

## The Organic Corner

*Briefs from the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP)*

### Program Handbook Update

The [National Organic Program](#) has released an updated version of the [Program Handbook](#), a resource to clarify existing Federal organic requirements and offer best practices. The NOP also released three instruction documents for the NOP Program Handbook outlining sampling procedures and laboratory criteria for parties conducting residue testing for organically produced agricultural products under the requirements at § 205.670 of the NOP Regulations:

- [Sampling procedures for residue testing](#)
- [NOP target pesticide list](#)
- [Laboratory selection criteria for pesticide residue testing](#)

### Financial Information available

The NOP published updated financial information in February on the Agricultural Management Assistance and National Organic Certification Cost Share Programs. You can download the data from the [NOP website](#).

### NOP Regulations under Review

The USDA announced on February 25, 2011 that it is reviewing the National Organic Program regulations (7 CFR part 205) concerning their impact on small businesses. AMS invites the public to provide written comments, views, opinions, and other information specific to the impact of the NOP regulations on small businesses.

Interested persons can send comments by visiting <http://www.regulations.gov> (reference document number AMS-NOP-11-0005; NOP-11-01) or by mailing written comments to Toni Strother, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, National Organic Program, USDA-AMS-NOP, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 2646-So., Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250. Comments must be received by April 26, 2011.

### Two Former Certifiers No Longer Accredited

The USDA announced March 2, 2011 that two former organic certifiers, Certified Organic, Inc. (COI) and Guaranteed Organic Certification Agency (GOCA), are no longer accredited to the National Organic Program (NOP).

### National Organic Standards Board's (NOSB) spring meeting

- April 26-29, 2011
- Red Lion Hotel on Fifth Avenue, 1415 5th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101-2313

The National Organic Standards Board invites you to reserve five-minute public comments slots on Tuesday, April 26 or Thursday, April 28 in Seattle, Washington ([reserve online](#)). You are also invited to submit and read public comments on the NOSB's agenda items and other related topics.

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