



**Ensuring Upper Midwest
Organic Integrity Since 2002**



**MINNESOTA CROP IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION**



We are proud to be a USDA National Organic Program (NOP) accredited certifier since 2002.

We are members of the Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA).

We are located in Minnesota and focus on the Upper Midwest.

For more information contact:

**Minnesota Crop Improvement
Association
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Organic Certification Services



**Local
Responsive
Committed to Service**



Organic Livestock Production

Organic agriculture is a production system that seeks to promote the efficient cycling of resources, ecological health and the conservation of biodiversity, while also giving producers access to new markets.

Organic livestock producers must develop management strategies that attempt to prevent problems from occurring by ensuring optimal health. These strategies take into account the natural behavior of the animal and place importance on meeting nutritional requirements at all stages of life. If ailments do occur, organic producers must use products allowed for treatment. These products include some botanicals, microbials and vitamins.

Natural Behavior of Livestock

Under the National Organic Program, livestock must be given access to the outdoors such that the species is able to express natural behaviors. Ruminant livestock are required to receive at least 30% of their dry matter intake from grazing over the course of the grazing season, which must be at least 120 days. Poultry, hogs, rabbits or other livestock that are not ruminants must also be given access to the outdoors. Some producers use moveable pens to provide some shelter and protection to smaller animals such as poultry and rabbits while still allowing outdoor access. Chickens, in fact, can obtain up to 20% of their nutritional requirements through foraging.

Organic Livestock Certification

- Organic livestock producers must maintain living conditions that accommodate the natural behavior of livestock, including access to the outdoors.
- Health problems that occur must be treated with NOP approved products.
- Antibiotics are not allowed for use on organic livestock.
- Vaccines are allowed.
- Meat animals must be managed organically from the last third of gestation, poultry from the second day of life.
- An existing dairy herd may go through a one-year transition using organic management in order to produce organic milk.
- With restrictions, non-organic breeding stock may be used.



Steps to Organic Certification

1. **Apply.** Contact MCIA Organic for an application packet or download the *Organic Certification Handbook* and application forms on-line at www.mciaorganic.org.
2. **Read and Submit.** Read the *Organic Certification Handbook* and when ready, submit the application and fees to MCIA. The application will become your Organic System Plan (OSP). Contact MCIA if you have any questions.
3. **Review.** MCIA Organic will review the application and may contact you for additional information.
4. **Inspection.** MCIA Organic will arrange for an inspector to schedule an on-site inspection. You or a person knowledgeable about your operation must be present. The inspector will complete an inspection report, which will be sent to MCIA and to you.
5. **Review.** MCIA Organic will review the inspection report to ensure compliance with the NOP standards. There may be additional questions for you or for the inspector.
6. **Certificate.** After all final issues are satisfied and all fees are paid, MCIA Organic will issue an Organic Certificate for the products grown or processed.