

## OLPS Organic Livestock and Poultry Standard Quick Reference Guide

*This guide provides quick reference tools for inspectors and reviewers relating to changes under OLPS. The implementation date is **January 2, 2025** for all organic operations, except:*

- 1. Layer operations certified before **January 2, 2025**, must comply with the §§ 205.241(c)(2), (c)(4), and (c)(5), concerning outdoor stocking density requirements and soil and vegetation requirements, by **January 2, 2029**.*
- 2. Broiler operations certified before **January 2, 2025**, must comply with §§ 205.241(b)(10), (c)(2), and (c)(6), concerning indoor and outdoor stocking density requirements and soil and vegetation requirements, by **January 2, 2029**.*
- 3. Poultry operations and poultry operations that are certified before **January 2, 2025** must comply with § 205.241(b)(4), concerning poultry house exit area requirements, by **January 2, 2029**.*

### Applicable Rule Sections and Impact under OLPS:

7CFR Part 205	Section Title	Impact under OLPS
§205.2	<a href="#">Definitions</a>	17 New Terms
§205.236	<a href="#">Origin of Livestock</a>	NO CHANGE
§205.237	<a href="#">Livestock Feed</a>	NO CHANGE
§205.238	<a href="#">Livestock care and production practices standard</a>	Additions
§205.239	<a href="#">Mammalian and non-avian livestock living conditions</a>	Additions
§205.240	<a href="#">Pasture Practice Standard</a>	NO CHANGE
§205.241	<a href="#">Avian Living Conditions</a>	NEW SECTION
§205.242	<a href="#">Transport and Slaughter</a>	NEW SECTION
§205.691	<a href="#">Severability</a>	NEW SECTION



**§205.2 Definitions.** New Terms under OLPS:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beak trimming           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mulesing                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caponization            | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-ambulatory                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cattle wattling         | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors or outdoor space       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> De- beaking             | <input type="checkbox"/> Perch                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> De-snooding             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pullet                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dubbing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious (or ritual) slaughter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indoors or indoor space | <input type="checkbox"/> Stocking density                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Induced molting         | <input type="checkbox"/> Toe clipping                    |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation                      |

**§ 205.236 Origin of Livestock**

No changes under OLPS. [Origin of Livestock Final Rule of 2022](#) (OOL) had a compliance date of April 5, 2023. Primary change under OOL includes mandatory individual animal traceability from birth to death (including slaughter), and prohibition on transition after initial operation transition for dairy animals. See OOL for additional information.

**§ 205.237 Livestock Feed**

No changes under OLPS. Last change occurred under OOL, referencing allowance for breeding stock feeding of their offspring during nursing period. *Breeding stock must be under organic management during nursing period, including feed.*

**§ 205.238 Livestock care and production practices standard.**

Key Changes under OLPS summarized:

**I. Animal Sourcing & Management (§ 205.238(a)):**

- Suitability & Care:
- Producers must select species suitable for site conditions.
- Appropriate housing and sufficient feed rations (meeting nutritional needs) are mandatory.
- Verify: Certifying agents must confirm breed suitability, housing, and diet adequacy during inspections.

**II. Physical Alterations (§ 205.238(a)(5)): Restricted and Prohibited Sections Follow**

- Purpose: Only for identification or animal safety.
- Timing: Must be done at a young age for the species.
- Method: Minimize pain and stress (during & after).
- Performer: Only by individuals capable of minimizing stress/pain (training/experience).



### III. Restricted Alterations (§ 205.238(a)(5)(i)):

- Needle teeth clipping & Tail docking (swine): NOT routine.
- Allowed ONLY IF: Documented harm occurred AND documented alternative steps failed.
- Example: Excessive needle teeth scarring on sow/piglets or tail biting on piglets.
- Documentation: Must show failure of alternatives (e.g., cross-fostering, enrichment, rooting vegetation).
- If performed: Teeth clipping limited to top third of each needle tooth.

### IV. Prohibited Alterations (§ 205.238(a)(5)(ii)):

- Avian Species: De-beaking, de-snooding, caponization, dubbing, toe clipping (chickens), toe clipping (turkeys unless infra-red at hatchery), beak clipping after 10 days of age.
- Mammalian Species: Tail docking of cattle, wattling of cattle, face branding of cattle, tail docking of sheep shorter than distal end of caudal fold, mulesing of sheep.

### V. Surgical Procedures (§ 205.238(a)(7)):

- For illness/injury treatment.
- Must minimize pain, stress, and suffering.
- Synthetic anesthetics/analgesics/sedatives: Only if on National List (§ 205.603(a) & (b)).

### VI. Lameness Monitoring (§ 205.238(a)(8)):

- Producers must actively monitor lameness in herds/flocks.
- Timely & appropriate treatment/mitigation strategies required.
- Lameness plan in OSP (Organic System Plan).

### VII. Medications & Treatments (§ 205.238(b) & (c))

#### Allowed Medications (§ 205.238(b)):

- Synthetic medications (National List § 205.603) for pain/suffering alleviation OR when preventive practices/biologics are inadequate.
- Parasiticides (National List § 205.603) for breeder stock, dairy, fiber animals.
- ALWAYS follow all limitations & withdrawal periods.
  - Milk & Withdrawal Periods (§ 205.238(c)(1)):
    - Milk from animals treated with National List substance with withdrawal period:
    - CANNOT be sold/labeled as organic during withdrawal.
    - CAN be fed to organic calves on the same operation during withdrawal.



**Hormones (§ 205.238(c)(3)):**

- PROHIBITED: Synthetic or non-synthetic hormones for growth, production, or reproductive purposes.
- Allowed ONLY IF: Used as medical treatments AND on the National List (e.g., oxytocin).
- Withholding Treatment is PROHIBITED (§ 205.238(c)(8)). Animals must be treated or humanely euthanized to minimize pain or suffering. An operation may not withhold a humane treatment or euthanasia to preserve animal status as organic.

**Treatment Options:**

- **Retain organic status:** Any allowed natural substance or synthetic medication on National List.
- **Lose organic status of animal but maintain organic compliance:** MUST administer treatment even if animal loses organic status.
- **Euthanasia:** Acceptable ONLY when animal suffering cannot be healed by other treatments (even those causing loss of organic status).

**Treatment Records (§ 205.238(c)(9)):**

- Producers must identify and record treatment of sick/injured animals in health records.
- Certifier Review: Verify individual identification of treated animals and compliance with regulations during inspections.

**VIII. Induced Molting (§ 205.238(c)(10)):**

- PROHIBITED in poultry production.
- Definition: Any artificially induced molting (e.g., feed restriction, severe light manipulation).

**IX. Parasite Control & Euthanasia**

**Parasite Control Plan (§ 205.238(d)):**

- Organic operations must have a plan to minimize internal parasite problems.
- Includes: Preventive measures (pasture management, fecal monitoring) and emergency measures.
- Certifier Approval: Plan must be approved as part of the OSP.

**Euthanasia (§ 205.238(e)):**

- For sick/injured livestock with irreversible disease/injury.
- Written plans required (§ 205.238(e)(1)).



- Prohibited Methods (§ 205.238(e)(2)): Suffocation, manual blows to head (blunt instrument/force trauma), equipment that crushes neck (killing pliers, Burdizzo clamps).
- Recommended Method: Consistent with most recent AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals.
- Post-Euthanasia: Producers must carefully examine livestock to ensure death (§ 205.238(e)(3)).
- Note: Emergency use of non-organic methods by government agency does not result in loss of certification.

---

### § 205.239 Mammalian and non-avian livestock living conditions.

Key Changes under OLPS summarized:

#### I. General & Foundational Changes

##### Separate Sections for Species:

- **§ 205.239:** Mammalian & Non-Avian Livestock (e.g., cattle, swine, sheep, goats, honeybees).
- **§ 205.241 (NEW):** Avian Species (chickens, turkeys, etc.).
- **Why:** Acknowledges different physiologies and husbandry needs.
- **Note:** Applicable sections of § 205.239 may apply to other "livestock" per § 205.2 (e.g., honeybees). Aquatic animals are NOT included.

##### Bedding (§ 205.239(a)(3)):

- **No change:** Must be appropriate, clean, and dry.
- **Organic Roughages:** Must be organically produced/handled by certified operations (exception: transitioning dairy producers using 3rd-year transition land).

#### II. Key Living Condition Updates

##### Year-Round Access & Wellbeing (§ 205.239(a)(1)):

- All animals **must have year-round access** to outdoors, shade, shelter, exercise, fresh air, clean water, and direct sunlight.
- Access to outdoors may be restricted as described in §205.239(b) and (c).
- **Suitability:** Conditions must be suitable to the species, life stage, climate, and environment.
- **Prohibited:** Continuous total confinement indoors for ANY animal.
- **Prohibited:** Continuous total confinement of ruminants in yards, feeding pads, or feedlots.



### III. Shelter Design & Use (§ 205.239(a)(4) & (a)(4)(iv)):

- **Space & Behavior:** Must provide sufficient space for animals to lie down, stand up, fully stretch limbs, and express normal behavior over a 24-hour period.
- **Environmental Protection:** Must provide appropriate temperature, ventilation, and air circulation to protect animals from extreme weather (cold, heat, precipitation, wind).
- **Injury Reduction:** Must be designed/managed to reduce potential for injury.
- **Indoor Bedding/Resting Areas:** Must be sufficiently large, comfortable, clean, dry, and prevent lesions.
- **Outdoor Shelter:** For animals on pasture/range without traditional barns, natural forms of shelter (e.g., trees) are acceptable if described in OSP.
- **Temporary Limited Movement (Stalls):**
  - Allowed for **short periods** (milking, feeding, well-being).
    - Stalls can limit turning (e.g., for manure collection), but animals must have complete freedom of movement during significant parts of the day (grazing, loafing, social behavior).
    - **PROHIBITED:** Gestation crates, farrowing crates, or other individual confinement that prevents lying down, turning around, standing up, stretching limbs, and normal behavior.
    - **Tie-Stall/Stanchion Barns (Cattle):** Acceptable **IF** animals are not tied for more than 24 hours and can still lie down, stand up, stretch, and exhibit normal behaviors. Operations must describe practices in OSP.

### Outdoor Space & Vegetation (§ 205.239(a)(12)):

- Unencumbered access to outdoors **year-round** (unless justified temporary confinement).
- **If outdoor space includes soil:** Vegetative cover must be maintained (appropriate for season, climate, geography, species, stage).
- Ruminants **must have access to pasture** during the grazing season.
- Swine are **not required** to have soil/vegetation access, but if provided for rooting, appropriate cover must be maintained.

### Species-Specific Provisions

#### Dairy Young Stock (§ 205.239(a)(7)):

- May be **individually housed until weaning is complete**.
- Pens must allow turning, lying down, stretching, getting up, resting, grooming.
- Pens **must allow visual, olfactory, and auditory contact** with other animals.
- **Post-Weaning:** Individual confinement for this reason is no longer allowed (other temporary confinement reasons from § 205.239(c) may apply, e.g., for young dairy cattle up to 6 months prior to rumen development).



#### Swine Housing (§ 205.239(a)(8), (9), (10), (11)):

- **Group Housing Required**, with specific exceptions:
  - Sows: Individually at farrowing & suckling
    - **PROHIBITED:** gestation & farrowing crates
  - Boars: May be individually housed.
  - **Confinement:** Aggression/Illness: Individual housing for multiple documented instances of aggression or illness recovery (after attempts to mitigate behavior through other means).
  - **PROHIBITED:** Flat decks or piglet cages.
- **Rooting Materials:** Must be provided at all times, except during farrowing and suckling.
- **Feeding Stalls:** For group-housed swine, individual feeding stalls can be fewer than the number of animals, provided all are routinely fed within a 24-hour period (accommodates robotic feeders).

#### IV. Clarified Temporary Confinement Reasons

##### Breeding (§ 205.239(b)(7)):

- Confinement allowed **only for natural breeding or artificial insemination**.
- **Prohibited:** Confinement to observe estrus or to confirm pregnancy after breeding.

##### Youth Livestock Projects (§ 205.239(b)(8)):

- Allows temporary confinement for youth projects (e.g., 4-H, FFA) for up to 1 week prior to event, through the event, and up to 24 hours after returning home.
- Animals must maintain continuous organic management (including feed).
- **EXCEPTION:** Sales facilities for these events (e.g., fairgrounds) **do NOT need to be certified organic** for the participating animals to be sold as organic, if all other organic management practices are met.

#### V. Ruminant Slaughter Stock Finishing (§ 205.239(d))

- **Feeding Flexibility:** Removes requirement for simultaneous feeding during the finishing period (allows for feeding without crowding or competition).
- **Duration:** Finishing period remains limited to 1/5 of the animal's life or 120 days, whichever is shorter.



**§ 205.240 Pasture practice standard.**

No changes under OLPS. Last change occurred in 2010.

**§ 205.241 Avian living conditions. NEW SECTION**

**I. General Requirements (§ 205.241(a))**

- **Applies to All Organic Avian Species:** Chickens, turkeys, geese, quail, pheasants, and any other birds raised for organic eggs, meat, or products.
- **Well-being & Natural Behaviors:** Operations must provide living conditions accommodating these, including:
- **Year-round access to:** Outdoors, soil, shade, shelter, exercise areas, fresh air, direct sunlight, clean drinking water.
- **New Additions:** Materials for **dust bathing** and **adequate space to escape aggressive behaviors**.
- **Prohibited: Continuous total confinement of any animal indoors.**
- **Suitability:** Living conditions must be appropriate to the species, its stage of life, the climate, and the environment.

**II. Indoor Space Requirements (§ 205.241(b))**

Topic	Requirement	
Ammonia Levels	<20 PPM	When ammonia exceeds 20 PPM, measures must be implemented to reduce. May not exceed 25 PPM
Lighting	<16 hours per day	Must have 8 hours of continuous darkness, decrease lighting before darkness. May not use spectrum of light to induce molting, increase growth rate or feed intake
Outdoor Access	Year Round	Only restricted for allowed reasons under 205.241(d)
Exit to outdoors	1 linear foot per 360 birds	Alternative plan may be approved by Certifier;  21 CFR part 118- 3000 or more laying hens- may establish barriers to animals/ wildlife



Indoor Space	
Perches ( Layers of Gallus gallus)	6 inches per bird, all birds must have space to perch, except aviary housing, which allows for 55% of birds to have 6 inches to perch.
Scratching and Dust Bathing	All birds must have access to areas for scratching or bathing
Slatted/ Mesh Flooring	Minimum 15% of flooring must be solid with litter to allow for bathing without crowding (non mobile housing)
Porches	Can be counted in calculation of indoor space if birds always have access. Cannot count if birds are excluded from porches during confinement events.
Square Feet Requirements	Based on production type and species

**Sufficiency & Movement (§ 205.241(b)(1)):**

- Indoor space must be **spacious enough for all birds to move freely, stretch both wings simultaneously, stand normally, and engage in natural behaviors.**
- **Prohibited:** Cages or environments that limit free movement.
- Must allow for natural behaviors like dust bathing, scratching, and perching.

**Ammonia Levels (§ 205.241(b)(2)):**

- **Monitoring:** Producers must **monitor ammonia levels weekly** at bird head height.
- **Action Level:** If levels exceed **20 ppm**, producers must implement additional practices and increase monitoring to reduce levels.
- **Maximum Level:** Ammonia levels **must NOT exceed 25 ppm.**

**Indoor Lighting (§ 205.241(b)(3)):**

- **Artificial Light:** May be provided for **up to 16 continuous hours per day.**
- **Darkness:** **At least 8 hours of continuous darkness per day** required (unless geographic location naturally prevents it, then as much as feasible).
- **Gradual Lowering:** Artificial light **should be lowered gradually** to encourage roosting.
- **Prohibited:** Manipulating light spectrum to increase feed intake or growth rates.
- **Applies to:** All fully feathered birds.



#### Exit Areas (Doors) (§ 205.241(b)(4)):

- **Purpose:** Enable all birds to easily access both indoor and outdoor areas.
- **Standard:** Provide **at least 1 linear foot of exit area space for every 360 birds.** (No less than 1 linear foot for flocks under 360 birds).
- **Flexibility:** Operations can comply with less space if they **document in OSP** how all birds get ready outdoor access and **certifier verifies** (e.g., time-lapse video, timestamped photos, on-site inspection).
- **Distribution:** Exit areas must be **appropriately distributed and sized.**
- **FDA Egg Safety Rule (21 CFR Part 118):** Producers must also comply with FDA biosecurity measures (preventing stray poultry, wild birds, etc., from entering houses). Consult FDA August 2022 guidance for compliance while providing outdoor access.

#### Perches (§ 205.241(b)(5)):

- **Chicken Layers:** Required at a rate of **6 inches per bird** for all housing.
- **What Counts:** May include alighting rail in front of nest boxes.
- **What Doesn't Count: Floors (including slatted floors) cannot be counted as perch space.**
- **All Layers:** Must be able to perch at the same time, EXCEPT in aviary housing.
- **Aviary Housing:** Requires **6 inches of perch space for 55% of flock** (i.e., 3.3 inches per bird), as birds can use vertical space to escape aggression.
- **Not Required for:** Broilers, meat birds, or non-chicken layers.

#### Natural Behaviors (Scratching/Dust Bathing) & Litter (§ 205.241(b)(6)):

- **Non-Mobile Housing:** Indoor space must include areas for scratching and dust bathing.
- **Mobile Housing:** May provide scratching and dust bathing areas **outside** (allowing for 100% slatted/mesh indoor flooring).
- **Litter:** For non-mobile housing, wood shavings or straw must be provided indoors. If consumed by animals, must be organic. Manure alone is not sufficient.
- **Litter Maintenance:** Litter must be **maintained in a dry condition** (topping off allowed). Wet litter is a major welfare concern (ammonia, lameness, pests, disease).

#### Flooring for Non-Mobile Housing (§ 205.241(b)(7)):

- Houses with slatted/mesh floors must provide **at least 15% solid flooring** indoors for scratching/dust bathing without crowding.
- **Exempt:** Mobile housing.



### III. Minimum Indoor Space for Chickens (*Gallus gallus*) (§ 205.241(b)(8)-(10)):

#### Two Metrics for Compliance (Producer's Choice):

- **Maximum Pounds of Bird per Square Foot (Weight-Based):**  
Accommodates different breeds/ages. (e.g., larger/heavier birds require more space per bird).
- **Minimum Square Feet per Bird (Simpler):** Requires only bird count and area; generally requires more space per bird than weight-based.

---

## New Section

### § 205.241 Avian living conditions.

- (8) For layers (*Gallus gallus*), indoor stocking density must meet one or both of the following rates, expressed in different terms.
- (i) Mobile housing: not to exceed **4.5 pounds per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 1.5 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.
  - (ii) Aviary housing: not to exceed **4.5 pounds per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 1.5 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.
  - (iii) Slatted/mesh floor housing: not to exceed **3.75 pounds per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 1.8 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.
  - (iv) Floor litter housing: not to exceed **3.0 pounds per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 2.2 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.



---

## New Section

### § 205.241 Avian living conditions.

- (9) For pullets (*Gallus gallus*), indoor stocking density must not exceed **3.0 pounds of bird per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 1.7 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.
- (10) For broilers (*Gallus gallus*), indoor stocking density must not exceed **5.0 pounds of bird per square foot**; or, alternatively, a rate of **at least 2.0 square feet per bird** will comply with the requirement.
- (11) Indoor space includes flat areas available to birds, excluding nest boxes.
- (12) Indoor space may include enclosed porches and lean-to type structures (e.g., screened in, roofed) as long as the birds always have access to the space, including during temporary confinement events. If birds do not have continuous access to the porch during temporary confinement events, this space must not be considered indoors.



#### IV. Outdoor Space Requirements (§ 205.241(c))

##### Design & Access (§ 205.241(c)(1)):

- Outdoor space must be designed to **promote and encourage daily outdoor access for all birds.**
- Provide outdoor access at an **early age.**
- Outdoor access may only be temporarily restricted per § 205.241(d).

##### Soil & Vegetation (§ 205.241(c)(2)):

- **Minimum 75% soil** in outdoor areas.
- Soil portion must include **vegetative cover.**
- **Maintenance:** Vegetative cover must be maintained to **prevent harborage for rodents and pests** (e.g., mowing).
- **Maximum 25%:** May be gravel, concrete, or other non-soil surfaces.

##### Shade (§ 205.241(c)(3)):

- May be provided by trees, shade structures, or other appropriate objects.
- Structures not meeting "outdoors" definition cannot be counted as outdoor space.

##### Minimum Outdoor Space for Chickens (*Gallus gallus*) (§ 205.241(c)(4)-(6)):

- **Two Metrics for Compliance (Producer's Choice):** Same as indoor space (Weight-Based or Square Feet per Bird).
- **Calculation:** Based on total flock size, not just birds currently outdoors.
- **Unenclosed Roofed Areas:** Can count as outdoor space IF birds can freely move between them and other outdoor space (e.g., no walls). Enclosed porches are NOT outdoor space.



Outdoor Space	Outdoor Space Required	Per (either requirement complies)
Layers	1 ft <sup>2</sup>	2.25 lbs of bird
	3 ft <sup>2</sup>	Bird
Pullet	1 ft <sup>2</sup>	3 lbs of bird
	1.7 ft <sup>2</sup>	Bird
Broiler	1 ft <sup>2</sup>	5 lbs of bird
	2 ft <sup>2</sup>	Bird

#### V. Temporary Confinement Indoors (§ 205.241(d))

- **Documentation Required:** Reason, duration, and flocks confined (sufficient for certifier review).
- **Allowed Reasons:**
  - **Inclement Weather (§ 205.241(d)(1)):**
    - Violent weather, or temperatures (high/low) or excessive precipitation causing **physical harm to livestock**.
    - **Does NOT include:** Sub-optimal weather that reduces growth/production.
    - **Temperature Thresholds:** Below **32°F** or above **90°F** are generally considered inclement. However, other violent weather (e.g., extreme wind) within this range also justifies confinement.
    - **Not Required:** Confinement simply because temperatures are outside these thresholds if birds are not harmed (e.g., sunny 30°F Day).
  - **Bird's Stage of Life (§ 205.241(d)(2)):**
    - **Chicken Broilers:** Through **4 weeks of age**.
    - **Chicken Pullets:** Through **16 weeks of age**.
    - **Other Avian Species:** Until **fully feathered**.
    - Any confinement beyond "fully feathered" must meet other D. reasons.



- **Jeopardized Health, Safety, or Well-being (§ 205.241(d)(3)):**
  - Requires **robust justification and documentation** (in OSP and records).
  - **"Temporary"**: Limited time only (e.g., overnight, during a storm, illness), not permanent or lasting.
  - **NOT allowed for:** Avoiding all predation, maximizing growth/production.
  - Consult animal health officials.
  
- **Risk to Soil or Water Quality (§ 205.241(d)(4)):**
  - To prevent damage (e.g., after heavy rainfall).
  - Must be **temporary** and documented.
  - **NOT allowed for:** Reseeding outdoor areas.
  - Frequent/prolonged confinement for this reason is not permitted and may indicate OSP failure.
  
- **Preventive Healthcare or Treatment (§ 205.241(d)(5)):**
  - Brief confinement for vaccination, individual medical treatment.
  - Life stages or egg laying are not considered illness for confinement.
  
- **Sorting, Shipping, & Sales (§ 205.241(d)(6)):**
  - Birds must remain under continuous organic management (e.g., organic feed).
  - Confinement no longer than necessary for these activities.
  
- **Training Pullets for Nest Boxes (§ 205.241(d)(7)):**
  - Maximum of **5 weeks over the bird's life**.
  - Must be no longer than needed to establish behavior.
  
- **Youth Exhibitions (4-H, FFA) (§ 205.241(d)(8)):**
  - Temporary indoor confinement allowed during event.
  - **Exception:** Sales facilities for these events **do not need to be certified organic** for the animals to be sold as organic (if all other organic management is met).

#### VI. Manure & Outdoor Space Management (§ 205.241(e))

- **Manure:** Must be managed to **prevent contamination** of crops, soil, or water (nutrients, heavy metals, pathogens).
- **Outdoor Space:** Must be managed to **prevent risk to soil or water quality**.
- **Compliance:** Must comply with all other governmental agency environmental quality requirements.



## § 205.242 Transportation and slaughter. NEW SECTION

- **Purpose:** Addresses animal care during transport and throughout the slaughter process, including prior to slaughter and slaughter methods.
- **Scope:** Applies to the **care of live animals** up to the time of slaughter.
- **Structure:** Divided into three subsections: Transportation, Mammalian Slaughter, and Avian Slaughter.
- **Overall Goal:** Ensure a high level of animal welfare and avoid mistreatment during transport and at the slaughter plant, aligning with existing animal welfare standards and laws where possible.

---

### I. Transport Requirements (§ 205.242(a))

#### Identification (§ 205.242(a)(1)):

- Organic animals **must be clearly identified during transport** to maintain traceability and organic integrity.
- Flexibility in how identity is maintained.

#### Fitness for Transport (§ 205.242(a)(2)):

- All livestock must be **fit for transport** to buyers, auction facilities, or slaughter facilities (does not apply to on-farm transport).
- **Calves (§ 205.242(a)(2)(i)):** Must have a **dry navel cord** and be able to **stand and walk without assistance**.
- **Prohibited Transport (§ 205.242(a)(2)(ii)):** **Seriously crippled and non-ambulatory animals** cannot be transported for sale or slaughter. These animals must be treated until recovery or humanely euthanized if recovery is not possible.

#### Transportation Mode Standards (§ 205.242(a)(3) & (4)):

- **Ventilation:** Trailer, truck, shipping container, etc., must provide **seasonally appropriate ventilation** to protect against cold or heat stress (airflow adjusted by season/temperature).
- **Bedding:** Required on trailer floors and in holding pens **as needed** to keep livestock clean, dry, and comfortable. Use must be **appropriate to the species and type of transport**.
  - If roughage, must be organically produced/handled.
  - **Not required for poultry crates.**

#### Long-Distance Transport Plans (§ 205.242(a)(5)):

- For transport **exceeding 8 hours** (from full loading to final destination arrival):
  - Operation must **describe in OSP how organic management and animal welfare will be maintained**.
  - This *may* include arrangements for water and organic feed, but it is not explicitly required in the rule.



**Emergency Plans (§ 205.242(a)(6)):**

- Operations transporting livestock to sale or slaughter **must have emergency plans** addressing problems reasonably possible during transport.
- **Examples:** How to maintain animal welfare, what to do if livestock escape, or how to euthanize injured animals.
- Shipping and/or receiving operations must include these plans in their OSPs.

---

**II. Mammalian Slaughter (§ 205.242(b))**

**FSIS Compliance Required (§ 205.242(b)(1)):**

- Certified organic slaughter facilities **must be in full compliance, as determined by FSIS, with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA)** of 1978 and FSIS's implementing regulations (9 CFR Parts 309 & 313).
- This covers humane handling from pens to slaughter, stunning effectiveness, and ante-mortem inspection.
- FSIS continuously inspects for HMSA compliance.

**Exotic Animals (§ 205.242(b)(2)):**

- Organic facilities slaughtering exotic animals (e.g., bison, deer) that voluntarily request FSIS inspection must comply with **9 CFR 352.10** (which aligns with 9 CFR Parts 309 & 313).

**Record Review by Certifying Agents (§ 205.242(b)(3)):**

- All certified organic slaughter facilities **must provide FSIS noncompliance records and corrective action records** related to humane handling and slaughter to certifying agents during inspections or upon request.
- This allows certifying agents to verify the facility's compliance and ensure corrective actions were taken (even if FSIS did not suspend services).
- Failure to take FSIS-required corrective actions within the specified time can lead to the **suspension of organic certification**.
- This applies regardless of whether the regulatory authority is federal, state, or foreign.

---

**III. Avian Slaughter (§ 205.242(c))**

**Compliance & Record Review (§ 205.242(c)(1) & (2)):**

- Avian slaughter facilities must comply with the **Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA)** and FSIS regulations regarding poultry slaughter, including the use of **good commercial practices** (9 CFR 381.65(b)).



- **"Good Commercial Practices":** Poultry must be handled humanely to minimize excitement, discomfort, and accidental injury, and to ensure thorough bleeding and cessation of breathing before scalding.
- Certifying agents can review FSIS noncompliance and corrective action records related to "good commercial practices" during inspections or upon request to verify compliance and good standing with FSIS.
- Failure to take FSIS-required corrective actions within the specified time can lead to the **suspension of organic certification**.

#### **Specific Standards for Exempt/Uncovered Poultry (§ 205.242(c)(3)):**

- For poultry exempt from or not covered by PPIA inspection (e.g., small-scale producers):
  - **Prohibited:** Hanging, carrying, or shackling any **lame birds by their legs** (§ 205.242(c)(3)(i)). Such birds must be euthanized or made insensible before shackling.
  - **Stunning Required (§ 205.242(c)(3)(ii)):** All birds hung or shackled on a **chain or automated slaughter system must be stunned prior to exsanguination** (bleeding).
    - *Does NOT prohibit:* Placing birds in killing cones without stunning (common for small-scale).
    - *Exception:* Religious (ritual) slaughter establishments are exempt from stunning prior to shackling/hoisting/cutting.
  - **Insensibility Before Scalding (§ 205.242(c)(3)(iii)):** All birds must be **irreversibly insensible prior to being placed in the scalding tank**.

---

#### **§ 205.691 Severability. NEW SECTION**

- **Purpose:** To clarify that if any part of the new Organic Livestock and Poultry Standard (OLPS) rule is challenged or invalidated in court, the **remaining parts of the rule will still stand and be enforceable**.
- **Independent Elements:** Each component of the OLPS rule (e.g., specific requirements for living conditions, transport, or slaughter) is designed to operate independently.
- **Maintaining Consistency:** USDA's intent is to **preserve the rule to the fullest possible extent** to continue ensuring consistent organic livestock standards, even if certain provisions or their application to specific livestock types are affected.
- **Benefit to Consumers:** The benefits provided by individual provisions for organic livestock products are not dependent on all other provisions or all livestock sectors being covered.

