

In September 2022, the Animal Welfare Institute and the ASPCA[®] (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals[®]) commissioned a national web-based survey, conducted by The Harris Poll among over 1,500 organic consumers (i.e., members of the public who have purchased organic animal products such as meat, dairy, and eggs). This survey was intended to gauge consumer attitudes towards animal welfare under the National Organic Program and the USDA Organic label. The following are among our findings:

Survey results demonstrate that an overwhelming majority of organic consumers consider animal welfare on organic farms to be an important factor when determining whether to purchase organic products and support the establishment of clear, uniform animal welfare standards for organic production.

1. 80% of organic consumers say animal welfare is important to them when considering whether to purchase organic animal products.
2. 85% of organic consumers think it is important that the federal government establish clear, uniform standards for animal welfare on organic farms.
3. 84% of organic consumers think animal welfare standards for organic farming should meet or exceed standards required under third-party animal welfare certification programs, such as indoor and outdoor space requirements for all animals, necessary enrichments to carry out natural behaviors, and standards around transport and slaughter.

Survey results demonstrate organic consumers, especially frequent purchasers of organic animal products (i.e., purchased once a week or more often), are confused about what requirements currently exist for animal welfare under the National Organic Program. The majority believe organic has higher standards than are currently required by the program and many others are simply unsure of the standards at all.

1. Organic consumers were asked which of the following statements about animals raised on organic farms are true or false:

	<u>Organic consumers*</u>	<u>Frequent purchasers**</u>
a. All animals raised on organic farms have access to outdoor pastures and fresh air throughout the day.		
True:	56%	65%
False:	16%	12%
Not sure:	29%	23%
b. Animals raised on organic farms have significantly more space to move than on non-organic farms.		
True:	59%	66%
False:	13%	12%
Not sure:	28%	21%

* Respondents who purchased organic animal products within the past 12 months

** Respondents who purchased organic animal products once a week or more within the past 12 months

- c. Animals raised on organic farms are not bred to grow so fast that they have trouble moving and standing.

True:	52%	62%
False:	17%	13%
Not sure:	31%	25%

- d. Animals raised on organic farms do not have their beaks and tails cut off.

True:	45%	54%
False:	15%	12%
Not sure:	40%	34%

Survey results demonstrate the USDA Organic label currently does not meet consumer expectations. A majority of organic consumers find certain production practices that are currently permissible on organic farms to be unacceptable and think animal welfare requirements under the National Organic Program should be stronger.

1. Organic consumers were asked whether they found the following practices totally unacceptable, somewhat unacceptable, somewhat acceptable, totally acceptable or didn't know.

- a. Performing physical alterations on animals, such as debeaking of birds and tail docking of pigs and cattle.

Totally unacceptable	48%
<u>Somewhat unacceptable</u>	<u>23%</u>
Total	71%

- b. Confining pregnant pigs in crates without the ability to move freely.

Totally unacceptable	50%
<u>Somewhat unacceptable</u>	<u>21%</u>
Total	71%

- c. Restricting dairy cows' movements by confining them in stalls where the animals are tethered at the neck.

Totally unacceptable	48%
<u>Somewhat unacceptable</u>	<u>24%</u>
Total	72%

- d. Transporting animals for longer than 12 hours.

Totally unacceptable	35%
<u>Somewhat unacceptable</u>	<u>32%</u>
Total	67%

- e. Housing calves in individual hutches or pens for the first several months of their life without contact with other calves.

Totally unacceptable	42%
<u>Somewhat unacceptable</u>	<u>26%</u>
Total	68%

2. Organic consumers were asked to select which specific criteria they think should be a requirement of outdoor access for animals on organic farms.
 - a. All animals have the ability to access the outdoors at the same time
Total: 49%
 - b. Outdoor space allowance is specific and consistent across all farms
Total: 44%
 - c. Outdoor space allows for ample room for animals to behave naturally
Total: 65%
 - d. Outdoor areas consist of soil and vegetation to graze on, not gravel or concrete
Total: 63%
 - e. Outdoor areas consist of shade and structures to protect animals from the elements
Total: 60%
 - f. None of these
Total: 6%

Survey results demonstrate the overwhelming majority of organic consumers think certified organic companies and farms should comply with any new animal welfare standards within three years or less.

1. Organic consumers were asked what they thought was an acceptable timeframe for companies that are currently certified organic to comply with any new animal welfare standards and were given the following options:

Immediately:	37%
Within 1 year:	38%
Within 3 years:	18%
Total:	92%
Within 5 years:	6%
Within 15 years:	2%
Total:	8%

Survey Method:

This survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals from September 15-19, 2022, among 2,075 adults ages 18+, of whom 1,505 are organic consumers (i.e., members of the public who have purchased organic animal products such as meat, dairy, and eggs). The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within +/- 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables and subgroup sample sizes, please contact Allie Granger at allie@awionline.org or Kara Shannon at kara.shannon@aspca.org.