

ERS Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: United States Certified Organic Dairy Production – Two Decades of Growth

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB) ERR

Influential Scientific Information

Agency: Economic Research Service Highly Influential Scientific Assessment
USDA

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Subject of Review: Responding to increased consumer demand for organic milk and establishment of the National Organic Program (NOP) via the U.S. Organic Foods Act of 1990, U.S. dairy farmers increased the production of organic milk over the last three decades, with organic milk production accounting for 2.3 percent of total milk production by 2021. The NOP has undergone several rule changes for certified organic dairy farms since 1990, particularly in regard to the transition of dairy cows from conventional to organic and forage requirements from pasture. The USDA's Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) dairy version targeted higher percentages of certified organic relative to conventional (non-organic) dairy farms in 2005, 2010, 2016, and 2021, allowing for estimation of costs and returns of both certified organic and conventional dairy production. These surveys have also allowed for charting the structure of certified organic dairy farms by farm size and U.S. region. This report discusses how the NOP created national standards and facilitated market development for organic products, how certified organic dairy farms have changed over the past two decades, and how certified organic dairy farms differ in structure, costs, and returns by farm size and region of the United States.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: Panel Review Individual Reviewers

Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 12/21/2023 Completed: ---

Number of Reviewers: 3 or fewer 4 to 10 More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: Agency Designated Outside Organization

