

US, Canada Reach Agreement on Organic Ruminant Stocking Rates

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The Agriculture Marketing Service of the United States Department of Agriculture announced an [agreement](#) reached with Canada's Food Inspection Agency that will provide U.S. organic dairy, beef, sheep, goat and bison producers with more streamlined access to the Canadian market. Canada now considers U.S. organic requirements for access to pasture and living conditions to be equivalent to Canada's ruminant stocking rates (number of animals in a given area). The agreement is part of the implementation of an [Equivalence Arrangement](#) the two countries entered into in 2009.

U.S. producers who provide ruminant animals with 30 percent of their feed during the grazing season from organic pasture, put animals on pasture at least 120 days per year, and provide animals with adequate space and living conditions which accommodate the natural behavior of livestock are now considered as having met the ruminant stocking rate requirement for labeling product as organic in Canada. U.S. producers are still prohibited from using sodium nitrate in the production of ruminant-derived products labeled as organic in Canada.