

The Aquaculture Working Group (AWG) was appointed by USDA in 2005 to advise the National Organic Program and the National Organic Standards Board on the development of organic aquaculture. The AWG was also requested by NOP to submit petitions for the allowance of synthetic substances on the National List that are necessary in the production of organic aquatic plants and animals.

On April 27, 2012, the Aquaculture Working Group petitioned for the addition of tocopherols to the National Organic Program's (NOP) National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List). The petition specifically sought to allow tocopherols in the organic production of aquatic animals as follows:

“§ 205.611 Synthetic substances allowed in organic aquatic animal production
(x) Tocopherols.”

This proposed language by AWG is exactly what is included for ingredients in processed products for direct human consumption in 205.603(d)(3) with the annotation

" Tocopherols—derived from vegetable oil when rosemary extracts are not a suitable alternative."

In response, the NOSB Livestock Committee has instead proposed: to list tocopherols on section 205.611 of the National List for use in aquatic livestock production with the following annotation:

“Tocopherols derived from vegetable oils, not extracted using volatile synthetic solvents, are allowed as ingredients in aquatic livestock production when rosemary extracts are not a suitable alternative.”

The condition , “not extracted using volatile synthetic solvents,” is new and is not consistent with our petition nor with 205.603(d)(3).

While the Aquaculture Working Group supports the elimination of solvent extraction in the preparation of materials used in organic production, investigations by AWG indicate that no tocopherol products exist that are not extracted by such means. The product proposed by the NOSB Livestock Committee is not available.

In preparing our petition, AWG has strived to use language that is consistent with substances allowed in other sections of the National List. The language proposed in our petition does this. We respectfully suggest that the language proposed by AWG in our April 27, 2012, petition be used in place of the Livestock Committee proposed annotation.

George S. Lockwood, Chair
Aquaculture Working Group
September 20, 2013