

AMS Announces Reorganization and Leadership Change

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) today announced organizational and structural changes for National Organic Program (NOP) after five-plus years of program implementation. "The NOP has been experiencing growing pains along with the organic industry," said Lloyd Day, administrator of AMS, which oversees the NOP, "and this new year brings an opportunity to make changes in the Program to keep up with growth in the organic industry."

The NOP is reorganizing into three branches: Standards Development & Review; Accreditation, Auditing & Training; and Compliance & Enforcement. Deputy Administrator for Transportation & Marketing Programs Barbara Robinson will assume overall leadership for the NOP in addition to her other duties, while Mark Bradley will assume leadership for the Accreditation, Auditing & Training Branch, and Richard Mathews will head up the Standards Development & Review Branch. No decision has been made for leadership of Compliance & Enforcement at this time.

Also underway is the creation of an electronic reading room, where all NOP records that can be made publicly available will be accessible electronically, including a new Q&A site to provide answers to questions posed to NOP. Only answers posted on the Q&A site will constitute an official response from the NOP. The Q&A site will be a component of a reorganized NOP site called "NOP-AQSS" (Answers to Questions on the Standards by the Staff). Details on the new reading room and NOP-AQSS will be forthcoming and posted in Today's News as soon as they are available.

These changes will help NOP continue to accomplish its goals—ensuring the integrity of the USDA organic seal, applying regulatory consistency, and providing transparency to its stakeholders.

February 4, 2008

National Organic Programs (NOP)

