

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

