

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** ["Manuel.ROSSI-PRieto@ec.europa.eu"](mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRieto@ec.europa.eu)  
**Cc:** [Joao.Onofre-Antas-Goncalves@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Joao.Onofre-Antas-Goncalves@ec.europa.eu); Courtney, Cheri - AMS; (b) (6)  
**Subject:** OWG meeting minutes  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 24, 2016 8:37:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [160202 OWG DRAFT minutes USDA review.doc](#)

---

Dear Manuel,

Please accept my apologies for the delay in sending comments. Attached are the draft minutes from the 2 February meeting of the Organic Working Group.

I appreciate your understanding.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!



## Note to the file

**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

### 1. Plurilateral arrangement

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

#### February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

#### April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

#### September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March, and equivalence discussions will follow in April. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. Not full equivalency expected US peer review audit proposed for early-2017 in Taiwan. Discussions will continue as US aims to ensure products access to Taiwan, and residue test and hold procedures at border are revised. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about Costa Rica's lack of investigation and enforcement on fraudulent pineapple products and bananas production.

## 5. Update on ETKO

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## 6. Update on EU review

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## 7. Update on US aquaculture standards

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has ~~been postponed~~ slowed but still plan to have a proposal out later in 2016.

## 8. AOB

OFIS irregularities: EC called ~~US~~ attention ~~again~~ to ~~the~~ delays in ~~replying~~ US responses to OFIS irregularities' notifications. ~~US is the country with the worst record in replying late. This is public information shared with EU Member States and could damage US image.~~ US expressed its willingness to ~~discuss~~ improve the situation. US subsequently met via teleconference with EU on February 22, 2016, to clarify EU expectations regarding irregularity closure, especially given the complexity and age of many of the EU irregularity findings. This meeting has resulted in significant progress in irregularity resolution by the US.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

Manuel ROSSI PRIETO

**From:** [Valeriya Staykova](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Benoit Dube](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 29 April draft minutes US-CFIA  
**Date:** Thursday, June 02, 2016 9:30:13 AM  
**Attachments:** [CFIA ACIA - #8203212 - v1 - 2016 APR 29 US CAN dvc minutes.DOCX](#)

---

Dear Renée,

Thank you for drafting the minutes and for the opportunity to comment. We have included our edits for your consideration in the attached copy of the minutes.

Regards,  
Valeriya

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor /Chef-auditeur  
Labelling, Organic Regime and Packaging/  
Étiquetage, Le Régime Bio et Emballage  
Consumer Protection and Market Fairness | Division de la protection des consommateurs et de l'équité des marchés  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency | Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments

1400 Merivale Road, Tower 2  
Floor 6, Room 252  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9  
Tel: (613) 773-6222, Fax 613-773 - 5961  
[valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca)

>>> "Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS" <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> 2016-05-16 1:26 PM >>>  
Dear Valeriya,

Please find attached the draft minutes from our recent teleconference held on 29 April 2016. I would appreciate it if you and your team could review these draft minutes and provide any edits in "track changes" mode.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

## Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group

### April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference

#### Time/Location:

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) @video.gc.ca
	OR	(b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) ## (b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca##(b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.

#### Purpose:

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
  - b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 positive pesticide residue sampling results. The NOP treats these requests for follow-up from the CFIA as complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
    - i. Another ~~branch program, the National Chemical Residues Monitoring Program, within the~~ CFIA (independent of the organic program) ~~performs~~ manages the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, ~~but The CFIA's organic program acknowledges that there are~~ issues with timeliness of notices and ~~accuracy-completeness~~ of sample information. ~~have occurred.~~
    - ii. The CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
  - c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
    - i. CFIA provided updated standards and a summary of the key changes side-by-side
    - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
  - d. Role of "observer" clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
  - e. NOP provided update on Mexico
- 3. Annual Reports
  - a. Annual reports shared
  - b. NOP: no questions at this time
  - c. CFIA: follow-up questions
    - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
    - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
      - 1. "Certifiers active by country" list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.
- 4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)
  - a. Proposed timeline:
    - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
    - ii. **ACTION:** Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)



- iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
    - iv. Spring 2017: On-site assessment of each program
    - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
  - b. Organic import certificates status update
    - i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement
    - ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
    - iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
    - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
5. USCOEA questions
- a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
  - b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement
6. USDA updates
- a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
    - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
    - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
  - b. Hydroponics
    - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
    - ii. Task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
    - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
  - c. Aquaculture
    - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
    - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
    - iii. [Aquaculture products are not under the scope of the current Organic Products Regulations in Canada.](#)
  - d. Pet Food

- i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
        - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate
      - e. Apiculture
        - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
7. CFIA updates
- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
    - i. New Executive Director, Food Import/Export and Consumer Protection Directorate: Lyzette Lamondin
    - ~~ii.~~ New National Manager Director, Strategies & Planning Consumer Protection and Market Fairness Division: Kathy Twardek
    - ~~iii.~~ New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
  - b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
  - c. ~~Reviewing comments currently~~ and expecting the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations to go ~~to out~~ pre-publication for public comment in Canada Gazette, Part I in late 2016.
    - i. Anticipating that aquaculture will ~~come~~ be included into the scope of the organic part of the regulations
    - ii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
  - d. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements
8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation
- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed that they provide material review services in Canada (per “Input Verification under COR” memo from CFIA). USDA wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation by USDA AMS is accepted (per CFIA memo). USDA AMS has granted ISO 17065 accreditation to OMRI for the scope of the National Organic Program and CAN/CGSB 32.311 Input Product Review.
  - b. CFIA confirmed that OMRI may be used by Canadian CBs for material review as an accepted third party (per CFIA memo requirement #3); CFIA will evaluate this situation further.

- c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.

#### 9. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).
- b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).
- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).

#### 10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

#### 11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea and the has assessed CFIA have assessed each other's system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The EU-CAN equivalency ~~with EU-CAN~~ was renewedexpanded; it now includes organic wine and Canadian multi-ingredient products containing imported ingredients.
- d. CFIA is currently working to extend the equivalency with CH currentlysimilarly as with the EU

#### 12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

#### 13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit ~~Dube~~Dubé  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Canada meeting, draft minutes  
**Date:** Thursday, May 05, 2016 1:49:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [2016 Apr 29 US CAN dvc draft minutes-mvm.docx](#)

---

Thanks Renee!  
Redline edits attached.  
Miles

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Monday, May 02, 2016 1:26 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>; Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS <Kelly.Strzelecki@fas.usda.gov>; Doherty, Julia <julia\_doherty@ustr.eop.gov>  
**Subject:** Canada meeting, draft minutes

Hi, Team!

Attached are the draft minutes from last Friday's teleconference with Canada. I would appreciate it if you could review these minutes and provide feedback (track changes mode).

I would like to send the minutes to Canada by the end of the week if possible. Thanks!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

**Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Time/Location:**

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	@video.gc.ca
	OR	(b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6) (b) (6)
	OR	## (b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca## (b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Ente (b) (6) "# when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Ente (b) (6) "# when prompted.

**Purpose:**

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
  - b.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION**: CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
- b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
  - i. Another branch in CFIA (independent of the organic program) performs the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, but issues with timeliness of notices and accuracy of sample information have occurred.
  - ii. CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
- c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
  - i. CFIA provided updated standards and side-by-side
  - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
- d. Role of “observer” clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
- e. NOP provided update on Mexico
- ~~f.~~ (b) (5)

(b) (5)

### 3. Annual Reports

- a. Annual reports shared
- b. NOP: no questions at this time
- c. CFIA: follow-up questions
  - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
  - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
    - 1. “Certifiers active by country” list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.

### 4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)

- a. Proposed timeline:
  - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
  - ii. **ACTION**: Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)
  - iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
  - iv. Spring 2017: Onsite assessment of each program
  - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
- b. Organic import certificates status update

- i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement
  - ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
  - iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
  - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
- 5. USCOEA questions
  - a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
  - b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement
- 6. USDA updates
  - a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
    - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
    - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
  - b. Hydroponics
    - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
    - ii. Task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
    - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
  - c. Aquaculture
    - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
    - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
    - iii.
  - d. Pet Food
    - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
    - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate



e. Apiculture

- i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.

7. CFIA updates

- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
  - i. New National Manager, Strategies & Planning: Kathy Twardek
  - ii. New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
- b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
  - i. Reviewing comments currently and expecting regulations to go out for public comment in Canada Gazette.
  - ii. Anticipating that aquaculture will come into scope
  - iii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
- c. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements

8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation

- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed ~~trying to provide~~ that they provide material review services in Canada (per "Input Verification under COR" memo from CFIA). OMRI-USDA wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation by USDA AMS is accepted (per CFIA memo). USDA AMS has granted ISO 17065 accreditation to OMRI for the scope of the National Organic Program and CAN/CGSB 32.311 Input Product Review.
- b. CFIA explained that ISO 17065 is only for certification bodies to certify organic products under COR; CFIA cannot recognize or accredit OMRI under their system to ISO 17065; CFIA confirmed that OMRI may be used by Canadian CBs for material review as an accepted third party only (per CFIA memo requirement #3) as an accepted third party, but OMRI cannot refer to accreditation to COR. CFIA will evaluate this situation further.
- c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.

9. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).

Formatted: Highlight

Formatted: Highlight

Formatted: Highlight

Formatted: Highlight

- b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).
- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).

10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea has assessed CFIA system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The equivalency with EU-CAN was renewed; it now includes organic wine and multi-ingredient products.
- d. CFIA is working to extend equivalency with CH currently

12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit Dube  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Re: ETKO appeal documents  
**Date:** Friday, February 17, 2017 8:58:52 AM

---

Please share the etko appeals file. (b) (5)

Miles McEvoy  
NOP Deputy Administrator  
Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 17, 2017, at 7:10 AM, Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Hello Miles:

Thank you very much for sending me the link to the ETKO appeal case.

Attached is the CA report from the ETKO witness audits conducted last October that I'm planning to send to Heather today, along with the link you've provided me with. The audit resulted in one NC regarding ETKO's organic certificates.

From my notes, those are the only two items we have agreed to provide at this time. Let me know if there is anything else you would like me to send together with today's communication.

Thanks.

**Robert Yang**  
Agricultural Marketing Specialist  
Accreditation & International Activities Division  
USDA National Organic Program  
Office: (202) 690-4540

---

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2017 5:15 PM  
**To:** Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** ETKO appeal documents

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOPETKOAppealSettlementFinalRedacted.pdf>

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program

<NP6279LCA CA Report ETKO 010317.pdf>

**From:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Howley, JannaB - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: ETKO  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 3:28:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

Wahoo! 😊

---

**From:** Howley, JannaB - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 3:28 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: ETKO

Thank you! This is perfect.

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 10:48 AM  
**To:** Howley, JannaB - AMS  
**Subject:** FW: ETKO  
**Importance:** High

FYI

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 10:36 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; Courtney, Cheri - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: ETKO

Dear Renée,

In terms of nonconformities, relevant information was primarily sourced from the IOAS audit report. In summary the assessors found the ETKO control system deficient in its implementation in a number of important aspects including:

- Insufficient rigour and integrity of inspection
- Acceptance of vague authority declarations on previous land use without checking veracity
- Inability to demonstrate effective controls
- Poor management of sample taking
- Inattention to dates of last use of non-allowed inputs and parallel production
- Lack of on-site input/output balance audits at handlers and processors
- Lack of regulation of non-organic seed use
- Not holding the operator to account for failings by sub-contractors
- Sales by sub-contractors
- An inspector payment system in Ukraine that lends itself to conflicting interest

With specific regard to the irregularity cases notified in OFIS, the assessors found that the ETKO investigation was unable to demonstrate full traceability of the product or fully link available samples and analyses to the shipments. More details can be made available where necessary.

These nonconformities together with the recurrence of irregularity cases notified in OFIS indicated a systematic malfunctioning of the control measures applied. It also appeared that ETKO was unable to take adequate corrective measures in respect of the deficiencies reported and in response to the serious infringements observed. In such circumstances the risk existed for the consumer to be misled about the true nature of the products certified by ETKO. Consequently, ETKO was withdrawn from the EU list.

Best regards,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
[REDACTED]

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS [<mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov>]

**Sent:** Friday, June 26, 2015 3:45 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** FW: ETKO

Dear (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

I hope this e-mail finds you well. The USDA NOP is in need of additional information regarding ETKO. I would appreciate it if the EU could share information on the specific nonconformities and other deficiencies noted with respect to ETKO.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.

Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS

**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2015 1:59 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS; (b) (6)

(b) (6)

**Subject:** RE: ETKO

Dear (b) (6), (b) (7)(C),

Thank you for providing information on the actions the EU has taken with regard to Ekolojik Tarim Kontrol Organizasyonu (ETKO).

The USDA NOP is currently in the process of gathering information on the situation with ETKO. To this end, the USDA NOP would appreciate if the EU could share information on the specific nonconformities and other deficiencies noted with respect to ETKO.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.

Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2015 8:18 AM

**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS

**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS; (b) (6)

; (b) (6)

**Subject:** ETKO

Dear Miles,

We would like to inform you about the measures taken against ETKO, a control body listed in Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008. As this control body is NOP accredited, the information below may be useful to you.

In recent months the Commission received several notifications from Member States concerning high volume shipments of organic goods imported from Ukraine into the Union containing residues of plant protection products that are not allowed in organic farming according to Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008. The goods in question had been certified under Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 by "Ekolojik Tarim Kontrol Organizasyonu" (ETKO).

Following information received by the Commission from ETKO and an on-the-spot examination of its activities by its accreditation body, serious deficiencies in the checks carried out and a substantial number of non-conformities were documented, which all together indicated a systematic malfunctioning of the control measures applied. It also appeared that ETKO was unable to take adequate corrective measures in respect of the deficiencies reported and in response to the serious infringements observed.

Consequently, ETKO has been withdrawn from Annex IV in accordance with points (d), (e) and (f) of the first subparagraph of Article 12(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008.

Best regards,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted signature block]



**From:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:56:09 AM

---

It's not bad but a little tougher when you come in in the 9<sup>th</sup> inning ☺

### ***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:55 AM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Don't you just love being a detective?! ☺

FYI: I noted that Kherson as referenced in the recent complaint against ETKO, so there may be an opportunity to find out the correct phone number through those channels instead. I couldn't find anything via a search on the ol' interwebs...

RGK

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:53 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
OK I'll see what I can find to track something down.

Thanks

### ***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:51 AM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Good morning, Jason!

Yep, the Ukraine outfit is De Trade House Kherson. I have the original receipts in the file on my desk (they should be right at the front and are one-page printouts with bar codes). The other letter was for Ivofga Holding in Kazakhstan, but no word back on that yet as undeliverable. FYI: I've tried the phone number listed for Trade House Kherson and all it does it ring, ring, ring...no voicemail, no answer.

RGK

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:44 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine

Good Morning Renee,

Is this letter is the one sent to De Trade House Kherson in the Ukraine sent 6-25-15? Joan said it was sent a few days ago???

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, September 04, 2015 3:12 PM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Cc:** Mann, Renee - AMS  
**Subject:** FW: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
FYI: Jason, (b) (5)

---

**From:** Avila, Joan - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, September 04, 2015 8:22 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Renee:

I got a message from Fed Ex regarding your package to the Ukraine that I sent a few days ago. Fed Ex says that the address is incorrect and there is no valid contact information. Can you provide them with the recipient's cell phone number or email address? Please call Fed Ex at 1-800-247-4747. If you can't provide a new address or other means of reaching the recipient, you can ask Fed Ex to destroy the letter or ship it back to you at our expense. The tracking number for this shipment is 774350539751.

Thanks.

Joan F. Avila, Secretary  
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service  
National Organic Program  
Stop 0268, Room 2642-S  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268  
(202) 720-3252  
[joan.avila@ams.usda.gov](mailto:joan.avila@ams.usda.gov)

**From:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:58:43 AM

---

Do we know what commodities they traded?

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:55 AM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Don't you just love being a detective?! 😊

FYI: I noted that Kherson as referenced in the recent complaint against ETKO, so there may be an opportunity to find out the correct phone number through those channels instead. I couldn't find anything via a search on the ol' interwebs...

RGK

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:53 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
OK I'll see what I can find to track something down.

Thanks

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:51 AM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Good morning, Jason!

Yep, the Ukraine outfit is De Trade House Kherson. I have the original receipts in the file on my desk (they should be right at the front and are one-page printouts with bar codes). The other letter was for Ivofga Holding in Kazakhstan, but no word back on that yet as undeliverable. FYI: I've tried the phone number listed for Trade House Kherson and all it does it ring, ring, ring...no voicemail, no answer.

RGK

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2015 7:44 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine

Good Morning Renee,

Is this letter is the one sent to De Trade House Kherson in the Ukraine sent 6-25-15? Joan said it was sent a few days ago???

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, September 04, 2015 3:12 PM  
**To:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Cc:** Mann, Renee - AMS  
**Subject:** FW: Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
FYI: Jason, (b) (5)

---

**From:** Avila, Joan - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, September 04, 2015 8:22 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** Fed Ex Package to Ukraine  
Renee:

I got a message from Fed Ex regarding your package to the Ukraine that I sent a few days ago. Fed Ex says that the address is incorrect and there is no valid contact information. Can you provide them with the recipient's cell phone number or email address? Please call Fed Ex at 1-800-247-4747. If you can't provide a new address or other means of reaching the recipient, you can ask Fed Ex to destroy the letter or ship it back to you at our expense. The tracking number for this shipment is 774350539751.

Thanks.

Joan F. Avila, Secretary  
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service  
National Organic Program  
Stop 0268, Room 2642-S  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268  
(202) 720-3252  
[joan.avila@ams.usda.gov](mailto:joan.avila@ams.usda.gov)

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** ["Valeriya Staykova"](#)  
**Cc:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Benoit Dube](#); [Gary Little](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Follow- up - RE: 29 April draft minutes US-CFIA  
**Date:** Friday, July 01, 2016 12:37:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [2016 Apr 29 US CAN dvc minutes FINAL.docx](#)

---

Dear Valeriya,

After several weeks out of the office, I have returned and able to provide you with the final minutes from our teleconference (see attached).

In a separate e-mail sent today, you should have received the invitation to participate in the plurilateral workshop and draft nonpaper for your review.

We look forward to your feedback on the plurilateral nonpaper. I will be in touch in the next few weeks to discuss plans to meet via videoconference or teleconference to discuss the nonpaper.

In the meantime, please contact me if you have questions.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Valeriya Staykova [mailto:Valeriya.Staykova@inspection.gc.ca]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 29, 2016 11:30 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov>  
**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Benoit Dube <Benoit.Dube@inspection.gc.ca>; Gary Little <Gary.Little@inspection.gc.ca>  
**Subject:** Follow- up - RE: 29 April draft minutes US-CFIA

Hello Renée,

I hope you are doing well. Could you please advise when we should expect to have the minutes from the US- Canada WG conference call finalized.

Also, we discussed that NOP will share the non-paper on the plurilateral concept with CFIA in June and we will set up a call to review it. We have not received a copy of the paper yet. I hope you will send the paper for our review shortly.

Regards,  
Vaeriya

**Valeriya Staykova**  
**Lead Auditor /Chef-auditeur**  
**Foreign Country Assessments/Évaluation des pays étrangers**  
**Canadian Food Inspection Agency | Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments**

**1400 Merivale Road, Tower 2**  
**Floor 6, Room 252**  
**Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9**  
**Tel: (613) 773-6222, Fax 613-773 - 5961**  
[valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca)

>>> "Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS" <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> 2016-06-02 9:43 AM >>>  
Dear Valeriya,

Thank you for providing feedback on the minutes. We will review them soon, but it may take a few weeks to respond to you with a final version as several key staff are traveling or on vacation this month.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Valeriya Staykova [<mailto:Valeriya.Staykova@inspection.gc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 02, 2016 9:30 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Benoit Dube <[Benoit.Dube@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:Benoit.Dube@inspection.gc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: 29 April draft minutes US-CFIA

Dear Renée,

Thank you for drafting the minutes and for the opportunity to comment. We have included our edits for your consideration in the attached copy of the minutes.

Regards,  
Valeriya

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor /Chef-auditeur  
Labelling, Organic Regime and Packaging/  
Étiquetage, Le Régime Bio et Emballage  
Consumer Protection and Market Fairness | Division de la protection des consommateurs et de l'équité des marchés  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency | Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments

1400 Merivale Road, Tower 2  
Floor 6, Room 252  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0Y9  
Tel: (613) 773-6222, Fax 613-773 - 5961  
[valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:valeriya.staykova@inspection.gc.ca)

>>> "Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS" <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> 2016-05-16 1:26 PM >>>  
Dear Valeriya,

Please find attached the draft minutes from our recent teleconference held on 29 April 2016. I would appreciate it if you and your team could review these draft minutes and provide any edits in "track changes" mode.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.



## Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group

### April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference

#### Time/Location:

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) @video.gc.ca
	OR	(b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) ### (b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca## (b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.

#### Purpose:

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
    - b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
      - i. Another branch in CFIA (independent of the organic program) performs the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, but issues with timeliness of notices and accuracy of sample information have occurred.
      - ii. CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
    - c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
      - i. CFIA provided updated standards and side-by-side
      - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
    - d. Role of “observer” clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
    - e. NOP provided update on Mexico
3. Annual Reports
- a. Annual reports shared
  - b. NOP: no questions at this time
  - c. CFIA: follow-up questions
    - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
    - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
      - 1. “Certifiers active by country” list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.
4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)
- a. Proposed timeline:
    - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
    - ii. **ACTION:** Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)
    - iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
    - iv. Spring 2017: Onsite assessment of each program
    - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
  - b. Organic import certificates status update
    - i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement

- ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
- iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
- iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.

5. USCOEA questions

- a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
- b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement

6. USDA updates

- a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
  - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
  - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
- b. Hydroponics
  - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
  - ii. Task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
  - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
- c. Aquaculture
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
  - iii.
- d. Pet Food
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate
- e. Apiculture

- i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.

## 7. CFIA updates

- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
  - i. New National Manager, Strategies & Planning: Kathy Twardek
  - ii. New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
- b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
  - i. Reviewing comments currently and expecting regulations to go out for public comment in Canada Gazette.
  - ii. Anticipating that aquaculture will come into scope
  - iii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
- c. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements

## 8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation

- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed that they provide material review services in Canada (per “Input Verification under COR” memo from CFIA). USDA wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation by USDA AMS is accepted (per CFIA memo). USDA AMS has granted ISO 17065 accreditation to OMRI for the scope of the National Organic Program and CAN/CGSB 32.311 Input Product Review.
- b. CFIA confirmed that OMRI may be used by Canadian CBs for material review as an accepted third party (per CFIA memo requirement #3), CFIA will evaluate this situation further.
- c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.

## 9. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).
- b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).
- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).

10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea has assessed CFIA system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The equivalency with EU-CAN was renewed; it now includes organic wine and multi-ingredient products.
- d. CFIA is working to extend equivalency with CH currently

12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit Dube  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: MOA debrief  
**Date:** Thursday, January 26, 2017 11:01:10 AM

---

Thanks for the readout. Sounds like it went well. Thanks for representing us so well. Safe travels back.  
Miles

-----Original Message-----

From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS  
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2017 10:37 AM  
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov>  
Subject: MOA debrief

Very quick debrief from presentation – it appears to have gone well. I got questions about administration transition, OLPP, the certified transition program, and a very pointed question about ETKO. I used the points that we had sent to Wall Street Journal on the latter topic, shared the current status of the transitional program – only what is public, and ended up using all the transition talking points. They seemed to work well in that there were no follow ups.

People seem genuinely concerned about what will happen with the program in the next few months and also surprised by how small the program actually is – using the 1 billion US sales for every staff member metric really drives that point home.

No one self identified as press. There were about 100 people in the audience – Sue said attendance was very low this year.

I'll be going to a couple of sessions and then getting on a plane this afternoon. Just wanted to give you a quick read out in case there were any questions from the home team.

Jenny

**From:** [Wilburn, Tammie - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Regalado, Andrew - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Organic corn imports  
**Date:** Monday, November 07, 2016 2:10:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [Certified Organic Corn Operations per Certifiers.xlsx](#)

---

Hi Miles,

I am still waiting on information and/or clarification from several certifiers. I am attaching information submitted to date, but based on the data submitted by Andrew, (b) (5)

The operations under certification are: 1. Field Farms (ProCert), 2. Mosher Products (OneCert), 3. Tiryaki Agro Gida (IMO), and 4. Caprock (CCOF).

(b) (5). These companies are under APHIS' purview per IMO data, since they have imported from prohibited countries. APHIS is ready to assist us in visiting these operations to confirm source and possibly collect samples.

If you're ok with this I will draft the four letters for your signature tomorrow or Wednesday. Renee & Vella perhaps we can set up a call with APHIS this week to discuss next steps.

Tammie

-----Original Message-----

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, November 04, 2016 8:22 PM  
**To:** Mann, Renee - AMS; Wilburn, Tammie - AMS  
**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Holmes, Vella - AMS; Michael, Matthew - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Subject:** Organic corn imports

During my meetings with European officials this past week I learned about continued concerns regarding organic feed production in Eastern Europe. The European Union requires Certifiers to conduct residue testing on imported organic feed. I'd like to send letters to Certifiers that are certifying Eastern European organic grain that they must conduct residue testing under the authority of 205.501(a)(21). I will explain in more detail on Monday.

Tammie - Please provide a list of Certifiers, certified operations, and traders involved in the organic grain trade in Eastern Europe by COB Monday. I understand that you may not have a complete list but it will be a place to start.

Renee - Please draft the certifier letters. I'll meet with you on Monday morning to explain in more detail. Thanks.

Miles V McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
USDA National Organic Program



<b>Certifying Agent</b>	<b>Crops</b>	<b>Handling</b>	<b>Grower Group</b>
Control Union	No	Yes	
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BioInspecta AG*			
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No

BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
Control Union	No	Yes	
Control Union	No	Yes	
Control Union	No	Yes	
Control Union	Yes	No	
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
Control Union	No	Yes	No
Control Union	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	Yes
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	No	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No

BioInspecta AG\*

BioInspecta AG\*

Control Union	Yes	Yes	
Control Union	Yes	Yes	
Control Union	Yes	Yes	
Control Union	No	Yes	
Control Union	No	Yes	
Control Union	No	Yes	
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	No	Yes	No
BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH	Yes	Yes	No

IBD - nothing to report

Etko

EcoCert

LACON

ACO

IMO

<b>Operation's Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>U.S. Based Customer</b>
AGROPEX BULGARIA LTD	Bulgaria	
Sociedad Agrícola Winter Seed Ltda.	Chile	
Agrícola Las Bandurrias Ltda	Chile	
Sociedad Agrícola Winter Seed Ltda.	Chile	
Tai'an Taishan Asia Food Co., Ltd.	China	
Xinjiang Good Harvest Agriculture	China	
Dalian Shengfang Organic Food Co., Ltd.	China	
Sunshine (Tianjin) Produce Ltd.	China	
Linyi Wonderful Foodstuff Co., Ltd.	China	
Liaoning Zhenlong Native Produce Holding Co., Ltd.	China	
Sunshine (Tianjin) Produce Ltd.	China	
Yongshan Tianshan Food Co., Ltd.	China	
Heilongjiang Land Reclamation Dragon King	China	
Liaoning Zhenlong Native Produce Holding Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Kaize Group Limited	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Products Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Liaoning Zhenlong Native Produce Holding Co., Ltd.	China	
Dunhua Dewei Organic Products Co., Ltd.	China	
Kaize Group Limited	China	
Sunshine (Tianjin) Produce Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Shengfang Organic Food Co., Ltd.	China	
Zunyi County Taida Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Heilongjiang Jiansanjiang Lvnong	China	
Qingdao Foodlink Co., Ltd.	China	
Lijiang Daran Biology Co., Ltd.	China	
Kaize Group Limited	China	
Liaoning Zhenlong Native Produce Holding Co., Ltd.	China	
Sunshine (Tianjin) Produce Ltd.	China	
Dalian Spring Agricultural Products Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Sun Found International Trading Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Linyi Dongxu Foods Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Products Co., Ltd.	China	
Dalian Xinglongken Organic Cereal & Oil Co., Ltd.	China	
Hakan	Dubai	Agribusiness
Agrícola Compañía Limitada Ecopallana	Ecuador	
Industrias Alen Eveliza	Ecuador	
Perla Negra La Loma S.C.P	Ecuador	
Sumak Mikuy S.C.C.	Ecuador	
CAMARI Sistema Solidario	Ecuador	

Agripure Egypt	EG Aegypten	
Teshome Anteneh Alemneh Imp. Exp.	Ethiopia	
SELAMAWIT G/MARIAM	Ethiopia	
TOO ORIENT TRADE CO.LTD	Kazakhstan	
Akasya Tarim Urunleri Gida San. ve Tic A.S.	Kyrgyzstan	
José Leobardo Ravelero Cruz	Mexico	
El Sauz Vega, SPR de RL de CV	México	
Mexarom, S. de R.L. de C.V.	México	
DFI Organics Inc	Netherlands	
Doens Food Ingredients B.V	Netherlands	
Cooperativa Agraria Bio – Orgánica	Peru	
UHTCO Corporation	Peru	
Peru Naturals Corporation S.A.C.	Peru	
AYNI - ESCUELA DE NUTRICIÓN HOLÍSTICA	Perú	
ANDINOINDUSTRIAS S.A.C.	Perú	
VILLA ANDINA S.A.C.	Perú	
AYMARA PERU S.A.C.	Perú	
Green Garden Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Ltd	Russia	
AGRO MICHYRINA	Russia	
Bri-wester Trading Co., Ltd.	Russia	
Rus Agro Export Ltd	Russia	
Isik Tarim Ürünleri San. ve Tic. A.S.	Turkey	
Isik Tarim Ürünleri San. ve Tic. A.S.	Turkey	
Isik Tarim Ürünleri San. ve Tic. A.S.	Turkey	
Beyaz Agro Ithalat Ihracat San. Ve TIC.A.S.	Turkey	
GZ TARIM ÜRÜNLERI TIC. LTD. STI.	Turkey	
Beyaz	Turkey	DFI Organics
<b>GZ</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Field Farms</b>
Ekoturka	Turkey	Perdue
Akasya Tarim Urunleri Gida San. ve Tic A.S.	Turkey	
Eko Turka Tekstil Tarim Hayvancilik Tasimacilik Sanayi	Turkey	
BURC EKOLOJIK TARIM TEKSTIL URUNLERI NAKLIYAT	Turkey	
Yusufcan Tarim Ur.Gub.Ins.Nak.ve Zirai Ilac San	Turkey	
TILLO TARIM (IBRAHIM EKIN)	Turkey	
Kadioglu Tarim Ticaret Ve Sanayi A.S.	Turkey	
Hakan Organics DMCC	Vereinigte Arab.	
Excalibur Investment LLC	Vereinigte Arab.	

**U.S. Customer Certifier    Compliance Issues**

Per CUC, a request received for crosschecking the origin of a shipment related to I

Control Union

BCS

Control Union

DFI Organics Inc.



**From:** [Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Joao.Onofre-Antas-Goncalves@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Joao.Onofre-Antas-Goncalves@ec.europa.eu); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); (b) (6)  
**Subject:** RE: OWG meeting minutes  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 25, 2016 5:32:38 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[160202 OWG minutes FINAL.doc](#)

---

Thanks, Renée.

All your comments are fine, including the improvement on US responses to OFIS irregularities notifications. Situation is getting better since our teleconference. Keep going!

You will find attached a clean version as agreed by both sides.

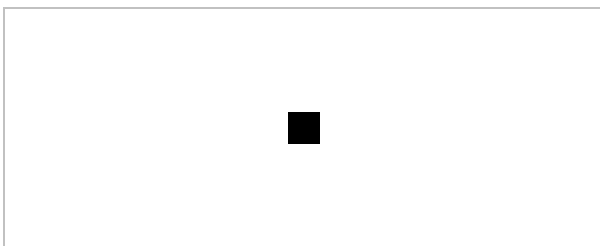
Best regards

**Manuel ROSSI PRIETO**  
Policy Officer – International Sector



**European Commission**  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development  
Directorate B. Multilateral Relations, Quality Policy  
Unit B.4. Organics

L130 06/100  
B-1049 Brussels/Belgium  
+32 2 295 21 27  
[manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu](mailto:manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu)



---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS [mailto:[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 24, 2016 2:38 PM  
**To:** ROSSI PRIETO Manuel (AGRI)  
**Cc:** ONOFRE Joao (AGRI); Courtney, Cheri - AMS; (b) (6)  
**Subject:** OWG meeting minutes



Dear Manuel,

Please accept my apologies for the delay in sending comments. Attached are the draft minutes from the 2 February meeting of the Organic Working Group.

I appreciate your understanding.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.



**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

**1. Plurilateral arrangement**

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

#### April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

#### September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March, and equivalence discussions will follow in April. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. US peer review audit proposed for early-2017 in Taiwan. Discussions will continue as US aims to ensure products access to Taiwan, and residue test and hold procedures at border are revised. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about Costa Rica's lack of investigation and enforcement on fraudulent products.

## **5. Update on ETKO**

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## **6. Update on EU review**

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## **7. Update on US aquaculture standards**

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has slowed but still plan to have a proposal out later in 2016.

## **8. AOB**

OFIS irregularities: EC called attention to delays in US responses to OFIS irregularities' notifications. US expressed its willingness to discuss the situation. US subsequently met via teleconference with EU on February 22, 2016, to clarify EU expectations regarding irregularity closure, especially given the complexity and age of many of the EU irregularity findings. This meeting has resulted in significant progress in irregularity resolution by the US.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

**From:** [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: QCS - Evidence of QCS Processing Activity in Ecuador (Email 1of 3)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 11:14:08 AM

---

Thanks Renee, I agree the first option seems the most efficient. Can we try that first, but also try to schedule a call for later in October?

Cheers,  
Kelly

**Kelly Strzelecki**  
Senior Trade Advisor  
Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division  
Office of Agreements and Scientific Affairs  
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service  
(202) 690-0522

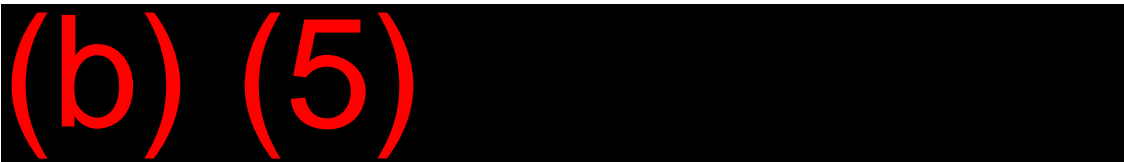
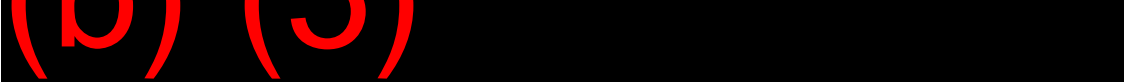
---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 10:54 AM  
**To:** Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: QCS - Evidence of QCS Processing Activity in Ecuador (Email 1of 3)

Hi Kelly,

I was not aware of this issue so thanks for bringing it to my attention. I know that annex revisions take quite a bit of time (several weeks/months), so I can appreciate QCS' need for the EU to provide interim verification of their processing/handling status. It does seem like a fairly quick fix.

Two options:

- 1)  (b) (5)
- 2)  (b) (5)

We haven't met since 2 Feb. 2016 because the plurilateral workshop has garnered the lion's share of our EU interactions lately. Perhaps the time is right for another DVC?

Based on the last meeting minutes, the agenda could include the following items:

- QCS listing error on EU Annex III
- EU response to U.S. questions (I sent a question about olive oil to Manuel, but no response yet)
- Equivalency updates from both parties
- Update on ETKO
- Update on EU regulations (final adoption)
- Update on U.S. aquaculture

- Compliance updates
- Remaining plurilateral prep for U.S. and EU projects

I prefer the first option, but would appreciate your thoughts.

*Renée*

---

**From:** Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 10:32 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: QCS - Evidence of QCS Processing Activity in Ecuador (Email 1of 3)

Hi Renee and Cheri,

While at Expo East, Marty Mesh, QCS, approached me to chat about an issue with their EU status as a recognized certifier. We also called Ramkrishnan to discuss. Apparently the EU doesn't have QCS listed for processing/handling in their Annex and there are now producers in Ecuador who are basically suing QCS for false representation (or something like that). Apparently Ram has been in touch with the EU, I believe Manuel, and they have said they will change the listing for QCS when they make the next revision to their annex. In the mean time, QCS is still having problems and would like the EU to write a letter that QCS could share with clients saying that there has been a clerical error in the way they are listed.

I'm not sure if QCS has brought this to your attention, but it seems like a fairly simple fix if we can get the EU's support.

Attached and below are more information on this. Let me know what you think.

Cheers,  
Kelly

**Kelly Strzelecki**  
Senior Trade Advisor  
Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division  
Office of Agreements and Scientific Affairs  
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service  
(202) 690-0522

---

**From:** Ramkrishnan.P.B. [<mailto:Ram@qcsinfo.org>]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2016 11:59 AM  
**To:** Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS  
**Subject:** FW: QCS - Evidence of QCS Processing Activity in Ecuador (Email 1of 3)

Kelly,

Can you please help. Do you also need other attachments from email 2 and email 3.

---

**From:** Krista Wanser [<mailto:krista@qualitysystemservices.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 10:02 PM  
**To:** [AGRI-ORGANIC-IMPORTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:AGRI-ORGANIC-IMPORTS@ec.europa.eu); [Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu)  
**Cc:** Ramkrishnan.P.B.; Beth Rota; Robin Schrieber  
**Subject:** QCS - Evidence of QCS Processing Activity in Ecuador (Email 1of 3)

**Manuel ROSSI PRIETO**

Policy Officer – International Sector

**European Commission**

DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Directorate B. Multilateral Relations, Quality Policy

+32 2 295 21 27

[manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu](mailto:manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu)

CC: [AGRI-ORGANIC-IMPORTS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:AGRI-ORGANIC-IMPORTS@ec.europa.eu)

Dear Manuel Rossi Prieto:

The following is an overview of instances where QCS provided the European Commission information in regards to certifying processing operations in Ecuador to its EU program:

In 2013, QCS submitted the 2012 EC Annual report via the OFIS system. On pages 67 of 450 of the 2012 EC Annual report is an assessment report from the USDA AMS that states on page that QCS has processors in Ecuador in compliance with the EU program. On page 77 of 450 of the 2012 EC Annual report, it also includes CAEQ's assessment report from 2013, which also mentions a visit to the office in Ecuador by CAEQ in 2010. **See Attachment A, QCS EU OFIS 2012 EU Annual report SUB 2013.**

In 2014, QCS submitted the 2013 EC Annual report via the OFIS system. The 2013 EC Annual report includes a report from the USDA AMS that states on page (26 of 318) under Standards Applied/Scope/Clients and (29 of 318) that QCS has processors in Ecuador in compliance to the EU program. **See Attachment B, QCS EU 2013 report ARCB00076\_report SUB 2014.**

In 2015, QCS submitted the 2014 EC Annual report via the OFIS system. **See Attachment C, QCS EU OFIS 2014 Annual Report SUB 2015.** The 2014 EC Annual report includes the following references to QCS performing certification activities in Ecuador for the scope of processing:

1. On page 75 of 412; the 2014 EC Annual report includes a 2014 CAEQ Annual Surveillance report identifying the countries with which QCS operates; including Ecuador. Then below, it identifies the programs included in those countries; which include COS (which is the Canada program) or International (which is EU program), and both programs are ticked for the scope of processing.
2. On page 360 of 412; a 2014 USDA NOP Reassessment report clearly makes reference that QCS has processors in Ecuador in compliance to the EU program.

3. On page 363 of 412; a 2014 USDA NOP Witness report makes reference that QCS has processors in Ecuador in compliance to the EU program.

Following submission of the 2014 EC Annual report, on April 29, 2015 , QCS requested EC to update an error to the OFIS report. The email requested processing/handling in Ecuador for Category D. Although not clearly articulated in the email, the attachment of the Annual Report was provided to show that our report had Category E listed and not Category D. **See Attachment D, QCS Request to Update OFIS Report 150429.** Please note, we cannot locate any responses from the EC to this email in our records.

Also for 2015, QCS submitted a geographical scope extension that included a complete list of operators in the EU program. The submission included an EU program operator list that included processing operations located in Ecuador. **See Attachment E, QCS Request for a Scope Extension.**

In 2016, QCS submitted the 2015 Annual Report to the EC via their OFIS system. The 2015 Annual report; includes the same reports from the 2014 OFIS report, see above items 1-3.

Also in 2016, CAEQ issued QCS a CAEQ QCS Recognition letter that clearly states that CAEQ has visited the Ecuador office and concur the activity of processors in the EU program. This is also supported by the CAEQ certificate issued to QCS which identifies both the scope of processing and the country of Ecuador. **See Attachment F, 20160823\_CAEQ\_letter QCS\_EU & Attachment G, 04 ISO 17065 Accreditation Certificate\_QCS\_2015.**

We appreciate your review of this evidence. If you have any questions please let us know. We hope this information meets your satisfaction.

Respectfully,

Krista Wanser

Quality Systems Manager

Quality Certification Services

Phone: 573-999-5926 ~ Fax: 660-677-4141

[ram@qcsinfo.org](mailto:ram@qcsinfo.org)

[www.qcsinfo.org](http://www.qcsinfo.org)

Enclosures:

Attachments A-B (Email 10f3)

Attachments C-D (Email 20f3)

Attachments E-F (Email 3of3)

.....

This message, including all content and attachments, are intended only for the use of the addressee(s) indicated and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, proprietary and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, copying, downloading, storing or forwarding of this communication is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error,



please notify the sender immediately via email and permanently delete the message and its attachments.

**From:** [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Pattillo, Devon - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 12:47:25 PM

---

Here are some additional talking points to address organic seed

- As a means to prevent GMO contamination in crops, the NOSB is presenting a discussion document to strengthening the organic seed guidance (i.e., revised in a way that will lead to greater use of organic seed) at the November NOSB meeting
- A main theme is that producers should be required to increase use of organic seed and planting stock over time (i.e. continuous improvement)

Other points are:

- o Current guidance is not strong or specific enough to ensure use of organic seed
- o Largest producers are not using enough organic seed
- o At-risk crops (prone to GMO contamination) should face greater scrutiny
- o NOP should promote the Organic Seed Finder ([www.organicseedfinder.org](http://www.organicseedfinder.org)); the database currently includes eight seed vendors

References:

NOP 5029 and response to comments 5029-1

NOSB recommendations in 2005 and 2008

Thanks.

Paul

Paul I. Lewis, Ph.D.  
Director, Standards Division  
National Organic Program  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Marketing and Regulatory Programs  
Department of Agriculture  
202 260 9294

---

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 5:04 AM  
**To:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Lewis, Paul I - AMS <[Paull.Lewis@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Paull.Lewis@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting

Please prepare talking points for these questions as they are under AIA responsibilities. Thanks.

**From:** Abby Youngblood [<mailto:abby@nationalorganiccoalition.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2016 4:52 PM

**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>

**Cc:** (b) (6)

**Subject:** thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting

Dear Miles,

Thank you for joining us at our Pre-NOSB meeting next week on Tuesday the 15th. I am writing to confirm that we have you scheduled to take part from 2:30 to 3:30. Are there others from USDA who will be able to join us?

We are planning on a Q&A format, similar to the format we've had during the past several meetings. Two of the topics we would like to discuss are outlined at the end of this message. I will be in touch very shortly with one or two additional topics. During the meeting, we would like to present each of these topics to you, hear your response and have time for some discussion. Here is the general format we have in mind:

- 5 min for opening remarks from you
- 3 min or less for NOC member to present topic/question
- 4 to 5 min for your response
- 10 min for discussion

If we spend about 15 to 20 minutes on each question, we should be able to finish in the time allotted.

We have approximately 50 people planning to attend, including about 20 NOC members, as well as 30 others, including farmers, NOSB members, certifiers, animal welfare groups, and organic industry members.

We appreciate your dedication to organic and your engagement with NOC and others during the meeting. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have questions.

Best Regards,  
Abby and Steve

#### 1. QUESTION ON ORGANIC SEED

While the allowance for the use of non-organic seed in organic production is important for growers who lack access to appropriate organic seed, the organic seed requirement is inconsistently enforced. Many would like to see the NOP do more through guidance and regular trainings to create incentives for farms to use more organic seed and to establish a framework for continuous improvement in the use of organic seed.

How can this guidance be strengthened and what else can the NOP do to support increased use of organic seed? How will the NOP support tracking organic seed availability by crop type and region on an annual basis?

#### 2. QUESTION ON ORGANIC IMPORTS

Over the past few years, there has been a dramatic increase in imports of organic

commodities, especially grains. A key area of concern for U.S. organic grain growers is whether these increased imports present an opportunity for fraudulently labeled organic products to enter the United States, undermining the opportunity for U.S. producers to get a fair price in the market. Long international supply chains may increase the opportunities for fraud due to breaks in the chain of recordkeeping, organic certification and verification that the USDA organic seal is built upon. The rise of imports from Turkey especially raises concern and one Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.

The NOP took the step of reminding importers of handling regulations on July 13, 2016, but this action is not enough to address the potential for fraud.

What plans does the NOP have to address this issue? Will the NOP require importers to be certified by an NOP accredited certifier going forward? What other systems will the NOP put in place to ensure the integrity of shipments of grains and other commodities?

--

Abby Youngblood  
Executive Director  
National Organic Coalition  
[Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org](mailto:Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Cell: (b) (6)

[www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org](http://www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Twitter: @NationalOrganic  
Facebook: Facebook.com/NationalOrganicCoalition

**From:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, November 10, 2016 2:19:51 PM

---

Hi Miles,  
We will have the talking points on Monday.  
*Cheri*

---

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 5:04 AM  
**To:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Lewis, Paul I - AMS <[Paull.Lewis@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Paull.Lewis@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting

Please prepare talking points for these questions as they are under AIA responsibilities. Thanks.

**From:** Abby Youngblood [<mailto:abby@nationalorganiccoalition.org>]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2016 4:52 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting

Dear Miles,

Thank you for joining us at our Pre-NOSB meeting next week on Tuesday the 15th. I am writing to confirm that we have you scheduled to take part from 2:30 to 3:30. Are there others from USDA who will be able to join us?

We are planning on a Q&A format, similar to the format we've had during the past several meetings. Two of the topics we would like to discuss are outlined at the end of this message. I will be in touch very shortly with one or two additional topics. During the meeting, we would like to present each of these topics to you, hear your response and have time for some discussion. Here is the general format we have in mind:

- 5 min for opening remarks from you
- 3 min or less for NOC member to present topic/question
- 4 to 5 min for your response
- 10 min for discussion

If we spend about 15 to 20 minutes on each question, we should be able to finish in the time allotted.

We have approximately 50 people planning to attend, including about 20 NOC members, as well as 30 others, including farmers, NOSB members, certifiers, animal welfare groups, and organic industry members.

We appreciate your dedication to organic and your engagement with NOC and others during the meeting. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have questions.

Best Regards,

Abby and Steve

## 1. QUESTION ON ORGANIC SEED

While the allowance for the use of non-organic seed in organic production is important for growers who lack access to appropriate organic seed, the organic seed requirement is inconsistently enforced. Many would like to see the NOP do more through guidance and regular trainings to create incentives for farms to use more organic seed and to establish a framework for continuous improvement in the use of organic seed.

How can this guidance be strengthened and what else can the NOP do to support increased use of organic seed? How will the NOP support tracking organic seed availability by crop type and region on an annual basis?

## 2. QUESTION ON ORGANIC IMPORTS

Over the past few years, there has been a dramatic increase in imports of organic commodities, especially grains. A key area of concern for U.S. organic grain growers is whether these increased imports present an opportunity for fraudulently labeled organic products to enter the United States, undermining the opportunity for U.S. producers to get a fair price in the market. Long international supply chains may increase the opportunities for fraud due to breaks in the chain of recordkeeping, organic certification and verification that the USDA organic seal is built upon. The rise of imports from Turkey especially raises concern and one Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.

The NOP took the step of reminding importers of handling regulations on July 13, 2016, but this action is not enough to address the potential for fraud.

What plans does the NOP have to address this issue? Will the NOP require importers to be certified by an NOP accredited certifier going forward? What other systems will the NOP put in place to ensure the integrity of shipments of grains and other commodities?

--

Abby Youngblood  
Executive Director

National Organic Coalition  
[Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org](mailto:Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Cell: (b) (6)

[www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org](http://www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Twitter: @NationalOrganic  
Facebook: Facebook.com/NationalOrganicCoalition

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** "[Marlene Moore](#)"  
**Cc:** [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** RE: USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Saturday, May 14, 2016 7:34:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

Hello, Marlene,

The sub-folders in the BAR-O file have been reloaded and should be available to you and your team. Please let me know if there are still issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

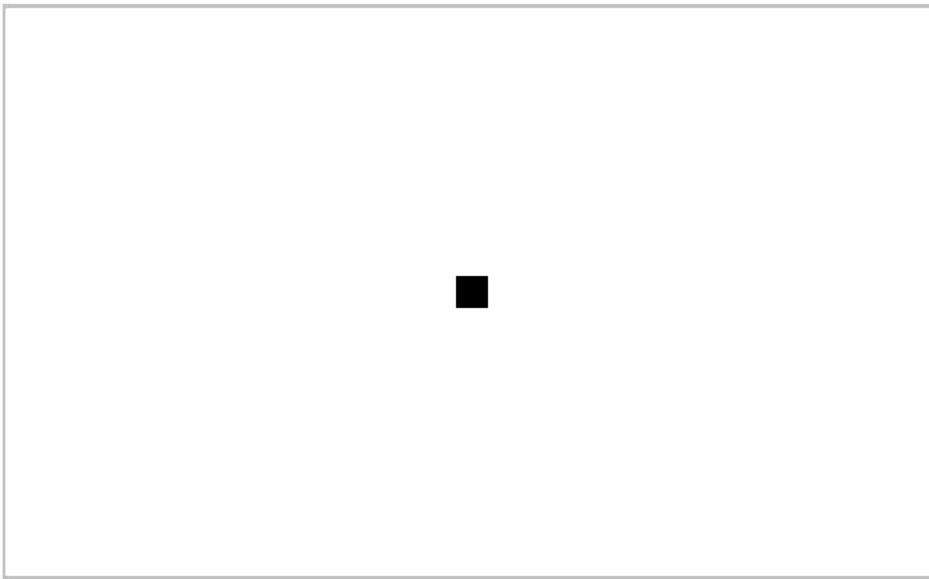
**From:** Marlene Moore [mailto:[mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 3:18 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6); Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigueir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigueir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

Renee

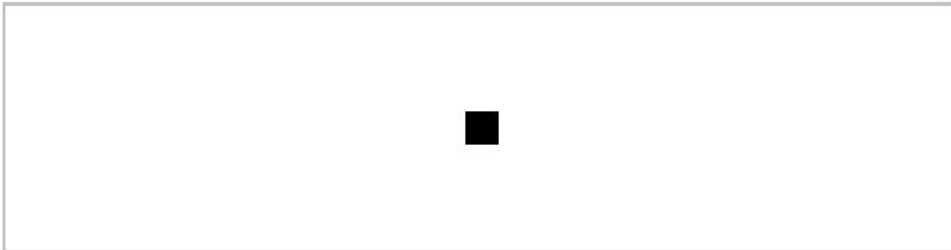
I can open the files, but it seems that some files are missing

Uncer corrective action I have NC1 to 8 and 5 tild files now I only see two





5 tilde



On May 13, 2016, at 3:09 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
<[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Hello, Marlene,

I have reloaded the BAR-O file directly (not "zip") into CloudVault. Please let me know if you continue to have issues with file access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Marlene Moore [<mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:58 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6) >; Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigueir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigueir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

Renee

I was able to download the zip files -

Bar-O: I have not reviewed all, but I see this file which I cannot open  
~\$5264EEA NC rept 12 18 15 (This is in folder NoNC)

There are several files under Corr Action Response with the same tild (~) mark at the start of the file name - these do not open either.

Do you know what it is not readable?

M

On May 13, 2016, at 2:43 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs
3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South,  
Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax:  
202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

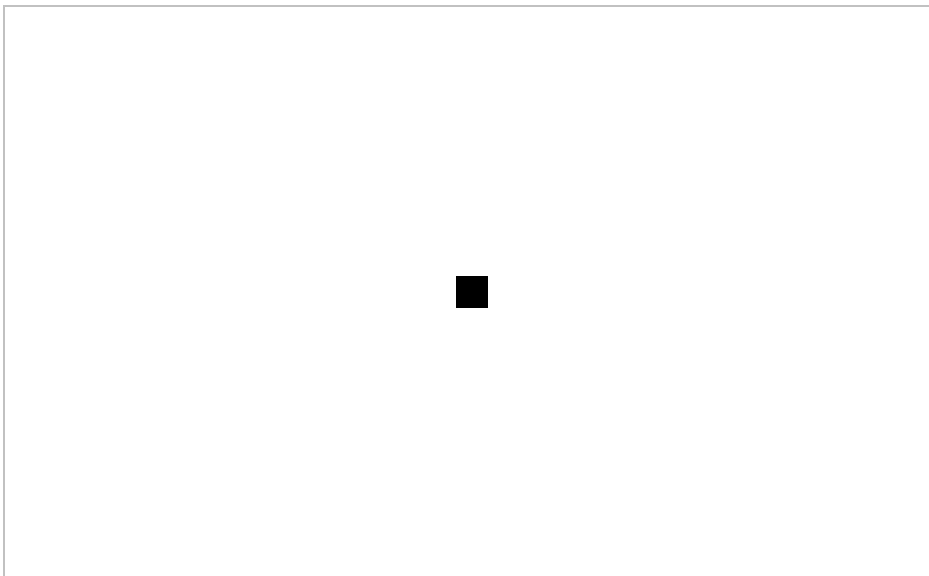
**From:** [Marlene Moore](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2016 3:18:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screen Shot 2016-05-13 at 3.15.34 PM.png](#)  
[Screen Shot 2016-05-13 at 3.16.22 PM.png](#)

---

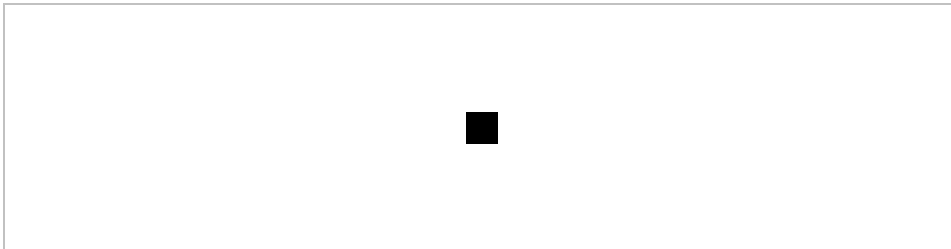
Renee

I can open the files, but it seems that some files are missing

Uncer corrective action I have NC1 to 8 and 5 tild files now I only see two



5 tilde



On May 13, 2016, at 3:09 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
<[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Hello, Marlene,

I have reloaded the BAR-O file directly (not "zip") into CloudVault. Please let me know if you continue to have issues with file access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Marlene Moore [<mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:58 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6); Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigueir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigueir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

Renee

I was able to download the zip files -

Bar-O: I have not reviewed all, but I see this file which I cannot open  
~\$5264EEA NC rept 12 18 15 (This is in folder NoNC)

There are several files under Corr Action Response with the same tild (~) mark at the start of the file name - these do not open either.

Do you know what it is not readable?

M

On May 13, 2016, at 2:43 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs

3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South,  
Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 |  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and

Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** "[Marlene Moore](#)"  
**Cc:** [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** RE: USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2016 3:09:00 PM

---

Hello, Marlene,

I have reloaded the BAR-O file directly (not "zip") into CloudVault. Please let me know if you continue to have issues with file access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renee Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Marlene Moore [mailto:[mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:58 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6)>; Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigureir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigureir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

Renee

I was able to download the zip files -

Bar-O: I have not reviewed all, but I see this file which I cannot open  
~\$5264EEA NC rept 12 18 15 (This is in folder NoNC)

There are several files under Corr Action Response with the same tild (~) mark at the start of the file name - these do not open either.



Do you know what it is not readable?

M

On May 13, 2016, at 2:43 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
<[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs
3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and

Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

**From:** [Marlene Moore](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:57:41 PM

---

Renee

I was able to download the zip files -

Bar-O: I have not reviewed all, but I see this file which I cannot open  
~\$5264EEA NC rept 12 18 15 (This is in folder NoNC)

There are several files under Corr Action Response with the same tild (~) mark at the start of the file name - these do not open either.

Do you know what it is not readable?

M

On May 13, 2016, at 2:43 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
<[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs
3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** "[Marlene Moore](#)"  
**Cc:** [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** RE: USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Saturday, May 14, 2016 7:34:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

---

Hello, Marlene,

The sub-folders in the BAR-O file have been reloaded and should be available to you and your team. Please let me know if there are still issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renee Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

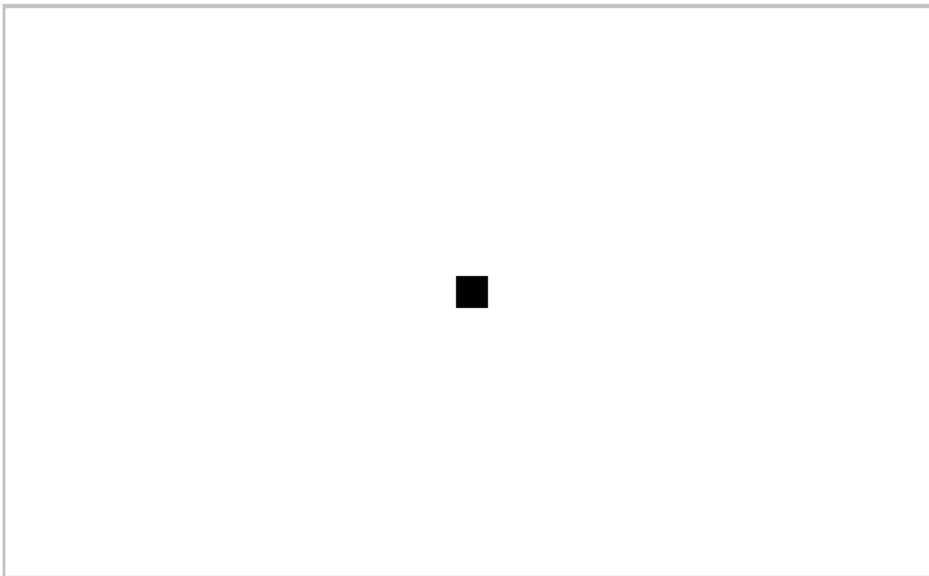
---

**From:** Marlene Moore [mailto:[mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 3:18 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6) >; Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigueir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigueir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

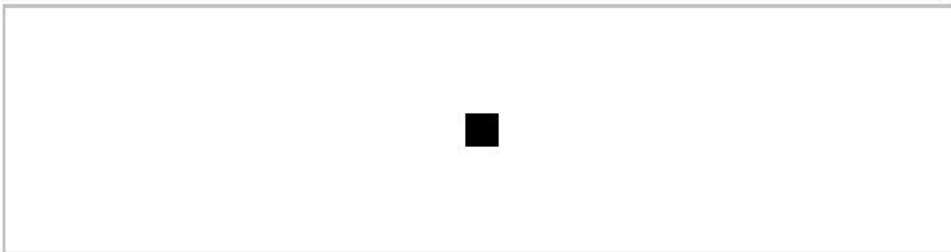
Renee

I can open the files, but it seems that some files are missing

Uner corrective action I have NC1 to 8 and 5 tild files now I only see two



5 tilde



On May 13, 2016, at 3:09 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
<[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Hello, Marlene,

I have reloaded the BAR-O file directly (not "zip") into CloudVault. Please let me know if you continue to have issues with file access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Marlene Moore [<mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:58 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Susan M Ranck <[susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com](mailto:susan.ranck@ranckandassociates.com)>; Jean Richardson (b) (6) >; Jim Riddle <[jriddle@riverland.org](mailto:jriddle@riverland.org)>; Yang, RobertH - AMS <[RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov](mailto:RobertH.Yang@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Elizabeth Okutuga <[EOkutuga@ansi.org](mailto:EOkutuga@ansi.org)>; Reinaldo Figueiredo <[rfigueir@ansi.org](mailto:rfigueir@ansi.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: USDA NOP files available

Renee

I was able to download the zip files -

Bar-O: I have not reviewed all, but I see this file which I cannot open  
~\$5264EEA NC rept 12 18 15 (This is in folder NoNC)

There are several files under Corr Action Response with the same tild (~) mark at the start of the file name - these do not open either.

Do you know what it is not readable?

M

On May 13, 2016, at 2:43 PM, Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs
3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South,  
Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax:  
202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.

---

All replies to: [mmoore@advancedsys.com](mailto:mmoore@advancedsys.com)

Advanced Systems, Inc. - Quality Systems Design, Auditing and  
Training P.O. Box 8032, Newark, DE 19714  
Voice: 302-368-1211, Fax: 720-293-3706

Advanced Systems cannot be responsible for the confidentiality of electronically transmitted data unless prior arrangements have been made.



**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: US-EU DVC draft minutes  
**Date:** Friday, April 01, 2016 10:03:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [160202 OWG DRAFT minutes ks mvm.doc](#)

---

I have some additional edits.

Miles

---

**From:** Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 10:16 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Doherty, Julia <[julia\\_doherty@ustr.eop.gov](mailto:julia_doherty@ustr.eop.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: US-EU DVC draft minutes

Thanks Renee, the attached includes a few edits.  
Kelly

**Kelly Strzelecki**  
Senior Trade Advisor  
Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division  
Office of Agreements and Scientific Affairs  
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service  
(202) 690-0522

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 3:45 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS; Doherty, Julia  
**Subject:** US-EU DVC draft minutes

Hello, Team-

Attached please find the draft minutes from the 2 Feb. 2016 DVC with the EU.

Please review at your earliest convenience. Enter any comments or edits in "track changes" mode.

Thank you!

*Renée GK*

USDA NOP  
Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)



## Note to the file

**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

### 1. Plurilateral arrangement

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

#### February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

#### April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

#### September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March, and equivalence discussions will follow in April. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. Not full equivalency expected US peer review audit proposed for early-2017 in Taiwan. Discussions will continue as US aims to ensure products access to Taiwan, and residue test and hold procedures at border are revised. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about pineapple and bananas production.

## **5. Update on ETKO**

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## **6. Update on EU review**

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## **7. Update on US aquaculture standards**

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has been postponed.

## **8. AOB**

OFIS irregularities: EC called US attention again to the delays in replying to OFIS irregularities' notifications. US is the country with the worst record in replying late. This is public information shared with EU Member States and could damage US image. US expressed its willingness to improve the situation.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

Manuel ROSSI PRIETO

**From:** [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: US-EU DVC draft minutes  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 10:16:17 AM  
**Attachments:** [160202 OWG DRAFT minutes ks.doc](#)

---

Thanks Renee, the attached includes a few edits.

Kelly

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor  
Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division  
Office of Agreements and Scientific Affairs  
USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service  
(202) 690-0522

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 3:45 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS; Doherty, Julia  
**Subject:** US-EU DVC draft minutes

Hello, Team-

Attached please find the draft minutes from the 2 Feb. 2016 DVC with the EU.

Please review at your earliest convenience. Enter any comments or edits in "track changes" mode.

Thank you!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)



## Note to the file

**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

### 1. Plurilateral arrangement

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

#### February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

#### April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

#### September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March, and equivalence discussions will follow in April. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. Not full equivalency expected US peer review audit proposed for early-2017 in Taiwan. Discussions will continue as US aims to ensure products access to Taiwan, and residue test and hold procedures at border are revised. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about Costa Rica's lack of investigation and enforcement on fraudulent pineapple products and bananas production.

## 5. Update on ETKO

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## 6. Update on EU review

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## 7. Update on US aquaculture standards

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has ~~been postponed~~ slowed but still plan to have a proposal out later in 2016.

## 8. AOB

OFIS irregularities: EC called US attention again to the delays in replying to OFIS irregularities' notifications. ~~US is the country with the worst record in replying late.~~ This is public information shared with EU Member States and could damage US image. US expressed its willingness to ~~discuss~~ improve the situation. US subsequently met via teleconference with EU on February 22, 2016, to clarify EU expectations regarding irregularity closure, especially given the complexity and age of many of the EU irregularity findings. This meeting has resulted in significant progress in irregularity resolution by the US.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

Manuel ROSSI PRIETO



**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 6:08:12 PM

---

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?  
[NOP] Witness audits were conducted in Ukraine in October 2016.
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?  
*[NOP] We have not received any complaints against ETKO. We have received complaints about organic corn imports from Turkey. An investigation is currently in progress.*
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?  
*[NOP] The NOP has copies of the audit reports that led to EU and Canadian sanctions against ETKO. ETKO was suspended by the EU and is not allowed to issue EU organic certification until the EU has determined that ETKO is in full compliance. Additionally, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified NOP of ETKO suspension and cancelation of ETKO accreditation. Specific information regarding CFIA actions is located on [CFIA website](#).*
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why? *[NOP] Each government has independent processes for reviewing, auditing and approving certifying agents. Under the US system we have specific compliance procedures which provide due process rights to certified farms, handlers and certifiers when noncompliances are identified.*
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?  
*[NOP] We have what is listed on the Organic Integrity Database. Each certified operation lists the type of organic products are produced and/or handled. There is no information on quantity.*
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share? *[NOP] We post all audit reports once they are finalized.*

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Monday, January 23, 2017 9:38:39 AM

---

Cheri and Renee – If you could send me quick answers to below, I can frame as a draft response for Miles' review.

Thanks –  
Jenny

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, January 20, 2017 11:17 AM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good morning,

We received a few more follow-up questions from the WSJ. The reporter would like responses back next week. Thanks in advance!

1. Why was a settlement agreement agreed upon with ETKO instead of a suspension?
2. Have all issues of noncompliance with ETKO been corrected?
3. Are there any outstanding complaints or investigations related to ETKO?
4. What was the nature of the violations that led to the settlement agreement with ETKO?

*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 6:37 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Thanks for pulling this together!

Sam Jones-Ellard

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service  
Public Affairs  
202.660.2268

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 12, 2017, at 6:08 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?  
*[NOP] Witness audits were conducted in Ukraine in October 2016.*
  
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?  
*[NOP] We have not received any complaints against ETKO. We have received complaints about organic corn imports from Turkey. An investigation is currently in progress.*
  
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?  
*[NOP] The NOP has copies of the audit reports that led to EU and Canadian sanctions against ETKO. ETKO was suspended by the EU and is not allowed to issue EU organic certification until the EU has determined that ETKO is in full compliance. Additionally, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified NOP of ETKO suspension and cancelation of ETKO accreditation. Specific information regarding CFIA actions is located on [CFIA website](#).*
  
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?  
*[NOP] Each government has independent processes for reviewing, auditing and approving certifying agents. Under the US system we have specific compliance procedures which provide due process rights to certified farms, handlers and certifiers when noncompliances are identified.*
  
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?  
*[NOP] We have what is listed on the Organic Integrity Database. Each certified operation lists the type of organic products are produced and/or handled. There is no information on quantity.*
  
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?  
*[NOP] We post all audit reports once they are finalized.*

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM

**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>

**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](https://twitter.com/USDA_AMS) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Re: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Friday, January 20, 2017 1:39:50 PM

---

FYI - we also just recently received a FOIA for ETKO appeal records related to the settlement agreement – we will be releasing appeals records to John Bobbe, OFARM Executive Director. And, posting on our website.

On Jan 20, 2017, at 11:16 AM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <[Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

Good morning,

We received a few more follow-up questions from the WSJ. The reporter would like responses back next week. Thanks in advance!

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->Why was a settlement agreement agreed upon with ETKO instead of a suspension?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->Have all issues of noncompliance with ETKO been corrected?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->Are there any outstanding complaints or investigations related to ETKO?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->What was the nature of the violations that led to the settlement agreement with ETKO?

*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 6:37 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Thanks for pulling this together!

Sam Jones-Ellard  
USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service  
Public Affairs

202.660.2268

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 12, 2017, at 6:08 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?

*[NOP] Witness audits were conducted in Ukraine in October 2016.*

2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?

*[NOP] We have not received any complaints against ETKO. We have received complaints about organic corn imports from Turkey. An investigation is currently in progress.*

3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?

*[NOP] The NOP has copies of the audit reports that led to EU and Canadian sanctions against ETKO. ETKO was suspended by the EU and is not allowed to issue EU organic certification until the EU has determined that ETKO is in full compliance. Additionally, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified NOP of ETKO suspension and cancelation of ETKO accreditation. Specific information regarding CFIA actions is located on [CFIA website](#).*

4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why? *[NOP] Each government has independent processes for reviewing, auditing and approving certifying agents. Under the US system we have specific compliance procedures which provide due process rights to certified farms, handlers and certifiers when noncompliances are identified.*

5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?

*[NOP] We have what is listed on the Organic Integrity Database. Each certified operation lists the type of organic products are produced and/or handled. There is no information on quantity.*

6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can

share? *[NOP] We post all audit reports once they are finalized.*

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator

National Organic Program

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM

**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>

**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->6. <!--[endif]-->Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog.](#)



**From:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Friday, January 20, 2017 11:16:44 AM

---

Good morning,

We received a few more follow-up questions from the WSJ. The reporter would like responses back next week. Thanks in advance!

1. Why was a settlement agreement agreed upon with ETKO instead of a suspension?
2. Have all issues of noncompliance with ETKO been corrected?
3. Are there any outstanding complaints or investigations related to ETKO?
4. What was the nature of the violations that led to the settlement agreement with ETKO?

*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 6:37 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Thanks for pulling this together!

Sam Jones-Ellard  
USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service  
Public Affairs  
202.660.2268

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 12, 2017, at 6:08 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?  
*[NOP] Witness audits were conducted in Ukraine in October 2016.*
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?  
*[NOP] We have not received any complaints against ETKO. We have received complaints about organic corn imports from Turkey. An investigation is*

currently in progress.

3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?  
*[NOP] The NOP has copies of the audit reports that led to EU and Canadian sanctions against ETKO. ETKO was suspended by the EU and is not allowed to issue EU organic certification until the EU has determined that ETKO is in full compliance. Additionally, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified NOP of ETKO suspension and cancelation of ETKO accreditation. Specific information regarding CFIA actions is located on [CFIA website](#).*
  
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why? *[NOP] Each government has independent processes for reviewing, auditing and approving certifying agents. Under the US system we have specific compliance procedures which provide due process rights to certified farms, handlers and certifiers when noncompliances are identified.*
  
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?  
*[NOP] We have what is listed on the Organic Integrity Database. Each certified operation lists the type of organic products are produced and/or handled. There is no information on quantity.*
  
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share? *[NOP] We post all audit reports once they are finalized.*

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?

2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Re: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 6:37:18 PM

---

Thanks for pulling this together!

Sam Jones-Ellard  
USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service  
Public Affairs  
202.660.2268

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 12, 2017, at 6:08 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?  
*[NOP] Witness audits were conducted in Ukraine in October 2016.*
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?  
*[NOP] We have not received any complaints against ETKO. We have received complaints about organic corn imports from Turkey. An investigation is currently in progress.*
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?  
*[NOP] The NOP has copies of the audit reports that led to EU and Canadian sanctions against ETKO. ETKO was suspended by the EU and is not allowed to issue EU organic certification until the EU has determined that ETKO is in full compliance. Additionally, The Canadian Food Inspection Agency notified NOP of ETKO suspension and cancelation of ETKO accreditation. Specific information regarding CFIA actions is located on [CFIA website](#).*
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?  
*[NOP] Each government has independent processes for reviewing, auditing and approving certifying agents. Under the US system we have specific compliance procedures which provide due process rights to certified farms, handlers and certifiers when noncompliances are identified.*
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?  
*[NOP] We have what is listed on the Organic Integrity Database. Each certified operation lists the type of organic products are produced and/or handled. There is no information on quantity.*
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?  
*[NOP] We post*

*all audit reports once they are finalized.*

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->6. <!--[endif]-->Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Crail, Lars - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 3:47:52 PM

---

We are already working on a response.

*Cheri*

---

**From:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 3:09 PM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Jones, Samuel - AMS <[Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov)>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Mann, Renee - AMS <[Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov)>; Crail, Lars - AMS <[Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions

AIA – Please take the lead in developing a response to these. For reference, the ETKO settlement agreement with the NOP is posted at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOPSettlementETKO.pdf>

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** Jones, Samuel - AMS <[Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov)>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Mann, Renee - AMS <[Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov)>; Crail, Lars - AMS <[Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Looping in Cheri, ReneeM and Lars.

Thanks,

*Renee GK*

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Crail, Lars - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 3:08:47 PM

---

AIA – Please take the lead in developing a response to these. For reference, the ETKO settlement agreement with the NOP is posted at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOPSettlementETKO.pdf>

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** Jones, Samuel - AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>; Mann, Renee - AMS <Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov>; Crail, Lars - AMS <Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Looping in Cheri, ReneeM and Lars.

Thanks,

*Renee GK*

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!



*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:18:42 PM

---

Thanks!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*  
Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** Jones, Samuel - AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>; Mann, Renee - AMS <Renee.Mann@ams.usda.gov>; Crail, Lars - AMS <Lars.Crail@ams.usda.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: WSJ Follow-up Questions

Looping in Cheri, ReneeM and Lars.

Thanks,

*Renee GK*

---

**From:** Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Holmes, Vella - AMS <[Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Vella.Holmes@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?

5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](https://twitter.com/USDA_AMS) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** ["Marlene Moore"](#); [Susan M Ranck](#); [Jean Richardson](#); [Jim Riddle](#)  
**Cc:** [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Elizabeth Okutuga](#); [Reinaldo Figueiredo](#)  
**Subject:** USDA NOP files available  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:43:00 PM

---

Dear Marlene,

The following files have been uploaded to CloudVault and are available for you:

1. Basin and Range Organics (BAR-O)
2. Primus Labs
3. Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO)
4. Ecocert ICO
5. Texas Department of Ag

These files are provided in compressed or “.zip” format. Please let me know if you have issues with access.

Kind regards,

*Renee*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** US-EU DVC draft minutes  
**Date:** Friday, March 18, 2016 3:44:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [160202 OWG DRAFT minutes.doc](#)

---

Hello, Team-

Attached please find the draft minutes from the 2 Feb. 2016 DVC with the EU.

Please review at your earliest convenience. Enter any comments or edits in “track changes” mode.

Thank you!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)



## Note to the file

**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

### 1. Plurilateral arrangement

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

#### February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. Not full equivalency expected. US aim to ensure products access to Taiwan. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about pineapple and bananas production.

## **5. Update on ETKO**

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## **6. Update on EU review**

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## **7. Update on US aquaculture standards**

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has been postponed.

## **8. AOB**

OFIS irregularities: EC called US attention again to the delays in replying to OFIS irregularities' notifications. US is the country with the worst record in replying late. This is public information shared with EU Member States and could damage US image. US expressed its willingness to improve the situation.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

Manuel ROSSI PRIETO



**From:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** WSJ Follow-up Questions  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 10, 2017 2:04:19 PM

---

Good afternoon,

Last week, Miles did an interview with the WSJ on organic imports. The reporter has the following follow-up questions I could use some help on. Ideally, he would like responses by the end of the week.

1. When was the most recent audit of ETKO?
2. Were any actions taken against ETKO based off of complaints received?
3. Did Canada or the EU share compliance information about ETKO and why they took action against the certifier?
4. If a company or ACA gets in trouble with a country that we have an equivalency arrangement with, does that company get in trouble with the US as well? In not, why?
5. Do we have any stats on the amount/type of products that ETKO certifies?
6. Is there a master schedule of all ACA audits that we can share?

Thanks in advance!

*Sam Jones-Ellard*

Public Affairs Specialist  
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service  
202.660.2268

Follow us on Twitter [@USDA\\_AMS](#) or [read our stories on the USDA blog](#).

**From:** [Crail, Lars - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Davis, Graham - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Reid, John - AMS](#); [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#); [Pattillo, Devon - AMS](#); [Claypool, Rebecca E - AMS](#); [Backus, Sonya - AMS](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#); [Zuck, Penelope - AMS](#); [Adams, Edith - AMS](#); [Caceres, Miguel - AMS](#); [Friesenhahn, Martin - AMS](#); [Gebel, Kelley - AMS](#); [Heckart, Patricia - AMS](#); [Kohles, Alan - AMS](#); [Lopez, Mike - AMS](#); [Ross, Steve - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Auditor Memo 16 - 10 2017 Audit Schedule  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 21, 2016 5:19:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[2017 CY audit plan 12 20 16.xlsx](#)

---

NOP and QAD Auditors:

Attached is a copy of the 2017 NOP Audit Schedule and below is a link where the current version of the schedule is maintained: [P:\AIA\Audit Planning - Calendar Year\2017](#)

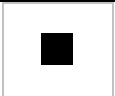
The schedule changes frequently as I receive information regarding confirmation of the Audit ID and dates throughout the year. It is important that you check the schedule frequently for updates (additional audits, audit postponement, etc...).

The proposed audits are identified with a month. The month is the preferred timeframe the audit should occur; however, the assigned Lead Auditor has some discretion to propose an alternate month/date for compelling reasons.

Review the audit schedule to see if you are assigned as the Lead Auditor or other assigned role. If you are the Lead Auditor, coordinate your audit planning and activities with the rest of the audit team and me. If you are the Lead Auditor, please contact the certifiers by January 15 and notify them of the proposed month you intend to conduct the audit.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Lars Crail  
USDA NOP  
202.205.5536 office  
(b) (6) mobile







**From:** [Panagl, Aurel \(Vienna\)](#)  
**To:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Hansi, Martin \(Vienna\)](#)  
**Subject:** AW: Contact information for De Trade House Kherson  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 09, 2015 6:21:29 AM

---

Dear Mr. Lopez,

I am sorry to inform you that SGS Austria has no more mutual business with this company. And therefore no up to date contact information.

As far as I know they were transferred to CB ETKO, but after what happened to ETKO they will now be certified by another CB, unfortunately we have no information about that.

Sorry we couldn't help you sufficiently.

Best regards \ Mit freundlichen Grüßen

**Dipl. - Ing. Aurel Panagl**

**CTS - Food Services**

Fachbereichsbetreuer

**SGS Austria Control-Co Ges.m.b.H.**

Diefenbachgasse 35  
A - 1150 Wien, Austria

Phone: +43 1 512 25 67 -4403

---

**Von:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS [mailto:JasonJ.Lopez@ams.usda.gov]

**Gesendet:** Dienstag, 08. September 2015 15:42

**An:** Panagl, Aurel (Vienna)

**Cc:** Mann, Renee - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS

**Betreff:** Contact information for De Trade House Kherson

Dear DI Aurel Panagl,

The NOP is currently trying to contact Nikolay Sergheev of the "De Trade House Kherson" in the Ukraine, a former SGS NOP certified operation. The contact information we received from SGS upon it's surrender of NOP accreditation is not a deliverable address. As SGS certifies other organic schemes, I considered the operation may still be an active client of SGS. I would appreciate any updated contact information (e-mail, physical address, etc..) SGS may have for Nikolay Sergheev of the "De Trade House Kherson" in the Ukraine.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

**Jason Lopez**

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Information in this email and any attachments is confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual(s) to whom it is addressed or otherwise directed. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Company. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. The Company accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email. All SGS services are rendered in accordance with the applicable

SGS conditions of service available on request and accessible at  
<http://www.sgs.com/en/Terms-and-Conditions.aspx>

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** CloudVault and ANSI peer review  
**Date:** Friday, May 13, 2016 2:57:00 PM

---

Hi, Cheri and Robert-

I recently invited you to the CloudVault folder "NOP Peer Review 2016." This is the vehicle for sharing documents with the ANSI team for a review of NOP accreditation procedures.

In summary, the following documents have been requested as part of the review process:

- NOP Handbook (available online)
  - General Accreditation Policies and Procedures NOP 2000
  - Separation of Duties in Certification Decisions NOP 2006
  - Information Submission Requirements for Certifying Agents NOP 2024
  - Internal Program Review Requirements NOP 2025
  - Instruction -- Responding to Non-compliances NOP 2403
  - Personnel Performance Evaluations NOP 2027
  - Auditor Criteria NOP 2500
  - Evaluating Auditor Performance NOP 2501
- NOP Internal Procedures (provided by RGK)
  - Accreditation Committee Instruction NOP 2012
  - Accreditation Committee Timeline NOP 2012-1
  - Accreditation Committee Timeline NOP 2039
  - Extending Accreditation Activities NOP 2501-1
  - Auditor-in-Training Evaluation NOP 2501-2
- The following accreditation decisions (certifier files) have been provided as requested by ANSI team (provided by RGK):
  - BAR-O
  - Primus Labs "satellite"
  - ETKO-Turkey
  - Ecocert ICO
  - TX Dept. of Ag

I am happy to meet with you if you would like more background about the process thus far. Please let me know if you have any questions.

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

**From:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Howley, JannaB - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: ETKO  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 10:47:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

FYI

---

**From:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 10:36 AM  
**To:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Cc:** (b) (6); Courtney, Cheri - AMS  
**Subject:** RE: ETKO

Dear Renée,

In terms of nonconformities, relevant information was primarily sourced from the IOAS audit report. In summary the assessors found the ETKO control system deficient in its implementation in a number of important aspects including:

- Insufficient rigour and integrity of inspection
- Acceptance of vague authority declarations on previous land use without checking veracity
- Inability to demonstrate effective controls
- Poor management of sample taking
- Inattention to dates of last use of non-allowed inputs and parallel production
- Lack of on-site input/output balance audits at handlers and processors
- Lack of regulation of non-organic seed use
- Not holding the operator to account for failings by sub-contractors
- Sales by sub-contractors
- An inspector payment system in Ukraine that lends itself to conflicting interest

With specific regard to the irregularity cases notified in OFIS, the assessors found that the ETKO investigation was unable to demonstrate full traceability of the product or fully link available samples and analyses to the shipments. More details can be made available where necessary.

These nonconformities together with the recurrence of irregularity cases notified in OFIS indicated a systematic malfunctioning of the control measures applied. It also appeared that ETKO was unable to take adequate corrective measures in respect of the deficiencies reported and in response to the serious infringements observed. In such circumstances the risk existed for the consumer to be misled about the true nature of the products certified by ETKO. Consequently, ETKO was withdrawn from the EU list.

Best regards,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)



[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted signature block]



(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS [<mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov>]

**Sent:** Friday, June 26, 2015 3:45 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Subject:** FW: ETKO

Dear (b) (6), (b) (7)(C),

I hope this e-mail finds you well. The USDA NOP is in need of additional information regarding ETKO. I would appreciate it if the EU could share information on the specific nonconformities and other deficiencies noted with respect to ETKO.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.

Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS

**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2015 1:59 PM

**To:** (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS; (b) (6)

**Subject:** RE: ETKO

Dear (b) (6), (b) (7)(C),

Thank you for providing information on the actions the EU has taken with regard to Ekolojik Tarim Kontrol Organizasyonu (ETKO).

The USDA NOP is currently in the process of gathering information on the situation with ETKO. To this end, the USDA NOP would appreciate if the EU could share information on the specific nonconformities and other deficiencies noted with respect to ETKO.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.

Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

---

**From:** [Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu) [<mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 17, 2015 8:18 AM

**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS

**Cc:** Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS; (b) (6)

; (b) (6)

**Subject:** ETKO

Dear Miles,

We would like to inform you about the measures taken against ETKO, a control body listed in Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008. As this control body is NOP accredited, the information below may be useful to you.

In recent months the Commission received several notifications from Member States concerning high volume shipments of organic goods imported from Ukraine into the Union containing residues of plant protection products that are not allowed in organic farming according to Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008. The goods in question had been certified under Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 by "Ekolojik Tarim Kontrol Organizasyonu" (ETKO).

Following information received by the Commission from ETKO and an on-the-spot examination of its activities by its accreditation body, serious deficiencies in the checks carried out and a substantial number of non-conformities were documented, which all together indicated a systematic malfunctioning of the control measures applied. It also appeared that ETKO was unable to take adequate corrective measures in respect of the deficiencies reported and in response to the serious infringements observed.

Consequently, ETKO has been withdrawn from Annex IV in accordance with points (d), (e) and (f) of the first subparagraph of Article 12(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008.

Best regards,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

■

■

■

**From:** [Panagl, Aurel \(Vienna\)](#)  
**To:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Hansi, Martin \(Vienna\)](#)  
**Subject:** AW: Contact information for De Trade House Kherson  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 09, 2015 6:21:29 AM

---

Dear Mr. Lopez,

I am sorry to inform you that SGS Austria has no more mutual business with this company. And therefore no up to date contact information. As far as I know they were transferred to CB ETKO, but after what happened to ETKO they will now be certified by another CB, unfortunately we have no information about that.

Sorry we couldn't help you sufficiently.

Best regards \ Mit freundlichen Grüßen

**Dipl. - Ing. Aurel Panagl**

**CTS - Food Services**

Fachbereichsbetreuer

**SGS Austria Controll-Co Ges.m.b.H.**

Diefenbachgasse 35  
A - 1150 Wien, Austria

Phone: +43 1 512 25 67 -4403

---

**Von:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS [mailto:JasonJ.Lopez@ams.usda.gov]  
**Gesendet:** Dienstag, 08. September 2015 15:42  
**An:** Panagl, Aurel (Vienna)  
**Cc:** Mann, Renee - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Betreff:** Contact information for De Trade House Kherson

Dear DI Aurel Panagl,

The NOP is currently trying to contact Nikolay Sergheev of the "De Trade House Kherson" in the Ukraine, a former SGS NOP certified operation. The contact information we received from SGS upon it's surrender of NOP accreditation is not a deliverable address. As SGS certifies other organic schemes, I considered the operation may still be an active client of SGS. I would appreciate any updated contact information (e-mail, physical address, etc..) SGS may have for Nikolay Sergheev of the "De Trade House Kherson" in the Ukraine.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268

Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Information in this email and any attachments is confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual(s) to whom it is addressed or otherwise directed. Please note that any views or opinions presented in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Company. Finally, the recipient should check this email and any attachments for the presence of viruses. The Company accepts no liability for any damage caused by any virus transmitted by this email. All SGS services are rendered in accordance with the applicable SGS conditions of service available on request and accessible at <http://www.sgs.com/en/Terms-and-Conditions.aspx>

**From:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**To:** [ma@etko.org](mailto:ma@etko.org)  
**Cc:** [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Yang, RobertH - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Contact information for de Trade House Kherson  
**Date:** Friday, September 11, 2015 11:39:00 AM

---

Dear Dr. Mustafa Akyuz,

The NOP is currently trying to contact Nikolay Sergheev of the “De Trade House Kherson” in the Ukraine, a former SGS NOP certified operation. The contact information we currently have is not a deliverable address. I was informed that Mr. Sergheev may have become certified with Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO). I would appreciate any updated contact information (e-mail, physical address, etc..) SGS may have for Nikolay Sergheev of the “De Trade House Kherson” in the Ukraine.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager  
USDA National Organic Program  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2649- South, Stop 0268  
Washington, DC 20250-0268  
Office: (202)260-9445  
[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

**From:** [ma@etko.org](mailto:ma@etko.org)  
**To:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](mailto:Lopez, JasonJ - AMS)  
**Subject:** RE: Contact information for de Trade House Kherson  
**Date:** Saturday, September 12, 2015 7:51:16 AM

---

Mr Lopez

We are not familiar with the mentioned company and Mr Sergheev. I guess SGS must have all details of the operator. As far as I know SGS Moldavia deals with the organic certification processes in Ukraine. There the contact person is Mr. Sergiu Croitoru  
I hope to help you in this way.

Sincerely

Mustafa Akyuz

ETKO/Turkey

Details of Mr Croitoru.

**Sergiu Croitoru**

**General Manager**

**Organic and GLOBALGAP Lead Auditor**

**SGS (Moldova) S. A.**

7, M. Eminescu, Street

MD-2009, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Phone: +373 22 22 83 83

Mobile: (b) (6)

Fax: +373 22 22 50 66

E-mail: [sergiu.croitoru@sgs.com](mailto:sergiu.croitoru@sgs.com)

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS [mailto:[JasonJ.Lopez@ams.usda.gov](mailto:JasonJ.Lopez@ams.usda.gov)]

**Sent:** Friday, September 11, 2015 6:39 PM

**To:** [ma@etko.org](mailto:ma@etko.org)

**Cc:** Mann, Renee - AMS; Yang, RobertH - AMS

**Subject:** Contact information for de Trade House Kherson

Dear Dr. Mustafa Akyuz,

The NOP is currently trying to contact Nikolay Sergheev of the “De Trade House Kherson” in the Ukraine, a former SGS NOP certified operation. The contact information we currently have is not a deliverable address. I was informed that Mr. Sergheev may have become certified with Ecological Farming Control Organization (ETKO). I would appreciate any updated contact information (e-mail, physical address, etc..) SGS may have for Nikolay Sergheev of the “De Trade House Kherson” in the Ukraine.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

***Jason Lopez***

Accreditation Manager

USDA National Organic Program

1400 Independence Ave, SW

Room 2649- South, Stop 0268

Washington, DC 20250-0268

Office: (202)260-9445

[www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

**From:** [Mann, Renee - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Lopez, JasonJ - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Zuck, Penelope - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** SGS Austria and TOFC surrendered clients follow-up  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 02, 2015 6:00:06 PM

---

Hi Jason –

I would like you to work on the follow-up for the SGS Austria and TOFC clients. Please speak with Penny and RGK about these tasks. We will check in on this at our weekly meeting.

Thanks,  
Renee

Renee Mann  
Assistant Director, Accreditation and International Activities Division  
USDA National Organic Program  
(202) 260-8635  
[Join the NOP mailing list.](#)



**From:** [Davis, Graham - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: SGS Stuff  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 10, 2016 2:55:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [RE Contact information for de Trade House Kherson.msg](#)  
[Contact information for de Trade House Kherson.msg](#)  
[AW Contact information for De Trade House Kherson.msg](#)  
[SGS Austria and TOFC surrendered clients follow-up.msg](#)  
[image002.jpg](#)

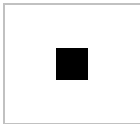
---

Renee- Here is what Jason sent me regarding the two remaining operations formerly certified by SGS. I am just not sure what letter I should send out next in order to close the books on this ACA surrender.

Thanks.

*Graham*

**Graham Davis**  
**Accreditation Manager**  
**USDA | NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM**  
**1400 Independence Ave SW | 2649-S | Washington DC 20250**  
**Desk: 202-692-0047 | Cell: (b) (6)**



[Join the NOP mailing list](#)

---

**From:** Lopez, JasonJ - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 14, 2016 8:44 AM  
**To:** Davis, Graham - AMS <Graham.Davis@ams.usda.gov>  
**Subject:** SGS Stuff

**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 08, 2016 5:04:30 AM

---

Please prepare talking points for these questions as they are under AIA responsibilities. Thanks.

**From:** Abby Youngblood [mailto:abby@nationalorganiccoalition.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2016 4:52 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>  
**Cc:** (b) (6)  
**Subject:** thank you for joining us on November 15 at the Pre-NOSB meeting

Dear Miles,

Thank you for joining us at our Pre-NOSB meeting next week on Tuesday the 15th. I am writing to confirm that we have you scheduled to take part from 2:30 to 3:30. Are there others from USDA who will be able to join us?

We are planning on a Q&A format, similar to the format we've had during the past several meetings. Two of the topics we would like to discuss are outlined at the end of this message. I will be in touch very shortly with one or two additional topics. During the meeting, we would like to present each of these topics to you, hear your response and have time for some discussion. Here is the general format we have in mind:

- 5 min for opening remarks from you
- 3 min or less for NOC member to present topic/question
- 4 to 5 min for your response
- 10 min for discussion

If we spend about 15 to 20 minutes on each question, we should be able to finish in the time allotted.

We have approximately 50 people planning to attend, including about 20 NOC members, as well as 30 others, including farmers, NOSB members, certifiers, animal welfare groups, and organic industry members.

We appreciate your dedication to organic and your engagement with NOC and others during the meeting. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have questions.

Best Regards,  
Abby and Steve

#### 1. QUESTION ON ORGANIC SEED

While the allowance for the use of non-organic seed in organic production is important for growers who lack access to appropriate organic seed, the organic seed requirement is inconsistently enforced. Many would like to see the NOP do more through guidance and regular trainings to create incentives for farms to use more organic seed and to establish a framework for continuous improvement in the use of organic seed.

How can this guidance be strengthened and what else can the NOP do to support increased use of organic seed? How will the NOP support tracking organic seed availability by crop type and region on an annual basis?

## 2. QUESTION ON ORGANIC IMPORTS

Over the past few years, there has been a dramatic increase in imports of organic commodities, especially grains. A key area of concern for U.S. organic grain growers is whether these increased imports present an opportunity for fraudulently labeled organic products to enter the United States, undermining the opportunity for U.S. producers to get a fair price in the market. Long international supply chains may increase the opportunities for fraud due to breaks in the chain of recordkeeping, organic certification and verification that the USDA organic seal is built upon. The rise of imports from Turkey especially raises concern and one Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.

The NOP took the step of reminding importers of handling regulations on July 13, 2016, but this action is not enough to address the potential for fraud.

What plans does the NOP have to address this issue? Will the NOP require importers to be certified by an NOP accredited certifier going forward? What other systems will the NOP put in place to ensure the integrity of shipments of grains and other commodities?

--

Abby Youngblood  
Executive Director  
National Organic Coalition  
[Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org](mailto:Abby@NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Cell: (b) (6)

[www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org](http://www.NationalOrganicCoalition.org)  
Twitter: @NationalOrganic  
Facebook: Facebook.com/NationalOrganicCoalition

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [Valeriya Staykova](#); [Benoit Dube](#); [Rola Yehia](#); "[David.Ladd@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:David.Ladd@inspection.gc.ca)"  
**Cc:** [Courtney Cheri - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** 29 April draft minutes US-CFIA  
**Date:** Monday, May 16, 2016 1:26:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [2016 Apr 29 US CAN dvc draft minutes.docx](#)

---

Dear Valeriya,

Please find attached the draft minutes from our recent teleconference held on 29 April 2016. I would appreciate it if you and your team could review these draft minutes and provide any edits in "track changes" mode.

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)  
[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)  
Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

## Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group

### April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference

#### Time/Location:

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) @video.gc.ca
	OR	(b) (6) @ (b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6) ## (b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca# (b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) #" when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) #" when prompted.

#### Purpose:

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
    - b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
      - i. Another branch in CFIA (independent of the organic program) performs the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, but issues with timeliness of notices and accuracy of sample information have occurred.
      - ii. CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
    - c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
      - i. CFIA provided updated standards and side-by-side
      - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
    - d. Role of “observer” clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
    - e. NOP provided update on Mexico
3. Annual Reports
- a. Annual reports shared
  - b. NOP: no questions at this time
  - c. CFIA: follow-up questions
    - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
    - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
      - 1. “Certifiers active by country” list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.
4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)
- a. Proposed timeline:
    - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
    - ii. **ACTION:** Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)
    - iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
    - iv. Spring 2017: Onsite assessment of each program
    - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
  - b. Organic import certificates status update
    - i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement

- ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
- iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
- iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.

5. USCOEA questions

- a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
- b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement

6. USDA updates

- a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
  - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
  - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
- b. Hydroponics
  - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
  - ii. Task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
  - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
- c. Aquaculture
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
  - iii.
- d. Pet Food
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate
- e. Apiculture

- i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.

#### 7. CFIA updates

- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
  - i. New National Manager, Strategies & Planning: Kathy Twardek
  - ii. New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
- b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
  - i. Reviewing comments currently and expecting regulations to go out for public comment in Canada Gazette.
  - ii. Anticipating that aquaculture will come into scope
  - iii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
- c. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements

#### 8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation

- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed that they provide material review services in Canada (per “Input Verification under COR” memo from CFIA). USDA wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation by USDA AMS is accepted (per CFIA memo). USDA AMS has granted ISO 17065 accreditation to OMRI for the scope of the National Organic Program and CAN/CGSB 32.311 Input Product Review.
- b. CFIA confirmed that OMRI may be used by Canadian CBs for material review as an accepted third party (per CFIA memo requirement #3); CFIA will evaluate this situation further.
- c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.

#### 9. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).
- b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).
- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).



10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea has assessed CFIA system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The equivalency with EU-CAN was renewed; it now includes organic wine and multi-ingredient products.
- d. CFIA is working to extend equivalency with CH currently

12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit Dube  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

## Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group

### April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference

#### Time/Location:

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	@video.gc.ca
	OR	@(b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	##(b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca##(b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.

#### Purpose:

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
    - b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 positive pesticide residue sampling results. The NOP treats these requests for follow-up from the CFIA as complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
      - i. Another ~~branch program, the National Chemical Residues Monitoring Program, within the~~ CFIA (independent of the organic program) ~~performs~~ manages the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, ~~but~~ The CFIA's organic program acknowledges that there are issues with timeliness of notices and accuracy-completeness of sample information. ~~have occurred.~~
      - ii. The CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
    - c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
      - i. CFIA provided updated standards and a summary of the key changes side-by-side
      - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
    - d. Role of "observer" clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
    - e. NOP provided update on Mexico
3. Annual Reports
- a. Annual reports shared
  - b. NOP: no questions at this time
  - c. CFIA: follow-up questions
    - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
    - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
      - 1. "Certifiers active by country" list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.
4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)
- a. Proposed timeline:
    - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
    - ii. **ACTION:** Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)

- iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
  - iv. Spring 2017: On-site assessment of each program
  - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
  - b. Organic import certificates status update
    - i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement
    - ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
    - iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
    - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
5. USCOEA questions
- a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
  - b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement
6. USDA updates
- a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
    - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
    - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
  - b. Hydroponics
    - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
    - ii. Task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
    - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
    - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
  - c. Aquaculture
    - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
    - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
    - iii. *Aquaculture products are not under the scope of the current Organic Products Regulations in Canada.*
  - d. Pet Food

- i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
        - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate
      - e. Apiculture
        - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
7. CFIA updates
- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
    - i. New Executive Director, Food Import/Export and Consumer Protection Directorate: Lyzette Lamondin
    - ~~ii.~~ New National Manager Director, Strategies & Planning Consumer Protection and Market Fairness Division: Kathy Twardek
    - ~~iii.~~ New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
  - b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
  - c. ~~Reviewing comments currently~~ and expecting the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations to go ~~to out~~ pre-publication for public comment in Canada Gazette, Part I in late 2016.
    - i. Anticipating that aquaculture will ~~come~~ be included into the scope of the organic part of the regulations
    - ii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
  - d. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements
8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation
- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed that they provide material review services in Canada (per “Input Verification under COR” memo from CFIA). USDA wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation by USDA AMS is accepted (per CFIA memo). USDA AMS has granted ISO 17065 accreditation to OMRI for the scope of the National Organic Program and CAN/CGSB 32.311 Input Product Review.
  - b. CFIA confirmed that OMRI may be used by Canadian CBs for material review as an accepted third party (per CFIA memo requirement #3); CFIA will evaluate this situation further.

- c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.

#### 9. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).
- b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).
- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).

#### 10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

#### 11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea and the has assessed CFIA have assessed each other's system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The EU-CAN equivalency ~~with EU-CAN~~ was renewedexpanded; it now includes organic wine and Canadian multi-ingredient products containing imported ingredients.
- d. CFIA is currently working to extend the equivalency with CH currentlysimilarly as with the EU

#### 12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

#### 13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit ~~Dube~~Dubé  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President



**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** Canada comments on meeting minutes  
**Date:** Thursday, June 02, 2016 9:41:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [CFIA ACIA - #8203212 - v1 - 2016 APR 29 US CAN dvc minutes.DOCX](#)

---

Hi Team!

Attached please find the draft minutes from our teleconference with Canada (29 April 2016). This version includes some edits, mostly added details or clarifications. Please review and let me know if you have any concerns or questions.

I would like to finalize these by Friday, 10 June if possible. Thank you!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

## Canada – U.S. Technical Working Group

### April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference

#### Time/Location:

1:30-3:00 pm. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 409, USTR, 1724 F St. NW
- IP Address: 65.207.24.228
- Telephone in room: 202.395.6077

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Ottawa, CAN

<u>Cisco</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6)@video.gc.ca
	OR	(b) (6)
<u>Polycom</u> IP based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
	OR	(b) (6) #(b) (6)
	OR	video.gc.ca## (b) (6)
<u>ISDN</u> based Videoconferencing system	DIAL	(b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.
By Telephone		(b) (6) OR (b) (6)
		Enter (b) (6) “#” when prompted.

#### Purpose:

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the U.S. and Canada.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. Connected via teleconference.
  - b.
2. Review June 10, 2015 meeting minutes
  - a. Compliance issues
    - i. Bob Thomas: CFIA sent information to USDA NOP; CFIA received letter from the USDA NOP; issue is resolved.
    - ii. Natural Health Products: this issue is under the authority of Health Canada; USDA NOP has not yet been contacted by Health Canada.

- iii. **ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.
  - b. CFIA sent to USDA NOP 18 complaints (15 deferred; 2 closed; 1 ongoing)
    - i. Another branch in CFIA (independent of the organic program) performs the sampling/testing for the CFIA organic program, but issues with timeliness of notices and accuracy of sample information have occurred.
    - ii. CFIA organic program staff may re-evaluate this process and focus on using a risk assessment approach; USDA NOP would be interested in reviewing the CFIA proposed directive.
  - c. Re-assessment (refer to item #4)
    - i. CFIA provided updated standards and side-by-side
    - ii. US conducting our own side-by-side analysis and a desk audit
  - d. Role of “observer” clarification (refer to #6 Plurilateral)
  - e. NOP provided update on Mexico
  - f. NOP provided information on SunOpta/non-GMO
- 3. Annual Reports
  - a. Annual reports shared
  - b. NOP: no questions at this time
  - c. CFIA: follow-up questions
    - i. Sampling and testing: NOP explained policy on mandatory sampling (require 5% minimum per 2013 requirement); NOP conducted training and published instructions for certifiers.
    - ii. Requested clarification on the list of ACAs posted on website
      - 1. “Certifiers active by country” list per the ACA 1) statement of geographical activity (self-report, from audit, or by request), 2) by US state, or 3) alphabetically.
- 4. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)
  - a. Proposed timeline:
    - i. The side-by-side analysis and desk audit process will continue into May and the summer 2016:
    - ii. **ACTION:** Within two weeks, CFIA will send a table to NOP that contains the COR standards for NOP to use as part of the desk audit (standards comparison)
    - iii. September : Post-desk audit review and discussion via videoconference
    - iv. Spring 2017: Onsite assessment of each program
    - v. Summer 2017: Finalize terms of the USCOEA
  - b. Organic import certificates status update

- i. USDA and CFIA agreed last year to change the attestation to an import certificate requirement
- ii. USDA is developing a proposed rule to require import certificates for all product entering the U.S. (not just for equivalence arrangements)
- iii. CFIA still exploring options; trying to use an existing form if possible; the organic import certificate proposal is a priority for this fiscal year.
- iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.

5. USCOEA questions

- a. COR CB accreditation in Third Country (“Country A” trade scenario)
- b. Trade route is based on the competent authority to ensure it meets the terms of the specific arrangement

6. USDA updates

- a. Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP):
  - i. NOP published proposed rule on April 15; comment period open to domestic and international comment until June 13; the timeline to review all comments and finalize the rule is not specific.
  - ii. Address this further during equivalency renewal
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP to share web link about OLPP release with CFIA
- b. Hydroponics
  - i. The NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force is currently working on this issue.
  - ii. T task force report to the NOSB will be completed in June; NOP expects proposals at the November 2016 NOSB meeting.
  - iii. **ACTION**: NOP share link to report when available on NOP website
  - iv. Address this item again during equivalency renewal.
- c. Aquaculture
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. Address this item during equivalency renewal because it is not currently part of the arrangement.
  - iii.
- d. Pet Food
  - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
  - ii. CFIA reminded the USDA NOP that this scope is not within COR mandate

- e. Apiculture
    - i. NOP plans to have a proposed rule by summer 2016, which will go out for public comment, after which a final regulation is the goal; the proposed rule essentially reflects the NOSB recommendations.
7. CFIA updates
- a. Sr. management changes at CFIA:
    - i. New National Manager, Strategies & Planning: Kathy Twardek
    - ii. New Program Specialist, Labeling, Organic & Packaging: David Ladd
  - b. New Canadian Organic Standards (COS) released November 25, 2015
    - i. Reviewing comments currently and expecting regulations to go out for public comment in Canada Gazette.
    - ii. Anticipating that aquaculture will come into scope
    - iii. No changes expected for renegotiations of equivalencies
  - c. CFIA attended BioFach and presented a session on plurilateral/multilateral arrangements
8. Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and ISO 17065 Accreditation
- a. USDA NOP discussed material review programs and their roles under the USDA organic program. NOP met with OMRI during NOSB meetings this week: OMRI discussed trying to provide material review services in Canada (per “Input Verification under COR” memo from CFIA). OMRI wants to confirm that OMRI ISO 17065 accreditation is accepted (per CFIA memo).
  - b. CFIA explained that ISO 17065 is only for certification bodies to certify organic products under COR; CFIA cannot recognize or accredit OMRI under their system to ISO 17065; OMRI may be used by CBs for material review only (per CFIA memo requirement #3) as an accepted third party, but OMRI cannot refer to accreditation to COR. CFIA will evaluate this situation further.
  - c. USDA and CFIA agreed that the responsibility for material approval still lies ultimately with the CB.
9. Plurilateral trade arrangements
- a. U.S. and EU have developed a non-paper on the plurilateral concept that contains broad ideas and to foster further discussions. The group is also working closely with Switzerland (CH).
  - b. CH is organizing the first government to government meeting (planned for November 2016 in CH). CAN will be formally invited by U.S. to participate in this meeting (after clearance of non-paper is complete).

- c. **ACTION**: USDA will 1) share the non-paper with CFIA and 2) set up a call to review the non-paper with CFIA (tentatively planned for June).

#### 10. USDA update on Mexico

- a. Onsite assessment is completed and was favorable.
- b. Working to further develop the arrangement structure over the summer 2016.
- c. New program has several items to address but USDA is optimistic for establishing equivalency before April 2017.

#### 11. CFIA Updates

- a. Mexico: CFIA negotiations are in-process and are expected to move forward after Mexico concludes negotiations with the EU and U.S.
- b. S. Korea: negotiations with CFIA are in process; S. Korea has assessed CFIA system; now negotiating terms of the arrangement.
- c. EU: The equivalency with EU-CAN was renewed; it now includes organic wine and multi-ingredient products.
- d. CFIA is working to extend equivalency with CH currently

#### 12. ETKO (Turkey)

- a. An additional assessment was conducted by CFIA and a decision will be rendered soon.
- b. USDA has no plans to conduct an onsite assessment currently due to U.S. travel restrictions for Turkey.
- c. **ACTION**: CFIA will inform the USDA NOP of the decision rendered for ETKO.

#### 13. Next Technical Working Group meeting

- a. Tentatively planned for October 2016

**Canada – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**April 29, 2016 – by Teleconference**

**Participants**

**Canada**

Rola Yehia  
National Manager  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Valeriya Staykova  
Lead Auditor  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Benoit Dube  
Regulations and Standards Officer  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**Subject:** Canada meeting, draft minutes  
**Date:** Monday, May 02, 2016 1:25:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [2016 Apr 29 US CAN dvc draft minutes.docx](#)

---

Hi, Team!

Attached are the draft minutes from last Friday's teleconference with Canada. I would appreciate it if you could review these minutes and provide feedback (track changes mode).

I would like to send the minutes to Canada by the end of the week if possible. Thanks!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)



**EU – U.S. Organic Working Group**  
**September 15, 2015 – by Videoconference**

**Time/Location:**

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Washington D.C.

- 1605-S, USDA South Building, 1400 Independence Ave.

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Brussels, BEL

- Only H.323 compatible system (Skype not supported)
- From a Tamberg machine: [72981@147.67.16.68](mailto:72981@147.67.16.68); [72981@ec.europa.eu](mailto:72981@ec.europa.eu)
- From a Polycomm machine: 147.67.16.68##72981

**Purpose:**

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the US and EU.

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) discussions
  - a. US and EU representatives agreed that EU organic program falls within the scope of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement (not the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures). The US provided a draft WTO TBT notification (under Article 10) of the US-EU arrangement to the EU staff; the EU agrees with the substance of the document.
  - b. The EU would like to conduct a joint notification with the US; the US agreed.
  - c. J. Doherty suggested the US and the EU inform the TBT committee of the notifications during their meeting in Geneva on November 4-5, 2015; the US will submit the notification to the WTO within the next 2-3 weeks and share the statement with the Committee.
  - d. Switzerland and Korea have already agreed to notify the US equivalence arrangements; the US will be notifying the WTO on behalf of Canada and Japan.
3. Plurilateral trade arrangements

- a. The draft of the US concepts paper was shared and comments requested from EU colleagues. The EU staff will need more time to review the document. There was also discussion about the potential launch or sharing of the plurilateral paper/process at BioFach 2016 or other venues with potential partner countries.
  - b. Determine next steps
    - i. Mid-October: the EU will share ideas on US concepts paper.
    - ii. Mid-October: the EU will propose meeting ideas for workshop/launch.
4. Status update on current US and EU equivalency negotiations
- a. Mexico
    - i. US: Equivalency negotiations continue. The NOP has shared documents from their program; Mexican officials have accompanied NOP staff on audits of certification bodies in the US. The NOP is still evaluating the Mexican program via desk audit; there will be additional meetings to discuss issues this fall. The US agreed to share the Mexican program assessment report with the EU once it is conducted.
    - ii. EU: Now starting technical discussions of Mexico legislation.
  - b. New Zealand
    - i. US: Currently have recognition agreement; New Zealand has requested equivalency arrangement (with export standards only); US is currently in discussions with New Zealand and is planning an onsite audit in 2016
    - ii. EU: Arrangement with New Zealand since 2002 and the scope covers unprocessed and processed plant products, live animals, and vegetable plant products for propagation; since 2014 had recognition of wine standard. The arrangement is bilateral but is primarily a program for New Zealand exporters; the EU receives ~12,000 tons/year of product from New Zealand. There have not been any particular nonconformities thus far; the EU/FVO has never conducted an audit of New Zealand (they are considered low-risk). New Zealand has some concerns about Pacific Islands that are not covered by arrangement.
  - c. Taiwan
    - i. US: Received request for equivalency arrangement and is currently conducting a “side by side” analysis. The US will share this information with the EU as process unfolds.
    - ii. EU: There are discussions about Taiwan re-applying to the EU, but one major issue is that Taiwan does not recognize all EU member states that joined after 2004.
  - d. Others?
    - i. India

1. US: The current recognition arrangement has significant issues; the US is continuing to work with India over the next 6 months-1 year to resolve/change arrangement. The NOP appreciated being able to participate in the recent FVO audit of India.
    2. EU: Nothing to share as the final report is not yet completed.
  - ii. Chile
    1. EU: equivalency expected in 2016.
  - iii. Ecuador
    1. EU: equivalency expected in 2016.
  - iv. Canada (CA)
    1. FVO will conduct an audit in CA from September 21 to October 2, 2015 in CA soon.
    2. CA would not allow US observers to participate in the FVO audit “because they want to better understand the role of the observer and want clearly defined roles.”
    3. Both sides discussed the need to develop criteria on the role of observers.
5. Status update on EU standards review from March
  - a. Update: The Council of Agricultural Ministers ~~proposal-common position from~~ was adopted in June 2015 is still active, but and next step is the adoption of the European Parliament report they are awaiting a report from the EU Parliament, which is expected in October 2015. Next it is likely that meetings and negotiations will start, but they don’t expect to finish before Christmas 2015. This is a political priority and visibility ~~is~~ expected to remain high.
6. Aquaculture standard:
  - a. The draft is currently under review.
  - b. The US expects publication in November 2015.
7. Next Organic Working Group meeting
  - a. Set for Thursday, 12 November 2015
  - b. *Update:* meeting postponed to Monday, 25 January 2016.

**EU – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**September 15, 2015 – by Videoconference**

**Participants**

**European Union**

Joao Onofre  
~~Assistant to the Director General~~Head of  
Unit - Organics  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Manuel Rossi-Prieto  
~~Policy Officer~~Organics – International  
Sector  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Jean Ferrière  
Desk Officer for the USA  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Sergio Pavón González  
Negotiator WTO  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Klaus Blank  
Geographical Indications and WTO legal  
issues  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Claudia Pierdominici  
WTO notifications co-ordinator  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International  
Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Renée Gebault King  
Accreditation Manager  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Marianne McElroy  
Director, Processed Products & Technical  
Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

Kelly Strzelecki (via telephone)  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products &  
Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural  
Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative  
(USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

Formatted: Font color: Auto, English (United States)

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt, Line spacing: single

Formatted: Font color: Auto, English (United States)

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt, Line spacing: single

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt, Line spacing: single

Formatted: Font color: Auto, Italian (Italy)

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt, Line spacing: single

Formatted: Italian (Italy)

Formatted: Font color: Auto, Italian (Italy)

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt, English (United States)

**EU – U.S. Organic Working Group**  
**January 25, 2016 – by Videoconference**

**Time/Location:**

9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Washington D.C., USA

- Room 305, Winder Building, 600 17<sup>th</sup> St. NW
- Conference Room Phone: +1 202.395.9613
- IP 65.207.24.231 (Up to 1Mbps)

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Brussels, BEL

- Only H.323 compatible system (Skype not supported)
- From a Tamberg machine: [72981@147.67.16.68](tel:72981147671668); [72981@ec.europa.eu](mailto:72981@ec.europa.eu)
- From a Polycomm machine: 147.67.16.68##72981

**Purpose:**

Ongoing discussions for maintenance of the equivalence agreement between the US and EU.

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Plurilateral trade arrangements
  - a. Draft concept papers from EU and US
    - i. Discuss feedback and synthesis of US and EU proposals
    - ii. Timeline moving forward
  - b. Discuss joint meeting on plurilateral arrangements with potential partner countries
    - i. Location and potential dates
    - ii. List of countries to invite
3. US-EU trade arrangement questions
  - a. Private label clarification: import of EU certified product for USDA certified private label company
  - b. Other trade clarifications?
4. Update on WTO TBT notifications (Geneva meeting November 2015)
  - a. US-EU joint notification
  - b. Other notifications

- i. Switzerland and Korea on behalf of the US
  - ii. US on behalf of Canada and Japan
5. Update on ongoing US and/or EU equivalency negotiations
  - a. Mexico
  - b. New Zealand
  - c. Taiwan
  - d. Chile
  - e. Ecuador
  - f. India
  - ~~g.~~ Canada
  - ~~g.~~~~h.~~ Colombia
6. Update on ETKO (Turkey)
7. Update on EU standards review/report from EU Parliament
8. Update on US aquaculture standards release
9. Other topics?
10. Next Organic Working Group meeting

**EU – U.S. Organic Equivalence Discussions**

**February 15, 2015 – by Videoconference**

**Participants**

**European Union**

Joao Onofre  
Assistant to the Director General  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Manuel Rossi-Prieto  
Policy Officer – International Sector  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Miles McEvoy  
Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Cheri Courtney  
Director, Accreditation and International Activities Division  
National Organic Program (NOP)  
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

Kelly Strzelecki  
Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division  
Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative**

Julia Doherty  
Senior Director, SPS and Agricultural Affairs  
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)  
Executive Office of the President

**From:** [Doherty, Julia](#)  
**To:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: EU-US meetings, draft minutes and draft agenda  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 19, 2016 5:51:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[2016 Jan 25 draft agenda DVC\\_EC.docx](#)  
[2015 Sep 15 agenda DVC draft minutes USDA\\_EC.docx](#)

---

Are y'all available to pre-game what we say to the EU on plurilateral strategy?  
Also, in case you missed it, Argentina has notified its proposed organic regs to the WTO.

---

**From:** Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu [mailto:Manuel.ROSSI-PRIETO@ec.europa.eu]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 18, 2016 5:04 AM  
**To:** ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov; Joao.Onofre-Antas-Goncalves@ec.europa.eu;  
Francesco.MEGGIOLARO@ec.europa.eu  
**Cc:** Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov; Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov; Kelly.Strzelecki@fas.usda.gov;  
Doherty, Julia  
**Subject:** RE: EU-US meetings, draft minutes and draft agenda

Dear Renée,

You will find attached the draft minutes from 15 September slightly modified and the draft agenda for next week's meeting with the addition of Colombia for the discussion on ongoing equivalency negotiations.

Both documents can become final for us.

On the plurilateral agreement, we are finalising our comments and will send them to you as soon as possible.

Best regards

**Manuel ROSSI PRIETO**

Policy Officer – International Sector



**European Commission**

DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Directorate B. Multilateral Relations, Quality Policy

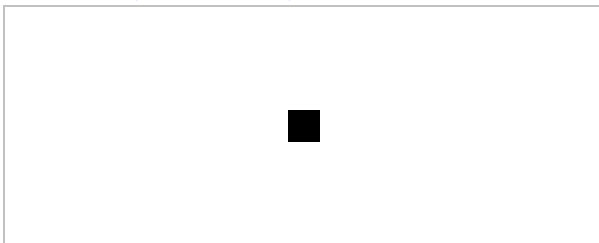
Unit B.4. Organics

L130 03/224

B-1049 Brussels/Belgium

+32 2 295 21 27

[manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu](mailto:manuel.rossi-prieto@ec.europa.eu)



---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS [mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2016 8:16 PM

**To:** ROSSI PRIETO Manuel (AGRI); ONOFRE Joao (AGRI); (b) (6)



**Cc:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS; Doherty, Julia

**Subject:** EU-US meetings, draft minutes and draft agenda

Dear Colleagues,

We are looking forward to the video conference scheduled for Monday, 25 January 2016 (9:00-11:00 am Washington/3:00-5:00 p.m. Brussels).

In preparation for the virtual meeting, we would appreciate your review/input on the (attached) following items:

- Draft minutes from our 15 September 2015 video meeting
- Draft agenda for 25 January 2016 meeting (connection information provided)

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please let me know.

Kind regards,

**Renée**

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.

Accreditation Manager

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave SW | Room 2649-South, Stop 0268

Washington, D.C. 20250-0268 | Tel: 202.720.3252 | Fax: 202.205.7808 | [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

Subscribe to the USDA's [Organic Insider](#) to receive updates in your e-mail!

**From:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**To:** [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: US-EU DVC draft minutes  
**Date:** Monday, March 21, 2016 5:51:30 PM  
**Attachments:** [160202 OWG DRAFT minutes.doc](#)

---

(b) (5)

Miles

---

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, March 18, 2016 3:45 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov>; Strzelecki, Kelly - FAS <Kelly.Strzelecki@fas.usda.gov>; Doherty, Julia <julia\_doherty@ustr.eop.gov>  
**Subject:** US-EU DVC draft minutes

Hello, Team-

Attached please find the draft minutes from the 2 Feb. 2016 DVC with the EU.

Please review at your earliest convenience. Enter any comments or edits in "track changes" mode.

Thank you!

*Renee GK*

USDA NOP

Office: 202.690.1312 | Mobile: (b) (6)

[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

## Minutes

Canada -U.S. Technical Working Group

February 16, 2017 – by Teleconference

### **Participants:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture:

1. Miles McEvoy Deputy Administrator National Organic Program (NOP)
2. Robert Yang Accreditation Manager National Organic Program (NOP)
3. Kelly Strzelecki Senior Trade Advisor, Processed Products & Technical Regulations Division Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

1. Dr. Gary Little , National Manager Food Systems Evaluation
2. Heather Holland, Manager Foreign Relations and Issues Management
3. Valeriya Staykova, Lead Auditor, Food Systems Evaluation
4. Marie-Claire Hurteau, Senior Program Officer Labelling, Organic and Packaging
5. Judy Waldron , Market Access Officer – Americas and the Caribbean

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of April 29, 2016 meeting minutes

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

**ACTION:** CFIA will share the pertinent Health Canada contact information with USDA NOP.

**ACTION:** National Organic Program (NOP) will share link to the NOSB Hydroponic and Aquaponic Task Force Report

3. CFIA
  - a. New Canada Organic Regime Structure

The Canadian Organic Office (COO) no longer exists as a separate office and the responsibilities for the implementation and the enforcement of the Canada Organic Regime (COR) are shared between the Food Import Export Division and the Consumer Protection and Market Fairness Division of the CFIA. The Food Systems Evaluation

Section of the Food Import Export Division is responsible for both the Food Safety Audits and the COR audits/assessments. The Foreign Relations and Issues Management Section of the Food Import Export Division is responsible for the existing equivalency arrangements including coordination of the international working groups.

Food Labelling Section of the Consumer protection and Market Fairness Division is responsible for the SIC, Organic Standard and the interpretation of the regulations as relates to labelling requirements.

It was confirmed that the main contact for the US Canada Working Group will be Heather Holland, Manager Foreign Relations and Issues Management.

#### b. Regulatory update/changes

The Government of Canada launched a public consultation on new rules to strengthen food safety. The proposed Safe Food for Canadians Regulations would better protect Canadian families by putting a greater emphasis on preventing food safety risks for all foods imported into Canada or sold across provinces. The proposal consolidates 14 sets of existing regulations into one. The Organic Products Regulations form Part 14 of the SFCR

The 90-day consultation closes on April 21, 2017.

Information and guidance explaining key elements of the proposal and what would be expected of food businesses, including videos, interactive tools, fact sheets, templates and a handbook can be found at <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/acts-and-regulations/regulatory-initiatives/sfca/consultation/learn/eng/1427299500843/1427299800380>

Revised versions of the Canadian Organic Standards were published on November 25, 2015. This update included:

- CAN/CGSB 32.310 - Organic Production Systems – General Principles and Management Standards; and
- CAN/CGSB 32.311 - Organic Production Systems – Permitted Substances Lists.

#### 4. USDA

##### a. Livestock and Poultry Practices

NOP published the document on January 18, 2017. It is currently under review by the new administration. The review period ends May 18, 2017. Some key requirements include changes to the space requirements and 5 years implementation period for indoor and outdoor access,

##### b. Organic corn and soy imports from Turkey

NOP is currently investigating increased imports of organic corn and soy from Eastern Europe.

**ACTION:** NOP will share with CFIA any intelligence with regards to imports of the organic products to Canada and re-export to the US.

c. Organic import certificates status

Initially the NOP was planning to introduce organic import certificates for all organic shipments. Because of logistics challenges with this proposed option, NOP is looking at different options that are currently in place for other programs in the US regarding the transaction/import certificates.

CFIA is exploring options under the proposed SFCR.

d. ETKO status

NOP advised that US NOP and ETKO signed a settlement agreement in 2016 followed by a compliance audit.

**ACTION:** NOP will share with CFIA link to the settlement agreement and the results from the compliance audit.

5. Re-assessment of U.S.-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA)

Proposed timeline:

- a. The side-by-side analysis and desk review - in progress.

NOP will provide desk review report with outstanding questions prior to the on-site visit

- b. Fall 2017: On-site assessment in Canada
- c. Canada will conduct an on-site assessment in the US following the assessment in Canada

6. USCOEA question

USDA-authorized certifier client wants to produce products to the USDA organic regulations "Made with Organic" labeling category that is intended to be shipped and marketed in the US under MWO claim, only.

**ACTION:** NOP will provide additional information to CFIA in regards to this request.

7. Plurilateral trade arrangements

CFIA continues to be interested in participating in the various working groups.

8. Next Technical Working Group meeting – To be confirmed at later date

DRAFT



## Note to the file

**Subject: Minutes of the US-EU Organic Working Group Videoconference, 2 February 2016**

Participants: Miles McEvoy, Cheri Courtney, Renée Gebault King (NOP), Kelly Strzelecki (FAS), Julia Doherty (USTR), Joao Onofre, Francesco Meggiolaro, Sergio Pavón González, Klaus Blank, Manuel Rossi Prieto (EC)

### 1. Plurilateral arrangement

A draft joint non-paper was discussed and finalised during the meeting. Comments on this non-paper had been previously exchanged between both sides.

Some points related to compatibility with WTO rules and to some language used were clarified. A roadmap was agreed to move forward. Regarding potential members, both parties agreed to share the responsibility to present/announce the idea to potential candidate countries, in particular those currently having equivalence arrangements with the EU and the US. US suggested to also include as potential candidates to some developing countries within Latin America (e.g.: Costa Rica). These exploratory discussions should take place in the upcoming months in view of a government-to-government (G2G) discussion that could take place after the summer in a "neutral" country like CH. CH could also be the ideal country to act as the secretariat of this process.

The agreed roadmap is the following:

#### February-April:

- USNOP will finalise the non-paper including comments made in this meeting and will send it to COM
- Both parties will launch internal consultations. US noted the need to consult the non-paper with stakeholders. EC explained that the non-paper has to be notified at EU level, according to transparency procedures.
- USNOP will suggest a preliminary list of countries to be contacted by each side.
- EC will informally contact CH at Biofach next week to explore their willingness to host the G2G discussion and to act as secretariat. CH has already shown a great interest on the plurilateral agreement.

- Videoconference EU-US by the end of March-beginning of April 2016 to follow-up.

#### April-July

- Exploratory discussions with equivalent third countries on non-paper

#### September-October

- G2G discussion in CH

## **2. US-EU trade arrangement questions**

US will send an email with some questions.

## **3. Update on WTO TBT notifications**

The EU-US joint notification was sent to WTO members. EC sent a draft joint notification to Canada and is waiting comments from the Canadian authorities. EC is preparing joint notifications regarding other mutual recognitions.

## **4. Update on ongoing US and EU equivalency negotiations**

US and EC exchanged information on ongoing negotiations with third countries.

On Mexico, US informed that an on-site inspection will take place in March. The goal is to conclude negotiations by fall 2016. EC explained that it will try to close its negotiations immediately after and asked US to share the equivalency assessment.

On New Zealand, US has planned to carry out the equivalency assessment in 2017.

On Taiwan, US informed about a peer review that will take place in US in March. Not full equivalency expected. US aim to ensure products access to Taiwan. EC referred to alternative solutions as the recognition of Taiwan's control authority.

On Chile, EC explained that negotiations are very advanced and a trade agreement (not an arrangement) is expected to be signed in 2016.

On Costa Rica, US confirmed interest in having equivalency recognition but there are significant concerns about pineapple and bananas production.



## **5. Update on ETKO**

US informed about ETKO's appeal to the decision on withdrawing accreditation. The appeal has no suspension effect. EC expressed concerns about the long procedure needed in US to withdraw accreditation to this CB.

## **6. Update on EU review**

EC explained the state-of-play of negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council. The Dutch Presidency of the EU has planned 6 "trilogue" meetings before July. The aim of the Dutch Presidency is to reach a political agreement in June. This is quite ambitious. Then some months would be needed to prepare the final text. The best scenario would be a final adoption of the new Regulation by the end of 2016.

## **7. Update on US aquaculture standards**

US informed that the adoption of aquaculture standards has been postponed.

## **8. AOB**

OFIS irregularities: EC called US attention again to the delays in replying to OFIS irregularities' notifications. US is the country with the worst record in replying late. This is public information shared with EU Member States and could damage US image. US expressed its willingness to improve the situation.

Next meeting: March-April 2016

Manuel ROSSI PRIETO

**From:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS  
**To:** [Wilburn, Tammie - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Official complaint and OIG letter filed on behalf of [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Friday, September 16, 2016 3:46:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [OIG organic imports letter final090116.doc](#)  
[NOP Complaint090716.docx](#)

---

Hi Tammie,

Per Miles' request, could you please provide a summary of this investigation? I would appreciate it if you could have something by noon on Thursday, 22 September.

Contact me if you have questions or concerns. Thanks so much!

Kind regards,

*Renée*

Renée Gebault King, Ph.D.  
Acting Chief of Staff  
USDA National Organic Program

Office: 202.690.1312 | [ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)

---

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Monday, September 12, 2016 1:24 PM  
**To:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Official complaint and OIG letter filed on behalf of [REDACTED]

Please ask Tammie to provide summary of current investigation. Thanks.

---

**From:** Rakola, Betsy - AMS  
**Sent:** Friday, September 09, 2016 3:28 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Starmer, Elanor - AMS <[Elanor.Starmer@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Elanor.Starmer@ams.usda.gov)>; Michael, Matthew - AMS <[Matthew.Michael@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Matthew.Michael@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Official complaint and OIG letter filed on behalf of [REDACTED]

FYI

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 09, 2016 3:21 PM  
**To:** Rakola, Betsy - AMS <[Betsy.Rakola@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Betsy.Rakola@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** Official complaint and OIG letter filed on behalf of [REDACTED]

Hi Betsy,

I hope all is well with you.

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) this week along with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) filed a a complaint with USDA's Office of Inspector General regarding oversight of organic imports.

In addition, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) filed a formal complaint with Miles McEvoy on possible issues with grain imported into the U.S. Specifically, the complaint cites a ship that unloaded 450,000 bushels of supposed organic grain at the Burns Harbor, IN port. The cargo originated in Turkey which has been rift with organic fraud

I just wanted to give you a heads up on this.

Best wishes,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

To: Miles McEvoy, USDA AMS Deputy Administrator

Attn: [Joan.Avila@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Joan.Avila@ams.usda.gov)

Date: September 7, 21016

From: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Re: Filing a formal complaint on behalf of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) and its organic producer members regarding potential fraudulent organic grain imports.

During the third week in May, 2016 the Nakagowa, a cargo ship docked in Burns Harbor, Indiana on Lake Michigan with a cargo of 450,000 bushels of supposedly organic corn. Further reports indicate that additional ships docked on the East Coast (Baltimore Harbor) with similar grain cargos during May, 2016 The Nakagowa took on its cargo from a Turkish port raising even further questions about the “organic integrity” of the shipment. This resulted in dumping up to 1.2 million bushels of corn on the U.S. organic market within a month.



(Source: Kramer and Eddy)

The ships port of origin was traced to a Turkish port on the Black Sea.

A 2016 report by USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service summarized the potential for fraudulent activity in the Turkish organic sector:

“According to a EUROPOL report, some Turkish companies have been involved in relabeling or repackaging products as organic and bringing the counterfeit products into the European Union, even though the products do not meet the EU's organic standards. Reports from the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in 2013, Eurofins Scientific in 2012, the Cornucopia Institute in 2013 and the French Ministry of the Economy in 2015 uncovered fraud or unapproved production methods in organic products from Turkey. There have also been instances where a few Turkish companies were found to have been using fraudulent organic certificates. Turkish news articles report that consumers may be misled by conventional products that are marketed as organic, mostly in open air bazaars or independent stores where a vendor could more easily sell a fake organic product. Although inspections and transparency in the Turkish organic food sector are improving, the integrity of organic farming, production, shipping and marketing is not always guaranteed.”<sup>1</sup>

One Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.<sup>2</sup> The introduction of additional testing regimes in the EU has reportedly led some traders to prefer to ship to non-EU destinations (including the United States), as there is less risk of rejection in U.S. markets.<sup>3</sup>

As the organic market grows rapidly around the world, resulting shortages in the supply of various commodities can create a tempting situation for those who do not value the integrity of the organic standards and see a potential to ship products fraudulently labeled as organic. The potential for fraud is being acknowledged by some participants in the organic sector, with the establishment of an Anti-Fraud Initiative to “improve cross border communication among inspection and certification bodies, trade companies, label organizations and authorities to strengthen organic integrity.”<sup>4</sup> The fact that fraud is a serious enough concern to trigger the creation of this network, and international workshops with titles such as “Best practice examples to guarantee integrity of organic exports from Turkey,”<sup>5</sup> should provide sufficient motivation to the NOP to dedicate more effort to this issue.

This type of shipment and its port of origin that USDA FAS has already cited for issues of organic fraud also raises questions about the traceability back to individual farms at the country of origin; the same standards as U.S. producers are required to meet. There is also the question of proper documentation and traceability at the U.S. port of entry.

On behalf of (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), its six member cooperatives and certified organic producers, this formal complaint is filed with your office to protect the organic integrity of U.S. producers under the NOP program and their markets.

Sincerely,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

---

<sup>1</sup> USDA Global Agriculture Information Network. “Report # TR601, Turkish Organic Market Overview.” January 26, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> IOAS. “IOAS withdraw ISO 65 accreditation of ETKO Turkey.” May 25, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication. Email to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) from a U.K. organic farmer-owned company. August 8, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Anti-Fraud Initiative. <http://www.organic-integrity.org/>

<sup>5</sup> Anti-Fraud Initiative. “Meetings and Events.” <http://www.organic-integrity.org/meetings/#c2716>

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

September 1, 2016

Inspector General Phyllis K. Fong  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Room 117-W Jamie Whitten Building  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Inspector General Fong,

We are writing to draw your attention to an emerging trend that is dramatically impacting organic markets in the United States. The (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) is a cooperative incorporated in the State of Minnesota as a marketing-agency-in-common and operates under the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) has six member organic grain and livestock marketing cooperatives with organic producers in 19 states from Montana to Texas and Louisiana to Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio and all states in between. USDA has cited (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) as the largest organized block of farmer controlled organic grain in the United States.<sup>1</sup> (b) (6), (b) (7)(D) is an advocacy organization that works to ensure that our food is produced sustainably, which includes advocating for strong organic standards and healthy markets for organic producers.

We are aware that the Office of Inspector General is conducting an audit into the USDA National Organic Program (NOP)'s oversight of an organic equivalency agreement between the United States and the European Union (EU). The audit was described in your annual plan as an effort "to ensure that European Union products marketed as organic in the United States meet the standards established in the arrangement." In the annual plan, the review of the equivalency arrangement is listed as a step to "reduce program vulnerabilities and strengthen program integrity in the delivery of program assistance."<sup>2</sup>

As part of this audit, we urge you to examine the dramatic increase in the import of organic commodities, especially grains. A key area of concern for U.S. organic grain growers, and increasingly for consumers, is whether these increased imports present an opportunity for fraudulently labeled organic products to enter the United States, undermining the opportunity for U.S. producers to get a fair price in the market.

The trend of increasing imports of organic soybeans and corn is dramatic:

- From 2013 to 2015, the dollar value of imported organic soybeans (except seed) more than doubled, from \$110 million to \$240 million.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. Rural Cooperatives Magazine. January, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General. "Annual Plan: Fiscal Year 2016." 2016. [https://www.usda.gov/oig/webdocs/2016\\_Annual\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.usda.gov/oig/webdocs/2016_Annual_Plan.pdf).

- During the first six months of 2016, 12 countries exported organic soybeans (except seed) to the United States. Turkey was the leading exporter, followed by India, and Ukraine. In 2015, Turkey was the sixth largest exporter.
- During the first six months of 2016, there was a dramatic increase in the dollar value of imported organic soybean (except seed) imports from Turkey, with more than thirty-six times the value of imports from Turkey in the first six months of 2016 than the same time period in 2015.
- From 2013 to 2015, the dollar value of imported organic yellow dent corn (except seed) more than tripled, from \$36 million to \$112 million.
- During the first six months of 2016, 8 countries exported organic yellow dent corn (except seed) to the United States. Turkey was the leading exporter, followed by Romania and the Netherlands.
- During the first six months of 2016, the dollar value of imported organic yellow dent corn (except seed) nearly doubled from the same time period in 2015.
- During the first six months of 2016, there was a dramatic increase in the dollar value of imported organic yellow dent corn (except seed) from Turkey, with more than five times the value of imports from Turkey in 2016 than the same time period in 2015. The imports from Turkey during the first six months of this year were close to double the value from Turkey for the entire year of 2015.<sup>3</sup>

As organic exports grow, so do concerns about the potential for fraudulent organic products to enter the United States, due to lack of inspections and the opportunities for fraud that occur in more complicated supply chains. These long international supply chains increase the opportunities for breaks in the chain of recordkeeping, organic certification and verification that the USDA organic seal is built upon.

We are aware that your audit focuses on the agreement between the United States and the EU. But there are connections between major exporters to the United States, such as Ukraine and Turkey, and the EU. Specifically, the rise of imports from Turkey raises concern. A 2016 report by USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service summarized the potential for fraudulent activity in the Turkish organic sector:

“According to a EUROPOL report, some Turkish companies have been involved in relabeling or repackaging products as organic and bringing the counterfeit products into the European Union, even though the products do not meet the EU's organic standards. Reports from the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in 2013, Eurofins Scientific in 2012, the Cornucopia Institute in 2013 and the French Ministry of the Economy in 2015 uncovered fraud or unapproved production methods in organic products from Turkey. There have also been instances where a few Turkish companies were found to have been using

---

<sup>3</sup> Data compiled from USDA's Economic Research Service.

fraudulent organic certificates. Turkish news articles report that consumers may be misled by conventional products that are marketed as organic, mostly in open air bazaars or independent stores where a vendor could more easily sell a fake organic product. Although inspections and transparency in the Turkish organic food sector are improving, the integrity of organic farming, production, shipping and marketing is not always guaranteed.”<sup>4</sup>

One Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.<sup>5</sup> The introduction of additional testing regimes in the EU has reportedly led some traders to prefer to ship to non-EU destinations (including the United States), as there is less risk of rejection in U.S. markets.<sup>6</sup>

As the organic market grows rapidly around the world, resulting shortages in the supply of various commodities can create a tempting situation for those who do not value the integrity of the organic standards and see a potential to ship products fraudulently labeled as organic. The potential for fraud is being acknowledged by some participants in the organic sector, with the establishment of an Anti-Fraud Initiative to “improve cross border communication among inspection and certification bodies, trade companies, label organizations and authorities to strengthen organic integrity.”<sup>7</sup> The fact that fraud is a serious enough concern to trigger the creation of this network, and international workshops with titles such as “Best practice examples to guarantee integrity of organic exports from Turkey,”<sup>8</sup> should provide sufficient motivation to the NOP to dedicate more effort to this issue.

The dramatic increases in imported organic grains are having impacts on the potential for U.S. organic farmers to sell their products for a fair price:

- One major international grain company attempting to make inroads into the U.S. domestic organic market recently told NFOrganics and (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) member organization marketer (b) (6) that he needed to get the prices for organic grain he was offering for sale down to the price they could pay for imported grain.
- Merle Kramer, Midwest Organic Farmers Coop organic grain marketer notes “many larger buyers of organic corn contracting 50,000 bushels from import brokers offer local farmers 20%-25% less than what they pay for imports, often not having room in their bins to buy domestic corn putting financial pressure on those farmers not being able to sell when they need cash.”
- (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) executive director had discussions with a major organic grain marketer in Ontario, Canada. The firm markets grain into U.S. markets as well as Canada. The marketer confirmed that in recent months any imported shipment with the semblance of “organic” in the documentation has been sold as organic, no questions asked as to the origin.

---

<sup>4</sup> USDA Global Agriculture Information Network. “Report # TR601, Turkish Organic Market Overview.” January 26, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> IOAS. “IOAS withdraw ISO 65 accreditation of ETKO Turkey.” May 25, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication. Email to (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), from a U.K. organic farmer-owned company. August 8, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Anti-Fraud Initiative. <http://www.organic-integrity.org/>

<sup>8</sup> Anti-Fraud Initiative. “Meetings and Events.” <http://www.organic-integrity.org/meetings/#c2716>



We urge you to take a careful look at the potential for non-organic products, especially bulk commodities like grains, to enter the U.S. market and be sold as organic. Specifically, we urge you to examine:

- What procedures does NOP have to assess whether the EU's processes for accreditation and certification are adequate to ensure the integrity of bulk shipments of commodities that are pooled from many farms?
- Does NOP have an adequate system to track bulk commodity shipments produced in other countries outside the EU that are certified by EU-based certifiers, or shipped through EU countries?
- What other data collection should NOP set up to have a better understanding of source of imports, back to the certifier and farm level?

We appreciate your attention to this critical issue for both organic consumers and farmers in the United States. Please contact (b) (7)(C), (b) (6) [REDACTED], for more information or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [Glasgow, David - AMS](#)  
**To:** [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)  
**Cc:** [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#); [Wood, Peter - AMS](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Flag - FOIA release  
**Date:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 6:34:52 PM

---

Got it. Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 9, 2017, at 6:01 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)> wrote:

The records were released yesterday.  
Miles

---

**From:** Glasgow, David - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 5:44 PM  
**To:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS <[Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)>; Jones, Samuel - AMS <[Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS <[Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov)>; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS <[ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov](mailto:ReneeA.GebaultKing@ams.usda.gov)>; Courtney, Cheri - AMS <[Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Cheri.Courtney@ams.usda.gov)>; Summers, Bruce - AMS <[Bruce.Summers@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Bruce.Summers@ams.usda.gov)>; Wood, Peter - AMS <[Peter.Wood@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Peter.Wood@ams.usda.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Flag - FOIA release

Thank you for the heads up, and the background and TPs.

The records have already been released? Or, are about to be released?

We'll let you know if calls come in here.

Dave

---

**From:** McEvoy, Miles - AMS  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 2:56 PM  
**To:** Glasgow, David - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS  
**Cc:** Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Gebault King, ReneeA - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS  
**Subject:** Flag - FOIA release

Sam and David – We have a quick media flag for you.

**Topline Summary:** Due to a release of records through the FOIA process, there may be press inquiries or articles raising concern about the compliance status of USDA accredited organic certifier ETKO, and more broadly, organic grain imports into the U.S.

from Turkey, where ETKO is based.

**Background:** ETKO (Ecological Farming Control Organization) is a USDA accredited organic certifier based in Turkey; the organization was also previously accredited under the EU and Canada. Based on compliance concerns identified through our standard certifier oversight processes, the National Organic Program issued a Notice of Proposed Suspension to ETKO in late 2015. To resolve the Notice, the NOP and ETKO reached a settlement agreement in mid-2016, in which ETKO agreed to take specific actions to maintain compliance in the future.

There is industry attention on ETKO because of the industry's broader concern about the organic integrity of grains coming from Turkey. USDA is investigating these concerns in a number of ways, including investigations and heightened oversight mechanisms in the areas of interest. One particularly concerned organization, OFARM (Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing), requested records related to ETKO's Notice of Proposed Suspension and subsequent settlement agreement with the NOP.

The documents provided to OFARM consisted of:

1. ETKO's appeal of its Notice of Proposed Suspension of Accreditation plus exhibits
2. Additional Information ("Developments") with attachments since the appeal was filed, which include the NOP Noncompliance Audit and Review Process Reports, emails, and ETKO Corrective Action Plans
3. The NOP Appeals Team case analysis documents
4. The settlement agreement (also posted online)

We have a second FOIA request related to ETKO from the Wall Street Journal – once these records are ready for release, they should come to you from the FOIA office automatically since all requests from the media are supposed to be 1) flagged "high priority" by the AMS FOIA Officer and 2) be given to AMS Public Affairs before being released to the requester.

## **General Talking Points**

Organic regulatory structure

- All organic products sold, labeled or represented as organic in U.S. must comply with USDA organic regulations.
- All imports must be certified by an AMS authorized certifying agent unless imported from countries where we have an equivalency arrangement
- Organic equivalency arrangements create new export markets that benefit U.S. producers and processors. AMS has equivalency arrangements with Canada, the European Union, Japan, Korea, and Switzerland.

- Organic grain coming to the U.S. from Turkey must be certified by AMS accredited certifier
  - Certifiers must comply with USDA accreditation and certification requirements
  - AMS conducts periodic audits of certifiers around the world

#### Turkish organic imports

- The Agricultural Marketing Service has received complaints alleging that non-organic corn and grains are being imported from Turkey as organic, in violation of the USDA organic regulations.
- Some of the complaints reference Foreign Agriculture Service data, provided by the Turkey Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Livestock (MINFAL), showing that exports of organic grain from Turkey exceed domestic grain production.
- This data, in itself, does not demonstrate noncompliance. We have determined that organic grain is being consolidated in Turkey that is coming from other countries in Eastern Europe. Additional evidence collected since the complaints were filed warrants continued investigation.
- On 10/1/16, (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) asked USDA-OIG to investigate, or to include in its ongoing audit of organic equivalency agreements, organic grain imports, and specifically those from Turkey. OIG referred the complaint to AMS-NOP to investigate.
- The NOP is actively investigating these complaints and will initiate enforcement action where warranted and appropriate. The NOP is working with its Federal partners with oversight authority over imports in investigating these complaints. Because these investigations are ongoing, we cannot comment on them in any detail.

#### ETKO

- ETKO is an AMS accredited certifier based in Turkey. ETKO certifies 34 operations in Turkey, Ukraine, and South Korea under the USDA organic regulations.
- A settlement agreement was established in 2016 that requires implementation of corrective and preventative actions by ETKO to address findings from previous audits.
- AMS conducted an audit in Ukraine in 2016. An AMS audit in Turkey is scheduled for February 2017.

Miles McEvoy

Deputy Administrator  
National Organic Program