

Note: Subcommittee notes may include preliminary discussions regarding substances considered for addition to or removal from the National List. They do not represent official National Organic Program (NOP) policy or regulations. Please see the NOP website for official NOP policy, regulations, and status of substances used in organic production and handling.

**National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)
Executive Subcommittee (ES) Meeting Notes
Friday, January 9, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

Attending: Jean Richardson (JR), NOSB Chair; Tracy Favre (TF), Livestock Chair & NOSB Vice Chair; John Foster, NOSB Vice Chair Emeritus, Harold Austin (HA), Handling Chair & NOSB Secretary; Materials/GMO ad hoc Chair; Carmela Beck (CBe), CACS Chair; Zea Sonnabend (ZS), Crops Chair; Calvin Walker (CW), Materials Chair; Colehour Bondera (CBo) - sitting in, Jay Feldman (JFe) - sitting in

Absent: Mac Stone (MS), PDS Chair & NOSB Secretary Emeritus

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA), Emily Brown Rosen (EBR)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of December 12, 2014**
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
- **NOP news and update**
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
 - Policy Development (PDS) – MS
 - Handling (HS) - HA
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

- **Call to Order** - JR
- **Approval of Notes:** Notes from December 12, 2014 were approved as is
- **Chairs Report**
 - **NOSB internal process and practice of formal reprimand/censure policy** - Over the last year, two Board members have shared or released confidential or draft information, which has resulted in both internal and external ramifications. The NOSB members have discussed this informally, and members expressed the need to have a process in the Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM) whereby members could censure or reprimand fellow members. The NOP sent a response to this informal inquiry indicating that it is the agency's responsibility to address any conduct issues with Board members. The NOP suggested a conference call on this issue in January. A member discussed two possible procedures the NOSB could adopt; Censure or a vote of no confidence, noting the critical difference between the two. Censure is a formal expression of discontent with no expectation of removal from office, while a vote of no-confidence would entail removal from office. The same member noted his disagreement with the NOP position to not take immediate action and feels that the NOSB should have language in the PPM. Another member asked if the Policy Development Subcommittee could work on a document or resolution asking the NOP to take action. Others supported his approach and added that

measures must be taken to prevent this from happening again, since disclosure of draft information offers, among other things, an unfair advantage to some community members and not others. A member noted that NOSB documents are subject to FOIA, so does not see an issue with public sharing of information.

- **Staff assistance on sunset templates** (Jan/Feb and May/Jun/Jul). - The Chair acknowledged the immense amount of work the NOP staff is doing in preparation for the sunset reviews, and asked that the NOP dedicate extra staff to help. She also asked that this request be relayed to the Deputy Administrator. A new Board member asked whether NOP has the budget to hire grad students to help with NOSB work. While the NOP cannot use funds to hire graduate students, they can contract work if necessary. A member added three points: Though the workload is heavy now, the templates will make it easier for future reviews and are important; the release of information through non-NOSB sources is a concern and; the process of searching for documents and conducting the review is an important part of the learning process. The NOSB Chair asked for updates from the NOP on the status of the templates and the NOP indicated that they should be done by next week.
- **Training update.** A member expressed his concerns with the upcoming new member training being held in DC in February. His primary concern is that only the 4 new members and the NOSB Officers are attending and not the entire Board. Several current members offered counter views, feeling that attending the training would not be beneficial since they had the same training last year. The Chair assured him that the NOP would be conducting the training and the content was very similar or identical to what was presented last year. The NOSB Vice Chairs, both present and emeritus, asked that the training include several components: A review of the materials' checklists, and a review and hands on activities using the sunset review templates. JFo noted that there is value in walking through the forms and templates with the newbies.
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update - MA**
 - 2016 Sunset review - The templates for the second posting are completed and will be finalized once the Subcommittees complete the reviews and votes.
 - 2017 Sunset template prep - MA indicated that the templates, while helpful, are not necessary for the members to conduct their review, as they have access to all of the necessary information. While the templates are being populated the members will continue to complete their reviews and can forward the info to MA, who will then incorporate it into the template for posting.
 - Spring deadlines - February 25 is the deadline to submit proposals so they can be posted to Regulations.gov by March 9
- **NOP news and update - EBR**
 - Update on TR statuses. Most are due back in mid-January or February. The normal 60-day sufficiency window pushes the deadline to March 9, which is after the proposal deadline. The NOP asked if it was feasible for the NOSB to have a shorter window (perhaps 30 days) in which to review the TRs for sufficiency. MA will add materials on the Subcommittee agendas as the TRs are received.
 - Origin of LS proposed rule. Currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Likely to publish early in 2015.
 - Aquaculture rule is under legal review.
 - Animal welfare document is being drafted and must undergo an economic analysis.
 - Training prep - The NOP is in the midst of prepping for the February NOSB new members training, which will be nearly identical to last year's training.
 - Certifier training - scheduled for mid-February.

- NOP hiring/staff changes are ongoing. Melissa Bailey, Standards Division Director, has taken a position with AMS/Fruit and Vegetable, and will not be returning to NOP. Jenny Tucker, Associate Deputy Administrator, will be acting Standards Division Director until a replacement is hired.
- A member of the Materials Subcommittee asked about a prior request for a Seed Panel at the spring 2015 meeting. She noted that they would like to have 3 individuals on the panel and get a definitive answer before the next MS call, which is scheduled for February 10.
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - **Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO)** - CW. The MS Chair emphasized the importance and need for the seed panel, and urged the NOP to approve this request. In addition to the Prevention Strategy Guidance for Excluded Methods in Crops and Handling (for which the MS is seeking to hold a panel), the MS is also working on a discussion document on Excluded Methods Terminology.
 - **Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS)** - CBe. The CACS is completing two documents for the spring meeting: Assessment of Soil Conservation Practices and Peer Review. The Peer Review proposal is scheduled to be discussed and voted upon during the next call.
 - **Crops (CS)** - ZS. The sunset reviews are moving along and the CS added extra calls in order to complete them. There are several petitions in the work queue and two new petitions were just received. The Contamination Issues in Farm Inputs was transferred from an outgoing member to a continuing member.
 - **Livestock (LS)** - TF. The LS scheduled two additional meetings so they could work through the MET proposal, which has been a complex topic. They are also working on numerous sunset materials and the aquaculture legacy discussion document. The LS Chair will incorporate comments from the NOP and send the document to the entire NOSB for review before the spring 2015 meeting. The purpose of the document is to capture the history of the aquaculture review, which the LS feels will be invaluable to future Boards since there will be so much attrition between now and 2017 this was invaluable to future boards if the AQ rule is not published before then. Vote on MET in early Feb.
 - **Policy Development (PDS)** - MS. No update. EBR noted that the NOP is preparing the document, as it is currently in separate pieces.
 - **Handling (HS)** - HA. The HS Chair and NOSB Vice Chair conveyed his observation that there is a lack of participation by some of the existing Board members which places a burden on other Board members. The HS is working diligently on many 2016 and 2017 sunset reviews. Ancillary substances has been challenging and using microorganisms as the test pilot material has provided a good example of the complexity. The NOP is revising the ancillary substance template as per a request from the HS.
- **Additional Items** - none
- The meeting was adjourned

[Previous ES Notes](#)

Future call schedule:

January 9, 2015 1:00 ET

February 13, 2015 1:00 ET

March 13, 2015 1:00 ET

April 10, 2015 1:00 ET (last meeting before Spr 2015 NOSB meeting)

May 8, 2015 1:00 ET

June 12, 2015 1:00 ET
 July 10, 2015 1:00 ET
 August 14, 2015 1:00 ET
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Spring 2015 Milestones	Target date
NOSB Training	Feb 4-5, 2015
NOP - Complete Spring 2015 NOSB meeting tentative agenda	Feb 7, 2015
NOSB - Spring 2015 proposals due to NOP	Feb 25, 2015
NOP - Post proposals, Publish FRN, Open public comment	Mar 9, 2015
Discuss work agendas on ES call	Mar 13, 2015
Public comment closes	Apr 6, 2015
Work agendas finalized on ES call (last call before spring mtg)	Apr 10, 2015
NOP - Send compiled public comments to NOSB	Apr 13, 2015
Spring 2015 NOSB meeting - La Jolla, CA	Week of April 27 - 30

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Friday, February 13, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

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Absent:

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA), Emily Brown Rosen (EBR), Miles McEvoy (MM)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of January 9, 2015**
- **Chairs Report** - JR
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
- **NOP news and update** - MM
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
 - Policy Development (PDS) - MS
 - Handling (HS) - HA
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

- **Call to Order** - JR
- **Approval of Notes:** Notes from January 9, 2015 approved as written.
- **Chairs Report** - JR.
 - NOSB training update. The Chair indicated that the training went very well, and was found to be very helpful. While in DC, the NOSB Officers had the opportunity to meet with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) staff, and also met with Secretary Vilsack's Chief of Staff to talk about the Origin of Livestock and animal welfare guidance.
 - The entire Board has been very busy working on sunset materials' reviews.
 - The Chair noted that she continues to travel around the country giving presentations about the NOSB. In March she will attend the IOIA training and this week will speak at NOFA VT.
 - The NOSB Secretary noted that he too has been giving talks to various groups.
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
 - Draft agenda - the draft agenda was circulated and MA asked for feedback about time blocks and organization
 - The proposal deadline is February 25, and the Subcommittees are on target to complete all proposals and documents.

- Members were reminded to update their email distribution lists with the new NOSB member contact info.
- MA informed the group about the changes to the travel system, and let them know that they will be able to start making travel reservations for the spring meeting soon.
- **NOP news and update – MM**
 - The New Member training last week went very well.
 - A representative from NIFA will speak at the NOSB meeting about research at the USDA and the NOSB research priorities.
 - Design for the Environment (DfE) - review of Inerts presentation. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and NOP will host a webinar for the Board in the March, and may also have the EPA present at the April NOSB meeting.
 - Seed panel for spring. The panel will be 90 minutes long, consist of 3-4 panelists, and will include presentations and Questions and answers from the Board.
 - Hydroponics/aquaponics Task Force - The NOP will seek nominations for the task force that will report to the NOSB Crops Subcommittee. The nomination period will be open for 60 days and the NOP is seeking diversity with regard expertise, affiliations, geography and demographics. The task force will be a non-voting group and will be tasked with writing a report to present to the NOSB via the Crops Subcommittee. A liaison to the Crops Subcommittee will be determined soon.
 - The Origin of Livestock is in clearance at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
 - The Nanotechnology Policy is near completion and should be published soon. Nanotech materials are not allowed in organic.
 - The Aquaculture Rule is in departmental clearance which may take from 6 to 12 weeks, and then will be sent to OMB.
 - The Certifier training in Arkansas went very well, and the grower group training was well received.
 - Private labels. The 2006 NOSB recommendation is difficult to implement because private labels do not typically list the name of the certified handlers. The NOSB Chair asked about potentially adding this to the work agenda for the CACS if it is need of updating.
 - A member asked about the status of bio-based mulch. After the NOSB made a recommendation on bio-based mulch, it was discovered that there are no qualifying bio-based products that meet the criteria; the products that were petitioned contained petroleum resins and less than 25% biobased materials. The NOP subsequently published a clarification memo indicating that product feedstocks must be biobased.
 - The Deputy Administrator is speaking at a VT organic conference tomorrow, where there has been a lot of interest in mulch and hydroponics.
- **Subcommittee Reports (5 minutes each)**
 - **Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) – CBe**
 - The CACS expressed her appreciation that the officers were able to meet with NRCS, because the new information they gleaned was taken into consideration for the Soil conservation document. The CACS will delay the document until the fall 2015 meeting so they can incorporate this new information. The Peer Review proposal will be discussed at the April 2015 meeting. The Subcommittee has discussed a couple of potential work agenda items including changing the name of the CACS to include an international component, which did not receive much support in Subcomm, and a project to consider the 100% organic category. The Deputy Administrator added that the NOP may consider having the CACS review International Agreements. The CACS

Chair asked that the NOP write a summary clarifying their role so they can discuss it on the next call.

- **Crops (CS) - ZS**
 - The Crops Subcommittee will present two 2016 sunset review, 54- 2017 sunset summaries, a couple of petitioned materials and the report on Contamination in Farm Inputs at the April meeting. The CS will be the liaison to the hydroponics task force, which will be seated this year. It will likely be a year before the task force submits a report.
- **Livestock (LS) - TF**
 - The Livestock Subcommittee is working on 2017 sunset summaries, and the Chair noted that they are waiting for TRs. In addition to the sunset materials, they will also be presenting the MET proposal, the Aquaculture Legacy document and several petitioned materials.
- **Policy Development (PDS) - MS.** The PDS has not met because the updated draft PPM has been delayed. The next PDS call is scheduled for March 10. .
- **Handling (HS) - HA**
 - The HS will have five petitioned materials, 104 - 2017 sunset summaries, 10 - 2016 sunset materials, and a proposal on Ancillary substances in microorganisms for the April 2015 meeting. The review for ancillary substances in microorganisms was a pilot project for reviewing ancillary substances. The HS has also discussed the annotation process since they cannot now make annotation changes as part of the sunset process. The NOSB will be able to propose annotation changes at the same meeting, but as a separate proposal. A statement about the Subcommittees intent to propose an annotation change was included in the summary of any proposal for which this is a consideration, so the public will be alerted to the potential for an annotation change. A member asked about adding this process idea to the work agenda. The NOP will elucidate this process and provide more guidance. The goal is to make it clear that the annotation process and sunset process are separate, but can and might be done at the same NOSB meeting. Another member asked about changes that were not necessarily annotations changes but are changes in classification of substances.
- **Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW**
 - The MS has two discussion documents and is convening a Seed Panel at the April meeting. Seed panel details will be finalized at the next MS call. The panel will likely be 90 minutes long and consist of 3-4 panelists.
- **Additional Items** - A member asked about the NOSB nominations for 2016. The announcement is scheduled to be released in April and will be open for 60 days. The NOP encouraged members to encourage their respective communities to apply.
- The meeting was adjourned

[Previous ES Notes](#)

Future call schedule:

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March 13, 2015 1:00 ET

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**National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)
Executive Subcommittee (ES) Meeting Notes
Friday, March 13, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

Attending: Jean Richardson (JR), NOSB Chair; Tracy Favre (TF), Livestock Chair & NOSB Vice Chair; Harold Austin (HA), Handling Chair & NOSB Secretary; Materials/GMO ad hoc Chair; Carmela Beck (CBe), CACS Chair; Zea Sonnabend (ZS), Crops Chair; Calvin Walker (CW), Materials Chair; Tom Chapman (TC) sitting in; Colehour Bondera (CBo) - sitting in

Absent: Mac Stone (MS) PDS Chair

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA), Emily Brown Rosen (EBR), Miles McEvoy (MM)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of** February 13, 2015
- **Chairs Report** - JR
 - Proposed Interim Minority Opinion policy - can the Exec adopt an Interim Policy?
 - Bio-mulch discussion
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** – MA
 - Zea CS in Dropbox
 - Proposal posting/comment status
 - Meeting Materials/DOI spreadsheet
 - Travel logistics for spring
- **NOP news and update** - MM
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
 - Policy Development (PDS) - MS
 - Handling (HS) - HA
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

- **Call to Order** - JR
- **Approval of Notes:** Notes from February 13, 2015 were not available for review yet
- **Chairs Report** - JR
 - Proposed Interim Minority Opinion policy - can the Executive Committee adopt an Interim Policy? The Board members provided feedback about best practices on minority opinions in the proposals. The NOP will forward some information regarding this, which came from Robert's Rules of Order and is currently in the PPM. Members are supportive of the work project since there is not a clear detailed process in place, and it is important to codify this for future Boards. The project will be added to the Policy Development Subcommittee's work agenda. As for adopting an interim process, the NOP feels that the current process should be used until the

PDS proposal is finalized. The current process involves having the minority opinion discussed in Subcommittee then submitted as a separate document. At the time of posting, the minority opinion document will be linked within the proposal

- The Chair noted that the meeting materials are posted, and the NOSB community is disappointed that the comment period was not extended given that it opened later than expected.
- Biomulch. As discussed during the last Executive call, there are currently no biomulches that qualify as organic. The Crops Chair asked about adding this to the Crops work agenda so they can reconsider the previous proposal. She noted the need for a TR; likely a supplemental TR. The CS Chair noted that if a TR is contracted, it may not be back in time to develop a proposal for the fall meeting, so they may target spring 2016. A member asked about an alternative to this approach, which involved asking the petitioners to re-petition this material, so they could highlight information that was not clear in the first petition.
- The request for nominations for the task force on hydroponics/aquaponics was published this week. The NOSB Chair has received requests for clarification from the public about qualifications for task force members and wording.
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update - MA**
 - Proposal posting and public comment. The comment period has been open for a few days and there are less than 10 comments.
 - Meeting Materials/DOI spreadsheet - MA will be preparing the meeting materials' binders and a spreadsheet listing all the documents so members can review the proposals and declare any potential COIs.
 - Travel logistics for spring - MA urged the members to make flight arrangements.
 - Field trip at NOSB meeting. Members were supportive of a field trip to a local hydroponic farm, while acknowledging the time and workload constraints. The NOP will discuss this further and let the group know the outcome.
- **NOP news and update - MM**
 - The draft PPM will be sent to the Policy Development Subcommittee in early April. This version is an integration of work from various entities (NOSB members and NOP) and is reorganized, updated, and contains standardized language.
 - Inerts webinar - EPAs Design for the Environment webinar is scheduled for the end of the month.
 - GMO - Seed panel is being organized for the Spring meeting
 - The Nano-technology policy memo will be published soon.
 - Electrolyzed water. The NOP may ask the Handling Subcommittee to look at this topic.
 - The NOP has new Standards staff working on materials, as well as new staff working in Accreditation and International Activities (AIA). MA will send a new staff directory when it is updated.
 - Rulemaking. There are several projects in different stages of progress including aquaculture, apiculture, pet food and animal welfare.
 - Methionine (MET) - The group briefly discussed the comparison between the US and EU rules.
- **Subcommittee Reports (5 minutes each)**
 - Crops (CS) - ZS. The CS is awaiting public comments, and is looking forward to beginning work with the aquaponics task force. The petition for Ally Isothiocyanate (AITC) was withdrawn at the proposal posting deadline. The group discussed the current policy on petition withdrawals and would like to refer this topic to the PDS for updating. The Crops Chair will update the group on the next call about the USDA Coexistence meeting she is currently attending.

- Livestock (LS) - TF. In addition to completing all of the sunset materials, the LS also completed several non-sunset reviews for the April 2015 meeting.
- Policy Development (PDS) - TF provided update. The PDS will be undertaking work on the PPM and the Member Guide, and fusing the two. The Member Guide would include templates and forms, while the PPM would contain the policy and procedures. The goal is to make the document a true resource for the Board.
- Handling (HS) - HA. The HS has a large portion of the 2017 sunset materials, as well as 2016 sunset reviews and petitioned materials. And there are 3 new members on the Handling Subcommittee. The HS is moving forward with sunset and TR reviews while they await public comment. The HS added 5 calls to their regular schedule over the summer in order to prepare for the fall meeting. MA will send the members an example of a material review (from JR) for the 2nd posting of the 2017 sunsets.
- Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW. On the last call the MS discussed the seed panel and logistics for the NOSB meeting. The Subcommittee also has several other projects on the schedule for the spring meeting.
- Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACs) - CBe. The CACS has one document for the April meeting: Peer Review. The CACS is continuing work on the Soil document, while they wait for public comments. The CACS Chair thanked the new Board members for taking on this project immediately after being appointed to the Board and Subcommittee.
- **Additional Items** - none
- **The meeting was adjourned**

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Friday, April 10, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

Attending: Jean Richardson (JR), NOSB Chair; Tracy Favre (TF), Livestock Chair & NOSB Vice Chair; Harold Austin (HA), Handling Chair & NOSB Secretary; Materials/GMO ad hoc Chair; Zea Sonnabend (ZS), Crops Chair; Calvin Walker (CW), Materials Chair; Carmela Beck (CBe), CACS Chair; Tom Chapman (TC) sitting in; Colehour Bondera (CBo) - sitting in

Absent: Mac Stone (MS) PDS Chair

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA), Emily Brown Rosen (EBR), Miles McEvoy (MM)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of** February 13 and March 13, 2015
- **Chairs Report** - JR
 - Withdrawn Petitions:
 - Will be discussed at April meeting
 - Revision of policy will be sent to PDS as work agenda
 - Research Priorities
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
 - Tentative Internal agenda (attached)
 - Secretary's Report, Acceptance of [October 2014 Meeting Summary](#) and Voting Results as Official Record
 - Comments (oral and written) update
 - Travel logistics questions?
 - Presentations for meeting
- **NOP news and update** - MM
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
 - Policy Development (PDS) - MS
 - Handling (HS) - HA
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

- **Notes of** February 13, 2015 approved with no changes.
- **Notes of** March 13, 2015 were not available for review
- **Chairs Report** - JR
 - Withdrawn Petitions:
 - Two petitions were withdrawn immediately before the meeting. The NOSB Chair indicated that the Subcommittees (Crops and Handling) will mention them at the April

meeting so the public is aware that they were reviewed and then removed. This will also provide a history to future Boards in case they are resubmitted.

- The PDS will be working on a revision of the petition withdrawal procedure/policy.
- Research Priorities - The NOSB Chair asked that each of the Subcommittees compile a list of 3 priorities and send them to the Materials Subcommittee in a timely manner prior to the fall NOSB meeting. The priorities should be reasonable, contain new ideas, and should be specific enough for research. As a starting point members will refer to last year's research priorities.
- A lawsuit was filed against the NOP requesting a halt to the current sunset review process. The NOP noted that the Department of Justice is handling the case, and the NOSB should proceed with business as usual.
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update - MA**
 - The tentative NOSB agenda was sent to the members prior to the call for final review.
 - The NOSB Secretary's report, will include the acceptance of the [October 2014 Meeting Summary](#) as official record
 - Comments (oral and written) update. In order to allow each commenter 4 minutes for comment, The NOSB will need to add 3 extra hours onto the agenda. Members discussed several ways in which to extend the time for comments and MA will adjust the agenda.
 - MA asked that members send her any presentations for the meeting by Sunday April 26
- **NOP news and update - MM**
 - The Deputy Administrator updated the Executive Committee about several items the NOP is working on: the Origin of Livestock and Aquaculture rules are both currently in departmental clearance, the Animal Welfare rule is currently undergoing legal and economic analysis review, and the Pet Food rule is in progress.
 - The NOP has a new Standards Director who begins April 20. Andrew Perry came from the Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) and has extensive expertise in the clearance process for regulations within USDA.
 - Sodium Nitrate. A member asked for clarification and direction about how the NOSB should proceed on Sodium Nitrate, since it is not part of sunset review. Should the NOSB revisit the issue or wait for the NOP? She noted that certifiers are unsure how to interpret the [2010 NOP memo on Sodium Nitrate](#) and asked if the NOP could provide an update at the spring NOSB meeting to clarify for stakeholders.
 - The NOP will present updates at the NOSB meeting on the following: budget, rulemaking changes, departmental initiatives, rules in the pipeline, compliance actions, requests from the NOSB, hydroponic task force, and nominations.
- **Subcommittee Reports (5 minutes each)**
 - Livestock (LS) - TF. The LS has scheduled the 2017 sunset reviews for the spring/summer calls and is working on several other projects.
 - Policy Development (PDS) - TF. The PDS recently received the latest draft version of the PPM from the NOP and will discuss it on the April 14 call. The PDS will be working with the NOP on various sections so there is no overlap in effort and the PDS does not spend time on projects that fall under the purview of the NOP. The NOSB member guide will also be updated.
 - Handling (HS) - HA. The time block for Handling will now shift and be shortened to accommodate the time needed for public comment. All TRs, save for one, have now been received, and the HS will begin work on the 2017 sunset reviews immediately after the spring 2015 NOSB meeting.
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW. The MS has been engaged with the four seed panelists as they prep for the NOSB meeting panel. The MS members provided questions ahead of time

so the panelists could prepare presentations. The panel will be 90 minutes long with 30 minutes for Q & A from the Board.

- Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACs) - CBe. The CACS will discuss public comment on its next call as well as continue the conversation about the soil conservation document
- Crops (CS) - ZS. There are three petitioned items and one report on Contamination in Farm Inputs on the spring NOSB agenda. The CS originally had four petitioned items, but one was withdrawn after the proposal posting deadline.
- **Additional Items** - none
- **The meeting was adjourned**

[Previous ES Notes](#)

Future call schedule:

March 13, 2015 1:00 ET

April 10, 2015 1:00 ET (last meeting before Spr 2015 NOSB meeting)

May 8, 2015 1:00 ET

June 12, 2015 1:00 ET

July 10, 2015 1:00 ET

August 14, 2015 1:00 ET

September 11, 2015 1:00 ET

October 9, 2015 1:00 ET

November 13, 2015 1:00 ET

December 11, 2015 1:00 ET

Spring 2015 Milestones	Target date
NOSB Training	Feb 4-5, 2015
NOP - Complete Spring 2015 NOSB meeting tentative agenda	Feb 7, 2015
NOSB - Spring 2015 proposals due to NOP	Feb 25, 2015
NOP - Post proposals, Publish FRN, Open public comment	Mar 9, 2015
Discuss work agendas on ES call	Mar 13, 2015
Public comment closes	Apr 6, 2015
Work agendas finalized on ES call (last call before spring mtg)	Apr 10, 2015
NOP - Send compiled public comments to NOSB	Apr 13, 2015
Spring 2015 NOSB meeting - La Jolla, CA	Week of April 27 - 30

Note: Subcommittee notes may include preliminary discussions regarding substances considered for addition to or removal from the National List. They do not represent official National Organic Program (NOP) policy or regulations. Please see the NOP website for official NOP policy, regulations, and status of substances used in organic production and handling.

**National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)
Executive Subcommittee (ES) Meeting Notes
Friday, May 8, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

Attending: Jean Richardson (JR), NOSB Chair; Tracy Favre (TF), Livestock Chair, PDS Chair & NOSB Vice Chair; Zea Sonnabend (ZS), Crops Chair; Calvin Walker (CW), Materials Chair/GMO ad hoc Chair; Tom Chapman (TC) acting HS Chair; Colehour Bondera (CBo) - sitting in; Jennifer Taylor (JT) - sitting in

Absent: Harold Austin (HA), Handling Chair & NOSB Secretary; Emily Brown Rosen (EBR), Carmela Beck (CBe), CACS Chair

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA), Miles McEvoy (MM)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of March 13, 2015**
- **Chairs Report - JR**
 - Mechanism for getting public comment late summer - e.g. open call that can be recorded for record.
 - Review of Meeting - suggestions/changes for October?
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update - MA**
 - Travel reimbursement vouchers
 - Fall timeline
 - Transmittal of Sunset reviews to NOP for posting
- **NOP news and update - MM**
- **Subcommittee Reports (5 minutes each)**
 - Policy Development (PDS) - TF
 - Handling (HS) - TC
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

Agenda

- **Approval of March 13, 2015 notes deferred to next call.**
- **Chairs Report - JR**
 - Mechanism for receiving public comment earlier in the cycle. The NOSB Chair proposed a listening session or webinar in late summer that can be recorded for the public record, in order to reduce the time needed for public comment at the fall meeting. MM suggested that the NOP and the NOSB discuss this again on the next call. Andrew Perry, the new Director for Standards, had suggestions for optional tools that could be used. Another concept proposed involved

- holding three listening sessions: One each for Livestock, Handling and Crops. Members were supportive of the idea of holding individual webinars with the understanding that commenters would present at one, not both. The group is very engaged in expanding public participation while reducing the time needed at the fall 2015 meeting for comment. This would also allow the Board members to hear comment sooner, thereby allowing them time to incorporate comments into their reviews. The Chair noted that this approach would also support the reduction of the carbon footprint. The NOP will provide the NOSB with some options one week prior to the next ES call.
- **Review of Meeting** - suggestions/changes for October meeting?
 - Voting efficiency. The NOSB Chair asked that the NOP and members think about ways to make the voting more efficient. Suggestions included the use of I-Clickers, and using a non-roll call vote.
 - Many members found the 5-6 hour blocks of public comment time tiring, and the group discussed how to break this up.
 - Time limits for Board members. Members were asked to think about this and bring any thoughts or ideas to the next ES call.
 - The Chair asked that members send any additional ideas to her or the NOP, on how to increase time at the fall 2015 NOSB meeting to insure that they complete the 2017 sunset reviews.
 - **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
 - Travel reimbursement vouchers - please make sure to send in your post travel form ASAP
 - Fall timeline - the new timeline has been drafted and inserted below: Fall 2015 proposals due to NOP by August 26, 2015
 - Transmittal of sunset reviews to NOP for posting. Members discussed ways in which to make this process as efficient as possible given the large number of sunset materials.
 - **NOP news and update** - MM
 - Emails to NOSB members from the public. A member shared with the NOSB and NOP two emails he received after the NOSB meeting. The NOP expressed their support for the members and encouraged everyone to not engage with commenters who choose to communicate in an offensive, unprofessional manner. If there is a direct threat, members are urged to alert the program and authorities as needed.
 - Hydroponics task force - The call for nominations closed today. The Crops Chair will be the liaison to the task force.
 - NOSB call for nominations closes in one week and the NOP is working on extending the deadline.
 - MM thanked the NOSB members for their hard work and dedication and for a very successful NOSB meeting.
 - The Crops Chair asked about the reclassification of some materials and how the NOSB should proceed for the fall meeting. Most felt the best approach would be for a Subcommittee to put forth two separate proposals, but would like some additional guidance on the best language to use.
 - A member noted that since this is his last year and the nominations for new Board members are currently open, he appreciates the department's quest for diversity.
 - **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Policy Development (PDS) - TF. The PDS will be working on the update to the PPM over the summer.
 - Handling (HS) - TC. The HS has scheduled discussions for 103 materials across 10 meetings and has two extra meetings scheduled in case they need additional time.

- Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW.
 - The MS has two proposals for the fall 2015 meeting in addition to the research priorities proposal.
 - The Subcommittee will delay the Excluded Methods proposal until spring 2016 in order to garner more comment on this complex topic.
 - APHIS is accepting comments on its proposal to modify the regulations on GMOs, and members of the MS would like to submit comments, which they would do as individuals not as a group. A member suggested including information that the NOSB has already worked on, as well as language that was in the 2012 NOSB letter sent to Secretary Vilsack. There are 2 webinars scheduled, May 12 and 20, and the Crops Chair urged people to participate. She will forward the webinar info to the Board.
 - Research Priorities. HA is the liaison between the Materials and Handling Subcommittees and may need someone to fill in for him while he is recuperating. The lead urged each of the Subcommittee Chairs to add the research priorities to their respective work agendas. Members discussed the date by which the priorities lists should be sent to the MS so they will have enough time to prepare the document for posting.
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe. The Soil Conservation document is moving forward and will be the sole project for the fall NOSB meeting.
 - Crops (CS) - ZS. The CS is working diligently on sunset 2017 reviews and four new petitions. In addition to these materials the CS is also working on the next iteration of the Contamination of Farm Inputs, and the research priorities.
 - Livestock (LS) - TF. The LS has scheduled the discussions for the 2017 sunset reviews, and is also working on a couple of new petitions.
- **Additional Items** - none
 - **The meeting was adjourned**

[Previous ES Notes](#)

Future call schedule:

April 10, 2015 1:00 ET (last meeting before Spr 2015 NOSB meeting)
 May 8, 2015 1:00 ET
 June 12, 2015 1:00 ET
 July 10, 2015 1:00 ET
 August 14, 2015 1:00 ET
 September 11, 2015 1:00 ET
 October 9, 2015 1:00 ET
 November 13, 2015 1:00 ET
 December 11, 2015 1:00 ET

Fall 2015 Milestones	Target date
NOP - Complete Fall 2015 NOSB meeting tentative agenda	July 8, 2015

NOSB - Fall 2015 proposals due to NOP	Aug 26, 2015
NOP - Post proposals, Publish FRN, Open public comment	Sep 8, 2015
Discuss work agendas on ES call	Sep 11, 2015
Public comment closes	Oct 5, 2015
Work agendas finalized on ES call (last call before fall meeting)	Oct 8, 2015
NOP - Send compiled public comments to NOSB	Oct 13, 2015
Fall 2015 NOSB meeting - Stowe, VT	Oct 26 - 29, 2015

Note: Subcommittee notes may include preliminary discussions regarding substances considered for addition to or removal from the National List. They do not represent official National Organic Program (NOP) policy or regulations. Please see the NOP website for official NOP policy, regulations, and status of substances used in organic production and handling.

**National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)
Executive Subcommittee (ES) Meeting Notes
Friday, June 12, 2015, 1:00 pm ET**

Attending: Tracy Favre (TF), Livestock Chair, PDS Chair & NOSB Vice Chair; Zea Sonnabend (ZS), Crops Chair; Calvin Walker (CW), Materials Chair/GMO ad hoc Chair; Tom Chapman (TC) acting HS Chair; Carmela Beck (CBe), CACS Chair; Harold Austin (HA), Handling Chair & NOSB Secretary; Colehour Bondera (CBo) - sitting in

Absent: Jean Richardson (JR), NOSB Chair

Staff: Michelle Arsenault (MA); Miles McEvoy (MM); Emily Brown Rosen (EBR)

Agenda

- **Approve notes of March 13, April 10 and May 8, 2015**
- **Chairs Report** - TF
- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update** - MA
- **NOP news and update** - MM
- **Subcommittee Reports** (5 minutes each)
 - Handling (HS) - TC
 - Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO) - CW
 - Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS) - CBe
 - Crops (CS) - ZS
 - Livestock (LS) - TF
 - Policy Development (PDS) - TF
- **Additional Items**
- **Adjourn**

Discussion

- **Notes of March 13, 2015** notes approved as is.
- **Notes of April 10, 2015** notes approved as is.
- **Notes of May 8, 2015** notes approved as is.
- **Chairs Report** - TF
 - Pre-meeting webinars for public comment (target dates - Sept 22 and 29). The Executive Committee discussed the idea of hosting two 3-hour public comment periods prior to the meeting. In addition to these 6 hours of comments, the NOSB will schedule ~5 hours at the fall Board meeting. The NOSB Chair noted the benefits of this approach, which include; increased stakeholder participation, reduced carbon footprint, and expansion of time at the fall meeting for the Board to discuss and vote on the 200+ sunset reviews. The Vice Chair asked that the webinar be advertised broadly so stakeholders are aware ahead of time. A member asked about expanding the comment time in case there is more interest. The majority of the group is supportive of this idea as it would allow stakeholders who cannot participate in person, or who do not usually participate, an opportunity to do so.
 - The Chair reminded the members to complete and submit the final recommendations for April 2015

- **Advisory Board Specialist (ABS) update - MA.**
 - Submission of final recommendations. AMS also reminded members to submit the recommendations from the April 2015 meeting
 - iClickers for voting. The NOP is looking into the feasibility of using iClickers or some other electronic voting mechanism to help facilitate the voting for 200 + materials.
 - Potential 2016 NOSB meeting locations:
 - May 2016: DC, or NC (Charlotte, Asheville, Raleigh Durham). A member noted that Asheville is difficult to get to.
 - Oct 2016: Midwest (Omaha, NE; Kansas City, MO; Fayetteville, AR; Lincoln, NE; Cincinnati, OH). A member noted that Fayetteville would be a good location for a meeting
 - NOP has been looking at options such as Open Gov for ongoing submission of public comment.
- **NOP news and update - MM**
 - The 2015 Sunset renewal notice notifying the public of a rulemaking action was sent to the Federal Register and should be published next week.
 - Nominations for the NOSB close next week. To date we've received about 30 applications
 - The Aquaponics task force has garnered a lot of interest and applicants. The task Force will be charged with developing a report and will work with the Crops Subcommittee.
- **Subcommittee Reports (5 minutes each)**
 - **Handling (HS)** - TC. The HS has completed 22% of its materials reviews, with 25% of its meetings left. The 2018 sunset materials are assigned and the HS will be working on them in the coming weeks. The HS also has two petitions under review.
 - **Materials/GMO ad hoc (MS/GMO)** - CW. The MS met last week and discussed submitting comments as individuals, as opposed to as a Subcommittee, to the public comment docket regarding the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) biotechnology regulations, 7 CFR Part 340. The MS is working on several documents including the Research Priorities and Excluded Methods Terminology. A member noted that they are awaiting feedback from the USDA's Organic Policy Advisor about resources to whom the NOSB can submit research priorities that focus on handling materials and food ingredients. Since NIFA and NRCS focus on agricultural topics only, many of the handling specific research priorities are not appropriate for their research programs.
 - **Compliance, Accreditation, & Certification (CACS)** - CBe. The CACS continues to work on the Soil Conservation document, which will be its only fall project. A representative from the NRCS was invited to participate on the July CACS call to provide some feedback. The lead and CACS Chair provided a brief summary of the draft document, members discussed it and provided feedback. Some specific topics in the document include crop rotation, soil conservation practices, and collaboration and information sharing. The NOP encouraged the CACS to look at the questions that were provided in the memo requesting that the NOSB take on this project.
 - **Crops (CS)** - ZS. Crops is working through 2017 sunset materials and have completed several votes. The Subcommittee is also looking at petitions and 2018 sunset materials and determining the need for TRs. The Chair noted the recent meeting with the EPAs Safer Choice Program (SCP). Currently the discussions are focused on the logistics of coordinating the two entities (The SCP and the NOSB) and in support of that the NOSB Chair was asked to join the Inerts Working group.
 - **Livestock (LS)** - TF. The LS is working to review the 2017 sunset materials, and has scheduled several additional meetings to do so. The LS also has on their work agenda a few petitioned materials, a potential addition to the AQ legacy document which was discussed at the April 2015

NOSB meeting, and a request for the formation of an organic poultry working group or task force.

- **Policy Development (PDS)** - TF. The PDS postponed the last call to June 30 while the NOP made revisions to the draft PPM. There are a couple of topics that are not currently in the PPM the PDS will work on: These projects will focus on minority opinion procedures and the appropriate timing and process for sharing work products. The goal is to have a document ready for review at the fall 2015 meeting. A member asked how to handle minority opinions until the new guidance is written and accepted. The PDS Chair noted that currently the PPM allows for minority opinions and the specific process of how it is incorporated into a proposal is up to the discretion of each of the Subcommittee chairs. The Chair welcomed feedback from the members.
- **Additional Items.**
 - HA noted that he will be able to participate on calls from this point forward.
 - A member asked about the status of the rules on animal welfare, and aquaculture. The NOP noted that the aquaculture rule is in departmental clearance and is moving forward, and the animal welfare rule is undergoing a regulatory impact analysis. This document was deemed to have significant economic impacts.
- **The meeting was adjourned**

[Previous ES Notes](#)

Future call schedule:

- May 8, 2015 1:00 ET
- June 12, 2015 1:00 ET
- July 10, 2015 1:00 ET
- August 14, 2015 1:00 ET
- September 11, 2015 1:00 ET
- October 9, 2015 1:00 ET
- November 13, 2015 1:00 ET
- December 11, 2015 1:00 ET

Fall 2015 Milestones	Target date
NOP - Complete Fall 2015 NOSB meeting tentative agenda	July 8, 2015
NOSB - Fall 2015 proposals due to NOP	Aug 26, 2015
NOP - Post proposals, Publish FRN, Open public comment	Sep 8, 2015
Discuss work agendas on ES call	Sep 11, 2015
Public comment closes	Oct 5, 2015
Work agendas finalized on ES call (last call before fall meeting)	Oct 8, 2015
NOP - Send compiled public comments to NOSB	Oct 13, 2015
Fall 2015 NOSB meeting - Stowe, VT	Oct 26 - 29, 2015