



SHEEP SHEET

by **Dr. Lyle G. McNeal, Executive Director, Sheep & Wool Specialist**

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Natural and/or organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony. "Organic" is a labeling term that denotes products produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act. "Natural" is a labeling term that does not have any specific legislation. The principal guidelines for organic production are to use materials and practices that enhance the ecological balance of natural systems and that integrate the parts of the farming/ranching system into an ecological whole. Organic agriculture practices cannot ensure that products are completely free of residues; however, methods are used to minimize pollution from air, soil, and water. Organic food handlers, processors, and retailers adhere to standards that maintain the integrity of organic agricultural products. The primary goal of organic agriculture is to optimize the health and productivity of interdependent communities of soil life, plants, animals, and people.



LIVESTOCK:

Livestock grown for the production of organically or naturally grown food or fiber may be purchased from any source.

Options for Marketing Sheep Products

Sheepdex G-12

GRAZING LAND and/or PASTURE:

Pasture land on which livestock are grazed or pastured shall be certified as transitional or organic and shall be produced under all requirements defined. It can require up to three years for agricultural lands to become certified.

FIBER:

Fiber or fiber by-products sold as organically produced shall be raised from such time such stock is brought onto a farm or field certified as transitional or organic and fed 100% certified organically produced feeds and feed supplements for a minimum of 12 months.

FEED:

Feed fed to livestock directly or as a supplement to feed rations shall be certified as organically produced, processed, and handled under all requirements defined.

A livestock producer shall not use feeds containing:

- hormones, antibiotics, or other prohibited growth promoters
- plastic pellets for roughage
- manure
- urea
- materials listed as prohibited in the National Listing

Feed additives fed to livestock shall meet the following requirements:

- natural feed additives shall be from any source, provided the additive is not categorized as prohibited on the National List.
- synthetic feed additives may be used, provided that the additive is categorized as allowed or restricted in the National List,
- synthetic vitamin and mineral supplements are permitted for documented deficiencies under the general supervision of a licensed veterinarian as a restricted practice.

"Feed availability emergency" is a temporary

shortage of certified organically produced feed.

HEALTH:

A producer shall not use growth promoters or hormones, whether implanted, ingested, or injected including antibiotics and trace elements used to stimulate growth.

A producer shall not:

- use sub-therapeutic doses of antibiotics
- use synthetic anthelmintic (internal parasites) on a routine basis, or
- administer medication, other than vaccinations, in the absence of illness
- a producer may vaccinate stock for endemic diseases including, but not limited to, those required by state or federal law.

Disease treatment requiring applications of an external or internal antibiotic shall be diagnosed, prescribed and applied by or under the general supervision of a licensed veterinarian as defined by the Food and Drug Administration compliance Policy Guide #7125.06, and include separation or isolation of treated stock from the organic herd during treatment, including the FDA recommended withdrawal period.

Fiber produced from treated stock may not be harvested for 45 days or twice the FDA recommended withdrawal period, whichever is longer.

Parasite management may use:

- quarantine and fecal exams for all incoming livestock
- periodic fecal exams and culling seriously infected individuals
- adequate pasture rotation and pasture management
- maintaining clean facilities and proper manure management
- vector and intermediate host control using biological controls
- vector and intermediate host control using materials categorized as allowed or allowed with restrictions in the National List.

PROCESSING:

Processing of organically produced or transitional meat animals or fibers shall be in accordance with the rules established.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)

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