

ITEM FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NOSB Aquaculture Working Group

SUPPLEMENT TO INTERIM FINAL REPORT (Bivalve molluscs)

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) at its October 12–14, 2004, meeting recommended the formation of an aquatic animal taskforce to develop proposed production, handling, and labeling standards for food and animal feed products derived from aquatic animals. The taskforce would be divided into two working groups—one for animals that live and are harvested in the wild or open-sea (wild-caught working group) and another for animals that live and are harvested under aquaculture (aquaculture working group).

On January 24, 2005, the National Organic Program (NOP) published a Federal Register notice that called for nominations for members to the taskforce. On May 26, 2005, the NOP named 12 diverse and experienced individuals, with backgrounds in aquaculture production and nutrition, environmental science, and organic principles, to the aquaculture working group of the aquatic animal task force. Members for the wild-caught working group have not yet been named, because of a low response to the call for nominations.

On January 13, 2006, the NOP received the [interim final report of the aquaculture working group \(PDF\)](#) for the production and handling of organic aquaculture products. The NOP submitted the interim final report to the NOSB for review and acceptance at its April 17-19, 2006, NOSB meeting in Pennsylvania. After acceptance of the report by the NOSB, the NOSB's Livestock Committee commenced work on developing a recommendation for the full NOSB to consider as a recommendation to the Secretary.

In preparation for the October 2006 Meeting of the NOSB, the NOSB Livestock Committee invited further public comment on some of the questions that had arisen during its review of the proposed standards for finfish in its document entitled: [Invitation for Public Comment on Aquaculture Standards, September 8, 2006 \(PDF\)](#). Written and oral comments received in response to that invitation are available for viewing on the website under the [October 2006 NOSB meeting](#).

At the [March 2007 NOSB Meeting](#), the NOSB voted to accept the proposed finfish standards of the aquaculture working group but postponed their final vote on the sections involving the use of wild harvested fish meal and fish oil at up to 24% of the diet of finfish, open net pens in oceans, and compost in ponds. An [aquaculture symposium](#) on the use of fish meal, fish oil, and open net pens is scheduled for November 27, 2007, in Washington, DC. Abstracts are being reviewed by the Livestock Committee at this time. No recommendation on these outstanding issues will be made at the November 2007 NOSB meeting.

On July 9, 2007, the NOP received the [Supplement to the Interim Final Report \(Bivalve molluscs\) \(PDF\)](#). It has been submitted to NOSB for its review and acceptance at the November 2007 NOSB Meeting. In the meantime, the NOSB is seeking public comment on the Supplement to the Interim Final Report (Bivalve molluscs) of the aquaculture working group, until **November 9, 2007**.

With respect to receipt of comments by the NOSB during the comment period, the following provisions have been established to ensure that your comment will be received and reviewed by the Board:

- **Mail:** Persons may submit comments on listed Board recommendations by mail to:

Valerie Frances, Executive Director, National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), National Organic Program, 1400 and Independence Avenue, SW, Room 4008 - South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-0001.

• **E-mail:** Comments may be sent via internet to NOSB.Livestock@usda.gov.

• **Fax:** Comments may be submitted by fax to (202) 205-7808.

In reviewing and commenting on the Supplement to the Interim Final Report (Bivalve molluscs) aquaculture working group's interim final report, please consider and respond to the following criteria:

Do the recommended standards:

1. Communicate effectively?
2. Provide clear and adequate context of scope, product coverage, and production systems?
3. Identify and address key stakeholders and their concerns and challenges?
4. Include vision and strategy for achieving consistency with organic principles demonstrated in the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 and its implementing regulations?
5. Present measurable objectives that are enforceable?
6. Present a clear expectation of targets and goals?