

**National Organic Standards Board
Policy Development Committee**

**Recommendation for amendments and additions to the NOSB Board Policy Manual
NOSB Policy for Public Comment at NOSB Meetings**

September 10, 2008

Recommendation

The following recommendation amends the section called NOSB Policy for Public Comment at NOSB Meetings of the NOSB Policy and Procedures Manual (page 28). The intent of these updates is to obtain maximum benefit from public comment, and to allow the most number of presenters the opportunity to speak according to the allotted time.

Proposed new language is presented in underlined text while deletions are indicated in strikethrough.

NOSB Policy for Public Comment at NOSB Meetings:

1. All persons wishing to comment at NOSB meetings during public comment periods must sign up in advance per the instructions in the Federal Register Notice for the Meeting.
2. All presenters are encouraged to submit public comment in writing according to the Federal Register Notice. Advance submissions allow NOSB members the opportunity to read comments in advance electronically, and decrease the need for paper copies to be distributed during the meeting.
3. Persons will be called upon to speak in the order they sign up. Persons called upon who are absent from the room could potentially miss their opportunity for public comment.
4. Each person will be given 5 minutes to speak, unless otherwise indicated by the Chair ~~each person will be given 5 minutes to speak.~~
5. Persons must give their names and affiliations for the record at the beginning of their public comment.
6. A person may submit a written proxy to the NOP or NOSB requesting that another person speak on his or her behalf.
7. No person will be allowed to speak during the public comment period for more than 10 minutes, unless otherwise indicated by the Chair.
8. Individuals providing public comment will refrain from any personal attacks and from remarks that otherwise impugn the character of any individual.

Other suggestions that would be appreciated by NOSB members:

- The NOSB will attempt to accommodate all persons requesting public comment time, however, persons requesting time after the closing date in the Meeting Notice, or during last minute sign-up at the meeting, will be placed on a waiting list and will be considered at the discretion of the

NOSB Chair depending on availability of time. Similarly, persons who have signed up to address the NOSB for their 5-minute slot and have also served as a proxy for another person will be placed on a waiting list if they wish to speak for a third time on the same topic, and will be considered at the discretion of the NOSB Chair depending on availability of time. This should allow more members of the public time to present.

- Members of the public are asked to define clearly and succinctly the issues they wish to present before the Board. This will give NOSB members a comprehensible understanding of the speaker's concerns.
- Members of the public should be considerate about - speaking more than once on the same topic - to allow more members of the public the opportunity to speak

Adopted October 19, 2002
~~Amended March 2, 2005~~
Amended September 10, 2008

Committee vote:

Moved: Barry Flamm

Second: Bea James

Yes- 4 No- 0 Absent- 0