



CCOF

Advancing organic agriculture through certification, education, advocacy, and promotion.

Ms. Michelle Arsenault
Advisory Committee Specialist
National Organic Standards Board, USDA-AMS-NOP
1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 2642-S, Mail Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250-0268

Docket: AMS-NOP-19-0095

Re: Handling Subcommittee: 2022 Sunset Reviews

April 3, 2020

Dear Ms. Arsenault and NOSB:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2022 Sunset Review of handling substances on the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.

CCOF is a nonprofit organization governed by the people who grow and make our food. Founded in California more than 40 years ago, today our roots span the breadth of North America. We are supported by an organic family of farmers, ranchers, processors, retailers, consumers, and policymakers. Together, we work to advance organic agriculture for a healthy world.

The NOSB should carefully consider the impacts of removing a substance that has been listed on an Organic System Plan (OSP) because producers need a variety of tools available to them. Producers may routinely use all or some substances listed on their OSP, or they may only occasionally use listed substances for specific situations. Some substances are commonly used by organic producers while others are only listed by a few producers who rely on the substance for their site-specific conditions. In the attached comments, we include the number of CCOF members who list each substance on their OSP because it demonstrates the importance of the substance to organic production.

Our comments also describe how the substance is used by our members and, when possible, whether viable alternatives exist. This information is based on our experience as a certifier and on feedback from our members. Although we strongly encourage our members to comment, they do not always have the capacity to directly submit their own comments. Our goal is to relay valuable information about our members' materials and practices to help NOSB maintain a clear, consistent regulatory environment for organic producers of all scales and types.

Thank you for your review of our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Nell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" and last name "Nell" clearly distinguishable.

Peter Nell

Special Assistant to the CEO

cc: Kelly Damewood, CEO, CCOF, Inc.
April Crittenden, Chief Certification Officer, CCOF Certification Services, LLC
Rebekah Weber, Policy Director, CCOF, Inc.

CCOF's Comments on the 2022 Sunset Review Handling Scope Materials

The following comments are based on CCOF's member input, our experience offering organic certification for more than 40 years, and our current certification of over 1,400 organic processors and handlers.

§ 205.605 (a) – Nonsynthetic nonagricultural (nonorganic) substances allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as "organic" or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food groups(s))."

Kaolin

4 CCOF members list kaolin in their OSPs. Kaolin is used in personal care products.

Sodium bicarbonate

46 CCOF members list sodium bicarbonate in their OSPs. Sodium bicarbonate is used as a leavening agent in various products, in personal care products, and in beer brewing.

Waxes (Wood resin)

Several CCOF members list waxes, including wood resin and carnauba wax, in their OSPs. CCOF uses Material Review Organization's categorizations that do not distinguish between approved waxes. Prior to December 2019, waxes were not split into separate categories.

§ 205.605 (b) – Synthetic nonagricultural (nonorganic) substances allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as "organic" or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food groups(s))."

Ammonium bicarbonate

1 CCOF member lists ammonium bicarbonate in their OSP. Ammonium bicarbonate is used as a leavening agent.

Ammonium carbonate

No CCOF member lists ammonium carbonate in their OSP.

Calcium phosphates (monobasic, dibasic, and tribasic)

6 CCOF members list calcium phosphates in their OSPs. Calcium phosphates are used in a variety of products including crackers, dietary supplements, and spice blends.

Ozone

15 CCOF members list ozone in their OSPs. Ozone is a sanitizer that is used on equipment and on wine barrels because of their porous nature. CCOF is unaware of any commercially available direct alternatives to ozone, however chlorine materials can be used as sanitizers.

Sodium hydroxide

24 CCOF members list sodium hydroxide in their OSPs. Sodium hydroxide is used in olive and oil processing and personal care products. Some CCOF members use sodium hydroxide as an equipment cleaning agent that does not have direct contact with food.

§ 205.606 – Nonorganically produced agricultural products allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as organic.

Waxes (Carnauba)

At least 7 CCOF members list carnauba wax in their OSPs. CCOF uses Material Review Organization's categorizations that do not always distinguish between approved waxes, such as carnauba wax or wood resin wax. Prior to December 2019, waxes were not split into separate categories.

Colors

11 CCOF members list colors in their OSPs. Colors are used in snack foods, syrups, supplements, and other products.

Glycerin

16 CCOF members list glycerin in their OSPs. Glycerin is used in personal care products and is a carrier within organic and nonorganic flavors.

Inulin-oligofructose enriched (CAS # 9005-80-5)

No CCOF member lists inulin-oligofructose enriched in their OSP or uses it directly. However, some nonorganic microorganisms and flavor substances include inulin as a carrier.

Kelp – for use only as a thickener and dietary supplement

2 CCOF members list nonorganic kelp in their OSPs for use in products intended for human consumption. Kelp is listed as an agricultural substance under § 205.606 and § 205.237(a) requires that all agricultural products included in livestock feed to be certified organic. Therefore, organic livestock producers must use certified organic kelp while human consumption products can utilize the commercial availability clause of § 205.606. 6 CCOF members sell organic kelp, mostly in powder or extract form.

Orange shellac-unbleached (CAS # 9000-59-3)

9 CCOF members list orange shellac in their OSPs. Orange shellac is used as a fruit coating.

Starches – cornstarch (native); sweet potato starch – for bean thread production only

11 CCOF members list cornstarch in their OSPs and none list sweet potato starch. Cornstarch is a component of baking powder used in various baked goods.

Turkish bay leaves

No CCOF member lists Turkish bay leaves in their OSP.

Whey protein concentrate

1 CCOF member lists whey protein concentrate in their OSP. Whey protein concentrate is used in dietary supplements.