sold as organic
- Records showing 12-month transition period for transitioned dairy animals, including:
  - Start date of transition
  - List of animals in transition
  - Records demonstrating continuous organic management
- Records identifying any animals treated with prohibited substances and documentation proving they and their products are not sold as organic

### Feed & Nutrition



- Receipts for purchased organic feed - keep labels and organic certificates
- Records of any on-farm produced feed
- Keep records of current inventory of harvested feed
- Records documenting use of third-year transitional crops when applicable
- Document any seasonal ration changes due to grazing (as fed ration records)
- Document the total feed ration for each type and class of animal - calculate dry matter demand and intake

### Healthcare & Welfare



- Herd/flock health plan and documentation of preventive care
- Receipts for healthcare products, supplements, and bedding - keep labels and organic certificates
- Document any vet visits and reason
- Records of all health treatments, including:
  - Date
  - Diagnosis
  - Medication used
  - Veterinarian orders when required
  - Withdrawal times followed

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### Healthcare & Welfare, *con't*



- Parasite control plans and fecal monitoring documentation
- Records showing prohibited practices were avoided (e.g., hormones for growth, routine antibiotics, routine parasiticides)
- Identification of animals treated with prohibited substances
- Written plan for prompt, humane euthanasia
- Record culled animals

### Housing & Living Conditions



- Documentation of year-round outdoor access – records showing access to shade, shelter, exercise areas, fresh air, clean water, and sunlight
- Record temporary confinement – note the date, amount of time, animals, and reason of any periods of temporary confinement
- Bedding source records proving bedding is organically produced when required
- Housing maintenance and cleaning logs
- Records showing adequate space and design for welfare needs

### Pasture Practices & Crop Field Activity



- Create or update pasture & field maps – location, name, size, fences, shade, water
- Record the day the animals go out to pasture
- Document pasture moves for all animal groups
- Records demonstrating minimum 30% DMI from grazing during grazing season
- Record the day the grazing season ends (grazing season length) and the winter ration begins
- Record any manure (with source documentation) or other soil fertility applications
- Monitoring records of pasture condition and regrowth
- Order and document any seed purchase and search for pasture and field crops (must be organic or documented unavailability)
- Keep field activity logs (planting, inputs, cultivating, harvesting, etc.)
- Record amount of feed harvested, amount, and from which fields
- Land use and field history records, if applicable
- Buffer zone documentation, if applicable

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### Transport & Slaughter



- Transportation logs including:
  - Departure and arrival times
  - Condition of animals
  - Transporter identity
- Label as organic for the duration of transport
- Emergency transport plans for animal welfare incidents
- Slaughter records, if applicable

### Sales



- Keep sales records for all livestock products (milk shipping, live animal, and meat sales)
  - Sales invoices describing product as “organic”
  - Records linking each animal/product to its organic management and origin
- File milk slips
- Buyer certifications or verification of organic status

### Organic System Plan & Inspection

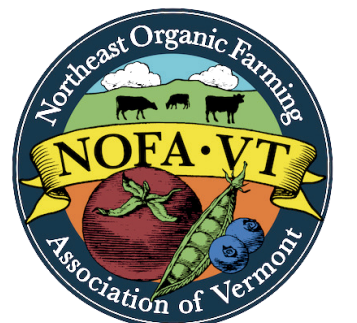


- Update your Organic System Plan by due date, annually
- Complete the certification fee reimbursement application
- Gather all records for your annual organic inspection
- Be sure you have a comprehensive audit trail linking animal origin → management → feed → health care → sale
- Retain all records for at least 5 years
- Documentation preventing commingling with nonorganic animals/products
- Training records for staff responsible for organic livestock

This checklist serves as an organic certification record keeping reference. Use it to stay organized throughout the year and prepared for inspections. You may not need every record listed—focus on those that reflect your operation's activities. Consult the current version of 7 CFR Part 205 at [ecfr.gov](http://ecfr.gov) and your Accredited Certification Agency (ACA) to understand which records are necessary for your ACA and inspector to fully understand your operation. This document does not substitute for legal advice or official regulatory guidance.



United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
National Organic Program  
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



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