

Formal Recommendation
From: The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)
To: The National Organic Program (NOP)

Date: January 14, 2026 (Fall 2025 meeting rescheduled)

Subject: Oxytocin annotation change

NOSB Chair: Amy Bruch

The NOSB hereby recommends to the NOP the following:

Rulemaking Action: X

Guidance Statement:

Other:

Statement of the Recommendation:

The NOSB recommends that the annotation for oxytocin at § 205.603(a)(22) be changed to read: “for use in postparturition therapeutic applications within 3 days after birth. It may not be administered to increase an animal’s milk production or for milk letdown.”

Rationale Supporting Recommendation:

The annotation as written is unclear and could be interpreted to allow use any time after a birth, from a few days to a week, a month, or more. The NOP has provided explicit guidance on the allowed use of oxytocin at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-03851/p-58>. However, some certifiers, veterinarians, and farmers may be unaware of this. Various stakeholders have submitted comments highlighting the issue. This change to the annotation makes its intent clear.

NOSB Vote:

Motion to amend the annotation of oxytocin at § 205.603(a)(22) to read: “for use in postparturition therapeutic applications within 3 days after birth. It may not be administered to increase an animal’s milk production or for milk letdown.”

Motion by: Brian Caldwell

Seconded by: Amy Bruch

Yes: 13 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Recuse: 0 Absent: 2

Motion Passed

**National Organic Standards Board
Livestock Subcommittee
Oxytocin Annotation Proposal
Fall 2025**

The purpose of this annotation change is to clarify the current annotation for oxytocin on the National List as a synthetic substance allowed in organic livestock production. The annotation currently reads:

§ 205.603(a) As disinfectants, sanitizer, and medical treatments as applicable.

(22) Oxytocin—use in postparturition therapeutic applications

The postparturition restriction, as written, is unclear and could be interpreted to allow use any time after a birth, from a few days to a week, a month, or more. The National Organic Program has provided explicit guidance on the allowed use of oxytocin in a final rule published on February 28, 2022 (87 FR 10930; <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-03851/p-58>). However, some certifiers, veterinarians, and farmers may be unaware of the provisions in the final rule. Various stakeholders have brought the problem up in written comments during the oxytocin sunset review. For instance, one commenter stated, “When an organic operator looks at the National List, they are not aware of this discussion from 2/28/2022 in the Federal Register, and not every certification reviewer would know of it as well. The likelihood that this material would be used routinely and longer than needed, based upon the current annotation, is very high. It has been noted in the past that some operations have chosen to use it routinely on all first-calf heifers, since ‘they all tend to have post-parturition issues.’ The regulations must be transparent and understandable as written.”

The goal is for oxytocin to be used only for postpartum therapeutic applications. Retained placenta is a common problem treated with oxytocin. If the placenta is not expelled within 24 hours of birth, it is considered retained and treatment is advised. A 3-day window for postpartum use of oxytocin provides ample time for this and other postpartum therapeutic uses, while prohibiting longer term usage for unapproved purposes. Therefore, the Livestock Subcommittee proposes a change to the annotation for oxytocin that will eliminate any uses of oxytocin not associated with emergency situations and complications in the immediate postpartum period.

The proposed annotation will read, “use in post parturition therapeutic applications within 3 days after birth. It may not be administered to increase an animal's milk production or for milk letdown.”

Subcommittee Vote

Motion to amend the annotation of oxytocin to read: “for use in postparturition therapeutic applications within 3 days after birth. It may not be administered to increase an animal’s milk production or for milk letdown.”

Motion by: Brian Caldwell

Seconded by: Amy Bruch

Yes: 5 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Recuse: 0 Absent: 2