

# Trump Officially Eliminates Obama's Organic Animal Welfare Rules

The Trump administration officially withdrew an Obama-era rule for higher standards regarding the treatment of animals whose meat will be sold under the organic label.

The standards were first created in 2016 under the United States Department of Agriculture. The rules had not been put in place yet. The USDA officially overturned the rule Monday, after delaying its implementation three times.

The rule would have required poultry to be housed in spaces large enough to move freely and fully stretch their wings. Livestock would be required to have some access to outdoor space year round.

*The existing robust organic livestock and poultry regulations are effective. The organic industry's continued growth domestically and globally shows that consumers trust the current approach that balances consumer expectations and the needs of organic producers and handlers." – Greg Ibach, USDA Marketing and Regulatory Program Undersecretary*

At this time animals must be raised without antibiotics or growth hormones, and the animal feed needs to be organic well. Clarity around animal welfare and living conditions is lacking. Many organic hens and cows live in similar conditions as their factory-farmed counterparts, with no room to move and little to no significant outside access. The USDA estimates that half of all organic eggs are produced from hens living in total confinement.

*Consumers trust that the Organic seal stands for a meaningful*

*difference in production practices. It makes no sense that the Trump Administration would pursue actions that could damage a marketplace that is giving American farmers a profitable alternative, creating jobs, and improving the economies of our rural areas.” – Organic Trade Association*

The proposed rule drew 47,000 comments, with only 28 supporting the withdrawal, according to data compiled by the Organic Trade Association.

*This is representative of the influence lobbyists and election money has at the Trump administration’s USDA.” – Mark Kastel, co-director of Cornucopia Institute*

Six out of 10 Americans feel that animals used to produce organic food should be raised on farms with higher animal welfare standards. More than half of Americans believe such animals should be allowed time outside and room to move freely.

**Source:**

- Trump Administration Eliminates Animal Welfare Rule – Newsweek