

CONTAINER REUSABILITY BETWEEN ORGANIC AND NONORGANIC PRODUCTS

It is common for handlers to reuse a container that was previously used to store nonorganic product or prohibited substances, particularly in split operations or mixed-use facilities. For example, a split operation grain mill may use proboxes to store organic corn and then later use them to hold conventional wheat. While this can be allowed, reusing containers also poses a risk for contamination.

The reuse of any bag or container is prohibited if it has been in contact with any substance that could compromise organic integrity. Reused containers are only permitted if the container can be thoroughly cleaned so that the risk of cross-contamination is prevented. The type of material the container is made from is a major factor in how effective a cleanout can be for preventing cross-contamination.

Container Reusability Between Organic and Nonorganic Products



Low Risk



Nonporous. Safe for reuse after standard sanitation.



Medium Risk



Porous materials trap residues. Do not reuse containers between nonorganic and organic products unless a disposable nonporous liner is used.



High Risk



Reusable if strict, documented wash and sanitize protocols are followed prior to contact with organic product, or a disposable nonporous liner is used.

SOURCES CITED

USDA National Organic Program, [7 CFR §205.272](#).