



USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service

~facilitating the competitive and efficient marketing of agricultural products for 125 years

The Breadth of Conformity Assessment
Activities in the Federal Arena

NIST Conformity Assessment Workshop
April 11, 2012

DANA K. STAHL, MANAGER
INDUSTRY SERVICES AUDIT AND ACCREDITATION PROGRAMS

Dana.Stahl@ams.usda.gov

U.S. Agriculture

- 2.2 Million Farms
 - Produce 262% more food with less inputs than in 1950
 - Sold \$297 billion in agricultural products in 2007, a 48% increase since 2002
- One-Third of Agricultural Products are Exported
 - Positive agricultural trade balance = more opportunities
 - \$115 billion in agricultural products exported in 2010
 - 2012 Estimates are set at \$137 billion
- Agriculture Creates Jobs
 - Employs 15% of the U.S. workforce

Sources: 2007 Census of Agriculture, American Farm Bureau Federation, and USDA Outlook on U.S. Agricultural Trade

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service

- Committed to Supporting U.S. Agriculture
- Offer Conformity Assessment Services
 - Commodity Grading
 - Inspection
 - Testing
 - Certification
 - Accreditation
- Focus on Commodity Grading & Accreditation

USDA Commodity Grading

- Authorized by Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946
 - "to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices"
- AMS's Core Service
- Verify that Products meet U.S. Grade Standards
- Applied by Federally Licensed Graders
- Voluntary – User Paid Service
- Quality Grades
 - Serve as a “language” between buyers and sellers
 - Differentiate products in the marketplace &
 - Allow consumers to make purchase decisions

USDA Commodity Grading Conformity Assessment System



USDA Grade Volume & Shields

In 2011, USDA Graded approximately:

- 1 billion lbs of butter
- 18 million bales of cotton
- 76 billion lbs of fruits & vegetables
- 20 billion lbs of beef & lamb
- 65 billion lbs poultry
- +2 billion doz shell eggs
- 60 million kg tobacco



USDA National Organic Program

Authority

- Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990
- National Organic Program (NOP) Regulations 2001

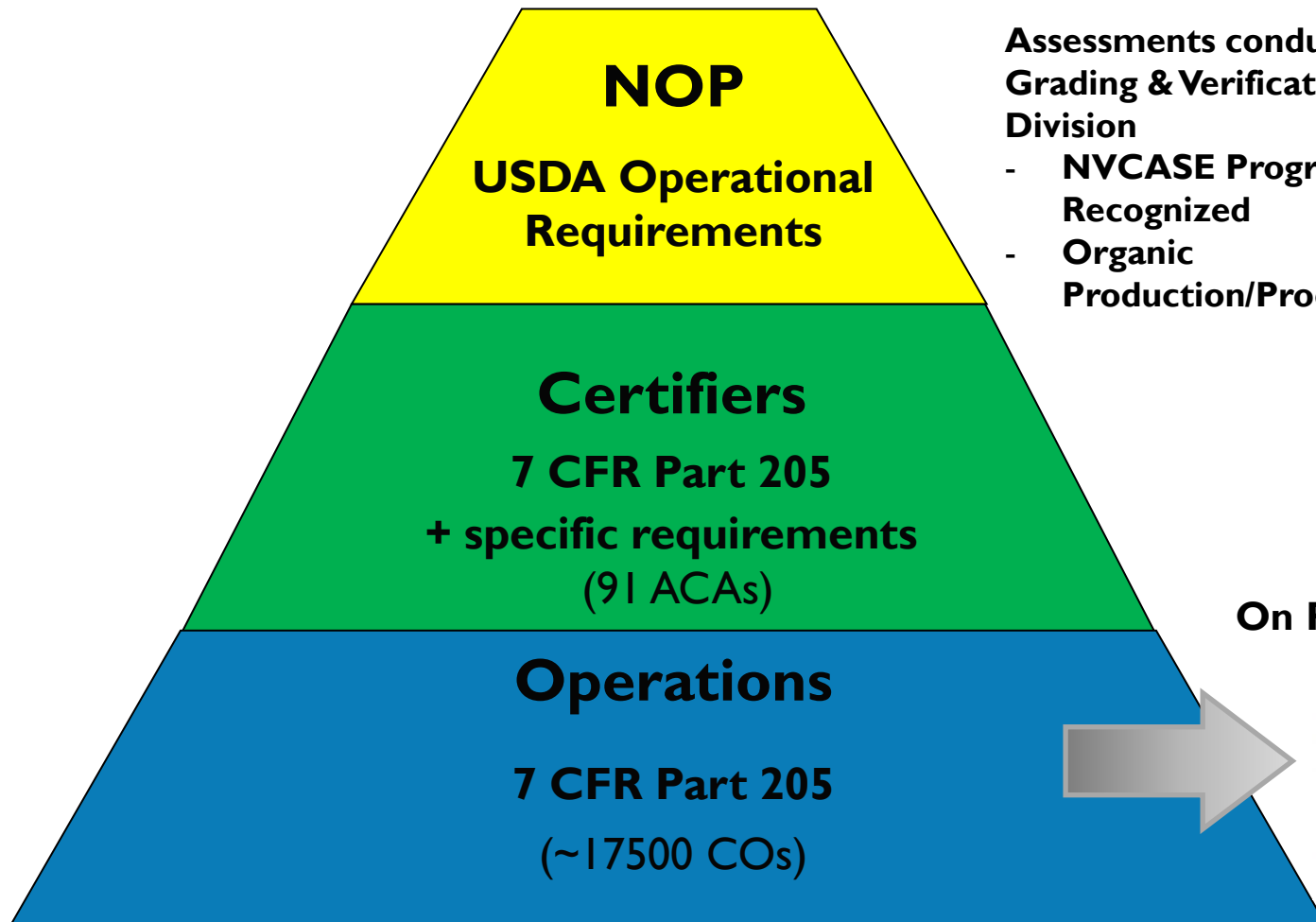
Mission

- To facilitate domestic and international marketing of fresh and processed food and assure consumers that such products meet consistent, uniform standards

Scope

- All aspects of food production, processing & retail sales
- *DOES NOT* address food safety or nutrition

USDA National Organics Program Conformity Assessment System



Positive Impacts

A Codified National Standard

- Common framework to market U.S. organic foods
- Replaced numerous standards within the U.S.



Program Growth

- Certified Operations increased 6.7% between 2009 -2011
- Organic Foods Retail Value grew 9.5% in 2011
- Organic foods = 4.2% of the U.S. Food Sales in 2010

Removal of Trade Barriers

- Canada 2009
- European Union 2012

AMS Facilitates the Marketing of Agricultural Products

- *Commodity Grading Services & the National Organic Program*
- *And So Many More....*
 - *Good Agriculture Practices & Good Handling Practices*
 - *USDA Export Verification Programs*
 - *USDA Process Verified Program*
 - *USDA ISO Guide 65 Program*
 - *Laboratory Approval Program*
 - *Accredited Seed Programs*
 - *Product Certification*
 - *Equipment Review*
- Visit us on www.ams.usda.gov