



Organic Food Federation

Explanatory Note 317

These notes are intended to help applicants comply with Organic EC Regulation 2092/91. They are not exhaustive and are for explanation only. In cases of doubt the Regulation or the OFF should be consulted.

Livestock Health

Health Management of your stock must rely on careful management rather than the use of wormers, vaccines and antibiotics.

Prevention must be the first course of action through

- Selection of the appropriate breeds or strains
- Biosecurity
- Use of high quality feed
- Stocking density
- Rotation of grazing

However if an animal does become ill they must be treated in the interest of animal welfare.

The livestock standards state that physiotherapeutic (e.g. plant extracts), homeopathic and trace elements should be used in preference to chemically synthesised products (i.e. wormers, vaccines antibiotics etc). If this does not work chemically synthesised products can be used to avoid suffering and distress under the direction of a vet.

The use of wormers, vaccines etc as a preventative is not allowed unless there is an identified disease risk and there is no other way of preventing it. On application to OFF and a suitable health plan being submitted then their use will be considered. (This is not the case for antibiotics.) For example in the case of a scab outbreak it may be treated with a product such as *Dectomax**. However if an outbreak has not occurred then *Dectomax** **must not** be used as a preventative for scab.

Organophosphate (OP) treatments are not allowed to be used. If an OP is used as part of statutory requirements these animals must be marked and **not** sold as organic. Any breeding stock will also be rendered non organic and will have to go through the appropriate conversion period again before they can produce meat animals.

Vaccines

Vaccines should not be needed under organic management however the standards do permit their use where there is a known disease risk. Single or 2 in 1 and 4 in 1 vaccines are preferred to the multiple vaccines that are available (e.g. *Heptevac P**). Nevertheless it is hard to know what disease risk there is if there has been a complete vaccination policy running for many years. A slow reduction is recommended to reduce the use of the vaccines over time to 4 in 1 and below.

Internal Parasites

Worms should be able to be controlled through grazing regime. Wormers are not allowed to be used in organic livestock unless it is justified by Faecal Egg Counts (FEC's). If there are positive results from these then only the affected individuals/ group should be treated i.e. those with duller coats.

One exception to this is the use of a pre lambing dose in ewes to prevent the spring rise of worms, but as stated before any other dose than this must be backed up by FEC's.

Any wormer can be used as long as the product is only to control worms and not a flukicide as well. Also the use of 'pour-on' products for the control of internal parasites **is not permitted** in

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organic farming systems. This is due to their systemic nature and the broad-spectrum coverage of these preparations.

Growth Promoters and Hormones

Growth promoters such as antibiotics, coccidiostats etc are not allowed to be used in organic production. Hormones cannot be used to control reproduction such as the synchronisation of oestrus, however they can be used on individual animals as a form of therapeutic treatment only.

External Parasites

The use of 'pour-on' products for the control of external parasites is allowed but is restricted to products that are non systemic (i.e. stays on the wool or the surface of the skin) and are not OP's. Please seek advice from your vet before selecting a product.

Scab

This can be prevented though the use of biosecurity and quarantine and also if required the use of a non-OP dip. However if scab is positively identified by microscopy an injectable product can be administered.

Withdrawal Periods

These are double the legal withdrawal periods. If there is no withdrawal period or zero then it must be 48hrs. If any products are used in a manner other than that which they are produced for then the withdrawal period for eggs and milk is 7 days and for meat it is 28 days. Both the legal withdrawal period and organic withdrawal period must be noted in the veterinary medicine book.

Veterinary and treatment records

All treatments must be recorded with the following information provided

1. Animals treated
2. Product used
3. Diagnosis
4. Method of administration
5. Duration of treatment
6. Legal and organic withdrawal period.

* These are examples. Any mention of a product in this leaflet is not an endorsement by OFF

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