



The

IFOAM NORMS for
ORGANIC PRODUCTION
and **PROCESSING**

VERSION 2005

including

IFOAM BASIC STANDARDS
for Organic Production and Processing

IFOAM ACCREDITATION CRITERIA
*for Bodies Certifying Organic Production
and Processing*



The

IFOAM NORMS

for

**ORGANIC
PRODUCTION**

and

PROCESSING

VERSION 2005

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I. INTRODUCTION

1 THE IFOAM NORMS AND ORGANIC GUARANTEE SYSTEM

The IFOAM Norms

The IFOAM Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing, along with the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria for Bodies Certifying Organic Production and Processing, are called the IFOAM Norms. This publication provides these IFOAM Norms and related information in book form. Electronic copies of the norms are also available for a small service fee in the “bookstore” on IFOAMs website, www.ifoam.org. IFOAM Members can at no cost order the Norms in the member section of the website. The Norms are the basis for IFOAMs Organic Guarantee System, which is described below. The IFOAM Basic Standards fulfill additional purposes, including serving as guidelines for private and governmental agencies that set their own regional or other specialized standards for direct use in certification. Additional information about each of the two Norms is presented in their introductory sections.

IFOAM’s Organic Guarantee System

Supporting the worldwide adoption of environmentally, socially, and economically sound systems based on the principles of organic agriculture.

The IFOAM Organic Guarantee System Enables Trade, Upholds Organic Integrity and Assures Consumers Internationally

In the rapidly growing environment of marketing and trade of products claiming to be “organic,” IFOAM provides a market guarantee of the integrity of organic claims. The Organic Guarantee System (OGS) unites the organic world by providing a common set of standards for organic production and processing, and a common system for verification and market identity. It fosters equivalence of participating certifiers and thereby facilitates the trade of organic products between operators certified by different participating certification bodies.

The IFOAM Organic Guarantee System enables organic certifiers to become “IFOAM Accredited” and for certified operators to label their products with the IFOAM Seal, next to the logo of their IFOAM accredited certifier. More than 30 certifiers worldwide participate in IFOAM accreditation.

The OGS Offers Conformity Assessment to Accepted International Norms

IFOAM Accreditation guarantees to buyers, government authorities, other control agencies, and the public, that a product has been produced within a system that conforms to accepted international standards for organic production, processing, and certification.

The two pillars of the Organic Guarantee System are the IFOAM Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing (IBS) and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria for Certification of Organic Production and Processing (IAC). These two documents are international Norms to

which certifiers must comply when conducting an IFOAM accredited organic certification. The IFOAM Basic Standards address the specific principles, recommendations, and required baseline standards that guide operators in producing their organic crops and maintaining organic integrity in the further handling and processing of organic commodities. The IBS are rooted in IFOAMs Principles of Organic Agriculture. The Principles of Organic Agriculture are the basis for all of IFOAMs work, particularly its organic standards. For this reason, the Principles are presented in this Introduction to the IFOAM Basic Standards. The IFOAM Accreditation Criteria are based on the International ISO norms for the operation of certifying bodies, and they are additionally developed to reflect the particular circumstances of certifying organic production and processing. IFOAM owns and develops these documents.

IFOAMs Basic Standards (IBS) and Accreditation Criteria are generally respected as the international guideline from which national standards and inspection systems may be built; and they have been used as a reference by standard-setters and legislators in national and international arenas. IFOAM Basic Standards have had a strong influence on the development of Codex Alimentarius Guidelines for the Production, Labeling, and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods. The development of the IBS conform to ISO/IEC Guide 59 Code of good practice for standardization, and the WTO Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement Annex 3 Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards.

The OGS is a Collaboration Among IFOAM and Other Organizations

IFOAM Accreditation is administered by an independent organization, the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS). The IOAS evaluates the compliance of certification programs with the IBS and the IAC through a system of document review and site evaluation, and execution of accreditation decisions by a committee with global representation and expertise. Supported by this system, these accredited certification bodies are developing more and more functional equivalence with one another to streamline trade for their clients.

The OGS is Governed by Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures provide the framework for revisions and interpretations of the Norms. They prescribe under which circumstances revisions of the IFOAM Basic Standards, the lists of approved inputs, and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria can be initiated and how decisions on changes are taken. The policies and procedures also regulate the responsibilities of the committees that are engaged in the continuous development of the Norms. The policies related to the OGS can be found in the OGS section of the IFOAM website at www.ifoam.org.

2 THE PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Preamble

These Principles are the roots from which organic agriculture grows and develops. They express the contribution that organic agriculture can make to the world, and a vision to improve all agriculture in a global context.

Agriculture is one of humankind's most basic activities because all people need to nourish themselves daily. History, culture and community values are embedded in agriculture. The Principles apply to agriculture in the broadest sense, including the way people tend soils, water, plants and animals in order to produce, prepare and distribute food and other goods. They concern the way people interact with living landscapes, relate to one another and shape the legacy of future generations.

The Principles of Organic Agriculture serve to inspire the organic movement in its full diversity. They guide IFOAMs development of positions, programs and standards. Furthermore, they are presented with a vision of their world-wide adoption.

Organic agriculture is based on:

- The Principle of Health
- The Principle of Ecology
- The Principle of Fairness
- The Principle of Care

Each principle is articulated through a statement followed by an explanation. The principles are to be used as a whole. They are composed as ethical principles to inspire action.

The Principle of Health

Organic Agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible.

This principle points out that the health of individuals and communities cannot be separated from the health of ecosystems - healthy soils produce healthy crops that foster the health of animals and people.

Health is the wholeness and integrity of living systems. It is not simply the absence of illness, but the maintenance of physical, mental, social and ecological well-being. Immunity, resilience and regeneration are key characteristics of health.

The role of organic agriculture, whether in farming, processing, distribution, or consumption, is

to sustain and enhance the health of ecosystems and organisms from the smallest in the soil to human beings. In particular, organic agriculture is intended to produce high quality, nutritious food that contributes to preventive health care and well-being. In view of this it should avoid the use of fertilizers, pesticides, animal drugs and food additives that may have adverse health effects.

The Principle of Ecology

Organic Agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.

This principle roots organic agriculture within living ecological systems. It states that production is to be based on ecological processes, and recycling. Nourishment and well-being are achieved through the ecology of the specific production environment. For example, in the case of crops this is the living soil; for animals it is the farm ecosystem; for fish and marine organisms, the aquatic environment.

Organic farming, pastoral and wild harvest systems should fit the cycles and ecological balances in nature. These cycles are universal but their operation is site-specific. Organic management must be adapted to local conditions, ecology, culture and scale. Inputs should be reduced by reuse, recycling and efficient management of materials and energy in order to maintain and improve environmental quality and conserve resources.

Organic agriculture should attain ecological balance through the design of farming systems, establishment of habitats and maintenance of genetic and agricultural diversity. Those who produce, process, trade, or consume organic products should protect and benefit the common environment including landscapes, climate, habitats, biodiversity, air and water.

The Principle of Fairness

Organic Agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.

Fairness is characterized by equity, respect, justice and stewardship of the shared world; both among people and in their relations to other living beings.

This principle emphasizes that those involved in organic agriculture should conduct human relationships in a manner that ensures fairness at all levels and to all parties – farmers, workers, processors, distributors, traders and consumers. Organic agriculture should provide everyone involved with a good quality of life, and contribute to food sovereignty and reduction of poverty. It aims to produce a sufficient supply of good quality food and other products.

This principle insists that animals should be provided with the conditions and opportunities of life that accord with their physiology, natural behavior and well-being.

Natural and environmental resources that are used for production and consumption should be managed in a way that is socially and ecologically just and should be held in trust for future generations. Fairness requires systems of production, distribution and trade that are open and equitable and account for real environmental and social costs.

The Principle of Care

Organic Agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.

Organic agriculture is a living and dynamic system that responds to internal and external demands and conditions. Practitioners of organic agriculture can enhance efficiency and increase productivity, but this should not be at the risk of jeopardizing health and well-being. Consequently, new technologies need to be assessed and existing methods reviewed. Given the incomplete understanding of ecosystems and agriculture, care must be taken.

This principle states that precaution and responsibility are the key concerns in management, development and technology choices in organic agriculture. Science is necessary to ensure that organic agriculture is healthy, safe and ecologically sound. However, scientific knowledge alone is not sufficient. Practical experience, accumulated wisdom and traditional and indigenous knowledge offer valid solutions, tested by time. Organic agriculture should prevent significant risks by adopting appropriate technologies and rejecting unpredictable ones, such as genetic engineering. Decisions should reflect the values and needs of all who might be affected, through transparent and participatory processes.

II. IFOAM BASIC STANDARDS FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

Version 2005

Ratified by the IFOAM General Assembly
in Adelaide, 27th of September 2005

SECTION A – GENERAL

Scope of the IFOAM Basic Standards

Organic agriculture [also known as “Biological” or “Ecological” agriculture or protected equivalent forms of these words (in other languages)] is a whole system approach based upon a set of processes resulting in a sustainable ecosystem, safe food, good nutrition, animal welfare and social justice. Organic production therefore is more than a system of production that includes or excludes certain inputs.

The IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) provide a framework for certification bodies and standard-setting organizations worldwide to develop their own certification standards and cannot be used for certification on their own. Certification standards should take into account specific local conditions and provide more specific requirements than the IFOAM Basic Standards.

Producers and processors that sell organic products are expected to be certified by certification bodies, using standards that meet or exceed the requirements of the IBS. This requires a system of regular inspection and certification designed to ensure the credibility of organically certified products and build consumer trust.

The IBS reflect the current state of organic production and processing methods. These Standards should not be seen as a final statement, but rather as a work in progress to contribute to the continued development and adoption of organic practices throughout the world.

Relevance to Accreditation and International Reference

The IFOAM Basic Standards and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC) are used by the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS) in the accreditation process for certification bodies and standards setting organizations. The IOAS compares the standards (used by the certifier) against the IFOAM Basic Standards and certification body performance against the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria.

All the requirements of the IBS relevant to the certified farming or processing operations, must be implemented by certification bodies in order to become IFOAM Accredited Certification Bodies (ACBs).

IFOAM Basic Standards are also used by non accredited certification and standard-setting organizations as a reference for setting their standards.

Structure

The IFOAM Basic Standards are presented as General Principles, Recommendations, Basic Standards and Derogations.

- **General Principles** are the intended goals of organic production and processing. The principles are written as positive statements, using words such as “is” or “are”. For example “Organic livestock husbandry is based on the harmonious relationship between land, plants, and livestock; respect for the physiological and behavioral needs of livestock and feeding of good-quality organically grown feedstuffs”.
- **Recommendations** are practical suggestions for operators to implement in organic farm, food, and fiber systems. IFOAM promotes the recommendations as desirable practices, but does not require operators to use them. They are written with the word “should”. For example “Handlers and processors should identify and avoid pollution and potential contamination sources”.
- **Basic Standards** are the minimum requirements that an operation must meet to be certified organic. All of the standards applicable to the particular farm and enterprise must be met before the operation may be certified as organic. Basic Standards use “shall”. For example “All ruminants shall have daily access to roughage”.
- **Derogations** are the exceptions made to specific sections of the Basic Standards that may only be applied under clearly defined conditions. Derogations are presented in italic text.

Technical terms are explained in the section on definitions below.

Note: Certification bodies sometimes set their own standards, or they may adopt standards set by other organizations. For convenience throughout the text, we have written standard-setting organization, where we mean both the standard-setting organization and the certification body.

SECTION B – DEFINITIONS, GENERAL PRINCIPLES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND STANDARDS

1 DEFINITIONS

Accreditation: Procedure by which an authoritative body gives a formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

Ayurvedic: Traditional Indian system of medicine.

Aquaculture: The managed production of aquatic plants and/or animals in fresh, brackish or salt water in a circumscribed environment.

Biodiversity: The variety of life forms and ecosystem types on Earth. Includes genetic diversity (i.e. diversity within species), species diversity (i.e. the number and variety of species) and ecosystem diversity (total number of ecosystem types).

Breeding: Selection of plants or animals to reproduce and / or to further develop desired characteristics in succeeding generations.

Buffer Zone: A clearly defined and identifiable boundary area bordering an organic production site that is established to limit application of, or contact with, prohibited substances from an adjacent area.

Certification: The procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a clearly identified process has been methodically assessed, such that adequate confidence is provided that specified products conform to specified requirements.

Certification Body: The body that conducts certification, as distinct from standard-setting and inspection.

Certification Mark: A certification body's sign, symbol or logo that identifies product(s) as being certified according to the rules of a program operated by that certification body.

Certification Program: System operated by a certification body with its own rules, procedures and management for carrying out certification of conformity.

Contamination: Pollution of organic product or land; or contact with any material that would render the product unsuitable for organic certification.

Conventional: Conventional means any material, production or processing practice that is not certified organic or organic "in-conversion".

Conversion Period: The time between the start of the organic management and the certification of crops and animal husbandry as organic.

Crop Rotation: The practice of alternating the species or families of annual and/or biennial crops grown on a specific field in a planned pattern or sequence so as to break weed, pest and disease cycles and to maintain or improve soil fertility and organic matter content.

Culture: A microorganism, tissue, or organ, growing on or in a medium.

Direct Source Organism: The specific plant, animal, or microbe that produces a given input or ingredient, or that gives rise to a secondary or indirect organism that produces an input or ingredient.

Disinfect: To reduce, by physical or chemical means, the number of potentially harmful microorganisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability.

Exception: Permission granted to an operator by a certification body to be excluded from the need to comply with normal requirements of the standards. Exceptions are granted on the basis of clear criteria, with clear justification and for a limited time period only.

Farm Unit: The total area of land under control of one farmer or collective of farmers, and including all the farming activities or enterprises.

Food Additive: An enrichment, supplement or other substance which can be added to a foodstuff to affect its keeping quality, consistency, color, taste, smell or other technical property (For full definition, see Codex Alimentarius).

Genetic Diversity: Genetic diversity means the variability among living organisms from agricultural, forest and aquatic ecosystems; this includes diversity within species and between species.

Genetic Engineering: Genetic engineering is a set of techniques from molecular biology (such as recombinant DNA) by which the genetic material of plants, animals, microorganisms, cells and other biological units are altered in ways or with results that could not be obtained by methods of natural mating and reproduction or natural recombination. Techniques of genetic modification include, but are not limited to: recombinant DNA, cell fusion, micro and macro injection, encapsulation, gene deletion and doubling. Genetically engineered organisms do not include organisms resulting from techniques such as conjugation, transduction and natural hybridization.

Genetically Modified Organism (GMO): A plant, animal, or microbe that is transformed by genetic engineering.

Genetic Resources: Genetic resources means genetic material of actual or potential value.

Green Manure: A crop that is incorporated into the soil for the purpose of soil improvement. May include spontaneous crops, plants or weeds.

Habitat: The area over which a plant or animal species naturally exists; the area where a species occurs. Also used to indicate types of habitat, e.g. seashore, riverbank, woodland, grassland.

HACCP: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point. A specific food safety program to identify contamination risks and actions to prevent exposure to such risks.

Homeopathic Treatment: Treatment of disease based on administration of remedies prepared through successive dilutions of a substance that in larger amounts produces symptoms in healthy subjects similar to those of the disease itself.

Ingredient: Any substance, including a food additive, used in the manufacture or preparation of a food or present in the final product although possibly in a modified form.

Irradiation (ionizing radiation): High energy emissions from radio-nucleotides, capable of altering a food's molecular structure for the purpose of controlling microbial contaminants, pathogens, parasites and pests in food, preserving food or inhibiting physiological processes such as sprouting or ripening.

Label: Any written, printed or graphic representation that is present on a product, accompanies the product, or is displayed near the product.

Media (plural) or Medium (singular): The substance in which an organism, tissue, or organ exists.

Multiplication: The growing on of seed stock or plant material to increase supply for future planting.

Natural Fiber: A non-synthetic filament of plant or animal origin.

Operator: An individual or business enterprise, responsible for ensuring that products meet the certification requirements.

Organic: "Organic" refers to the farming system and products described in the IFOAM Basic Standards and not to "organic chemistry".

Organic Product: A product which has been produced, processed, and/or handled in compliance with organic standards.

Organic Seed and Plant Material: Seed and planting material that is produced under certified organic management.

Parallel Production: Any production where the same unit is growing, breeding, handling or processing the same products in both a certified organic system and a non-certified or non-organic system. A situation with “organic” and “in conversion” production of the same product is also parallel production. Parallel production is a special instance of split production.

Processing Aid: Any substance or material, not including apparatus or utensils, and not consumed as a food ingredient by itself, intentionally used in the processing of raw materials, foods or its ingredients, to fulfill a certain technical purpose during treatment or processing and which may result in the non-intentional, but unavoidable presence of residues or derivatives in the final product.

Propagation: The reproduction of plants by sexual (i.e. seed) or asexual (i.e. cuttings, root division) means.

Sanitize: To adequately treat produce or food-contact surfaces by a process that is effective in destroying or substantially reducing the numbers of vegetative cells of microorganisms of public health concern, and other undesirable microorganisms, but without adversely affecting the product or its safety for the consumer.

Split Production: Where only part of the farm or processing unit is certified as organic. The remainder of the property can be (a) non-organic, (b) in conversion or (c) organic but not certified. Also see parallel production.

Synthetic: Manufactured by chemical and industrial processes. May include products not found in nature, or simulation of products from natural sources (but not extracted from natural raw materials).

2 ORGANIC ECOSYSTEMS

2.1 Ecosystem Management

General Principle

Organic farming benefits the quality of ecosystems.

Recommendations

Operators should maintain a significant portion of their farms to facilitate biodiversity and nature conservation.

A farm should place appropriate areas under its management in wildlife refuge habitat. These include:

- a. extensive grassland such as moorlands, reed land or dry land;
- b. in general all areas which are not under rotation and are not heavily manured: extensive pastures, meadows, extensive grassland, extensive orchards, hedges, hedgerows, edges between agriculture and forest land, groups of trees and/or bushes, and forest and woodland;
- c. ecologically rich fallow land or arable land;
- d. ecologically diversified (extensive) field margins;
- e. waterways, pools, springs, ditches, floodplains, wetlands, swamps and other water rich areas which are not used for intensive agriculture or aquaculture production;
- f. areas with ruderal flora;
- g. wildlife corridors that provide linkages and connectivity to native habitat.

Standards shall require that:

- 2.1.1 Operators shall take measures to maintain and improve landscape and enhance biodiversity quality.
- 2.1.2 Clearing of primary ecosystems is prohibited.

2.2 Soil and Water Conservation

General Principle

Organic farming methods conserve and grow soil, maintain water quality and use water efficiently and responsibly.

Recommendations

Operators should minimize loss of topsoil through minimal tillage, contour plowing, crop selection, maintenance of soil plant cover and other management practices that conserve soil.

Operators should take measures to prevent erosion, compaction, salination, and other forms of soil degradation.

Operators should use techniques that conserve water, such as increasing organic matter content of soil, timing of planting and the appropriate design, efficiency and scheduling of irrigation practices.

Operators should apply water and inputs in a way that does not pollute water by runoff to surface water or leaching into ground water.

Organic processors and handlers should install systems that permit the responsible use and recycling of water without pollution or contamination either by chemicals, or by animal or human pathogens.

Operators should plan and design systems that use water resources responsibly and in a manner appropriate to the local climate and geography.

Organic management plans should anticipate, address, and mitigate impacts on water resources, including but not limited to the application of manure, stocking densities, application of soluble fertilizers, and effluent from processing and handling facilities.

Operators should respect sustainable resource management and the common good.

Standards shall require that:

- 2.2.1** All operators shall take defined and appropriate measures to prevent erosion.
- 2.2.2** Land preparation by burning vegetation shall be restricted to the minimum.
- 2.2.3** Crop production, processing and handling systems shall return nutrients, organic matter and other resources removed from the soil through harvesting by the recycling, regeneration and addition of organic materials and nutrients.
- 2.2.4** Grazing management shall not degrade land or pollute water resources.
- 2.2.5** Relevant measures shall be taken to prevent or remedy soil and water salinization.
- 2.2.6** Operators shall not deplete nor excessively exploit water resources, and shall seek to preserve water quality. They shall where possible recycle rainwater and monitor water extraction.

2.3 Genetic Engineering

General Principle

Genetic engineering is excluded from organic production and processing.

Recommendation

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and their derivatives should be excluded from organic production processing and handling to the fullest extent possible.

Standards shall require that:

- 2.3.1** The deliberate use or negligent introduction of genetically engineered organisms or their derivatives to organic farming systems or products is prohibited. This shall include animals, seed, propagation material, and farm inputs such as fertilizers, soil conditioners, vaccines or crop protection materials.
- 2.3.2** The use of genetically engineered organisms or their derivatives is prohibited. This shall include animals, seed and farm inputs such as fertilizers, soil conditioners, vaccines or crop protection materials.
- 2.3.3** The use of genetically engineered seeds, pollen, transgene plants or plant material is not allowed.
- 2.3.4** Organic processed products shall not use ingredients, additives or processing aids derived from GMOs.
- 2.3.5** Inputs, processing aids and ingredients shall be traced back one step in the biological chain to the direct source organism *(see definition) from which they are produced to verify that they are not derived from GMOs.
- 2.3.6** Contamination of organic product by GMOs that results from circumstances beyond the control of the operator may alter the organic status of the operation and/or product.
- 2.3.7** On farms with split (including parallel) production, the use of genetically engineered organisms is not permitted in any production activity on the farm.

2.4 Wild Harvested Products and Common/Public Land Management

General Principle

Organic management sustains and prevents degradation of common biotic and abiotic resources, including areas used for rangeland, fisheries, forests, and forage for bees, as well as neighboring land, air, and water.

Recommendations

The operator should provide for maintenance and sustainability of the ecosystem when harvesting or gathering the products.

The operator should positively contribute to the maintenance of natural areas.

Standards shall require that:

- 2.4.1.** Wild harvested products shall only be certified organic if they are derived from a stable and sustainable growing environment. The people who harvest, gather, or wildcraft shall not take any products at a rate that exceeds the sustainable yield of the ecosystem, or threaten the existence of plant, fungal or animal species, including those not directly exploited.
- 2.4.2** Operators shall harvest products only from a clearly defined area where prohibited substances have not been applied.
- 2.4.3** The collection or harvest area shall be at an appropriate distance from conventional farming, pollution and contamination.
- 2.4.4** The operator who manages the harvesting or gathering of common resource products shall be familiar with the defined collecting or harvesting area.
- 2.4.5** Operators shall take measures to ensure that wild, sedentary aquatic species are collected only from areas where the water is not contaminated by substances prohibited in these standards.

3 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CROP PRODUCTION AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

3.1 Conversion Requirements

General Principle

Organic agriculture develops a viable and sustainable agro-ecosystem, by working compatibly with natural living systems and cycles.

Recommendations

For optimum sustainability of an agro-ecosystem, all activities including crop production, animal husbandry and general environmental maintenance should be organized such that all the elements of the farm activities interact positively. Practical farming skills, based on knowledge, observation and experience are therefore important for organic growers. Careful practice based on skill and knowledge often avoids the requirement for synthetic inputs, and reduces reliance on inputs.

Conversion may be accomplished over a period of time. A farm may be converted by gradual introduction of organic practices over the whole farm, or by application of organic principles to only a portion of the operation at first.

There should be a clear plan of how to proceed with the conversion. This plan should be updated as necessary and cover all aspects relevant to these standards. The plan should indicate that the totality of crop production and animal production in the operation will be converted to organic management.

Standards should determine how organic and non-organic production and product can be clearly separated and distinguishable in production and documentation, to prevent unintentional mixing of inputs and products.

Independent sections of the operation unit should be converted in such a way that these standards are completely met on each section before it is certified as organic.

Standards shall require that:

- 3.1.1** There shall be a period of organic management, meeting all the requirements of these standards, before the resulting product may be considered as organic.
- 3.1.2** The start of the conversion period shall be calculated from the date of application to the certification body or, alternatively, from the date of the last application of unapproved inputs providing the operator can demonstrate that the full standards requirements have been met for at least the minimum period stated in sections 4.2 and 5.2. Calculation of

the conversion period may not start before the date of the last non-compliant input or practice.

For the length of conversion periods, refer to sections 4.2 and 5.2.

3.2 *Split Production and Parallel Production*

General Principle

The whole farm, including livestock, is converted to organic management practices according to the standards over a period of time.

Recommendation

The operator should convert the whole farm, and the conversion plan should include the steps and approximate timeframe for whole farm conversion.

Standards shall require that:

- 3.2.1** If the whole farm is not converted (split production) the organic and conventional parts of the farm shall be clearly and continuously separated.
- 3.2.2** Simultaneous production of the same organic and non-organic crops or animal products (parallel production) is only permitted where such production is undertaken in a way that allows clear and continuous separation of all product claimed as certified or certifiable as organic.
- 3.2.3** Prohibited materials shall be stored in separate locations from those where organic products are handled.

3.3 *Maintenance of Organic Management*

General Principle

Organic production systems require an ongoing commitment to organic production practices.

Recommendation

The operator should design an organic conversion management plan that includes programs and strategies that will allow the operation to be sustainably maintained as organic.

Standards shall require that:

- 3.3.1.** The operator shall demonstrate that a production system does not rely upon continuous switching between organic and conventional management.

4 CROP PRODUCTION

4.1 Choice of Crops and Varieties

General Principle

Species and varieties cultivated in organic agriculture systems are selected for adaptability to the local soil and climatic conditions and tolerance to pests and diseases.

All seeds and plant material are certified organic.

Recommendations

A wide range of crops and varieties should be grown to enhance the sustainability, self-reliance and biodiversity value of organic farms.

Plant varieties should be selected to maintain genetic diversity.

Varieties known to be suited to organic cultivation should be preferred.

Operators should use organically bred varieties.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.1.1** Seed and plant materials shall be propagated under organic management one generation, in the case of annuals, and for perennials, two growing periods, or 12 months, whichever is the longer, before being certified as organic seed and plant material.
- 4.1.2** Operators shall use organic seed and plant material of appropriate varieties and quality.

When organic seed and plant materials are not available, conventional materials may be used provided that they have not been treated with pesticides not otherwise permitted by these standards. To promote and establish the use of organic seed and plant material, standard-setting organizations shall set appropriate standards and/or time limits for the selected use of non-organic seed and plant material.

Where untreated conventional seeds and plant materials are not available, chemically treated seed and plant material may be used. The certification body shall establish time limits and conditions for exemptions that permit use of any chemically treated seeds and plant materials.

4.2 Length of Conversion Period (Plant Production)

General Principle

A conversion period enables the establishment of an organic management system and builds soil fertility.

Recommendations

The conversion period should be long enough to improve soil fertility significantly and to re-establish the balance of the ecosystem.

The length of the conversion period should be adapted to:

- a. the past use of the land;
- b. the ecological context and its implications;
- c. the experience of the operator.

The length of the conversion period should be defined to provide for a period of at least 36 months from the last date of application of any prohibited material or practice.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.2.1** Plant products from annual production shall only be considered organic when a conversion period of at least 12 months has elapsed prior to the start of the production cycle. In the case of perennials (excluding pastures and meadows) a period of at least 18 months prior to harvest shall be required.
- 4.2.2** There shall be at least a 12-month conversion period prior to pastures, meadows and products harvested therefrom, being considered organic.
- 4.2.3** The conversion period may be extended by the standard-setting organization depending on conditions such as past use of the land, management capacity of the operator and environmental factors.
- 4.2.4** Where conversion periods exceeding those stated in 4.2.1 are required, and labeling of product as “produce of organic agriculture in the process of conversion” or a similar description is permitted, the standards requirements shall have been met for at least 12 months prior to such labeling.

4.3 Diversity in Crop Production

General Principle

Soil and soil management is the foundation of organic production. Organic growing systems are soil based, care for the soil and surrounding ecosystems and provide support for a diversity of species, while encouraging nutrient cycling and mitigating soil and nutrient losses.

Recommendations

Diversity in crop production is achieved by a combination of:

- a. a diverse and versatile crop rotation that includes green manure, legumes and deep rooting plants;
- b. appropriate coverage of the soil with diverse plant species for as much of the year as possible.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.3.1** Diversity in plant production and activity shall be assured by minimum crop rotation requirements and/or variety of plantings. Minimum rotation practices for annual crops shall be established unless the operator demonstrates diversity in plant production by other means. Operators are required to manage pressure from insects, weeds, diseases and other pests, while maintaining or increasing soil organic matter, fertility, microbial activity and general soil health.
- 4.3.2** For perennial crops, the certifying body shall set minimum standards for orchard/plantation floor cover and/or diversity or refuge plantings in the orchard.

4.4 Soil Fertility and Fertilization

General Principle

Organic farming returns microbial plant or animal material to the soil to increase or at least maintain its fertility and biological activity.

Recommendations

Biodegradable material of microbial, plant or animal origin produced from organic practices should form the basis of the fertility program.

Nutrient resources should be used in a sustainable and responsible manner. Nutrient losses from the farm to the natural environment should be minimized. Nutrients should be used in such a way and at appropriate times and places to optimize their effect.

Accumulation of heavy metals and other pollutants should be prevented.

Naturally occurring mineral fertilizers and brought-in fertilizers of biological origin permitted under these standards should be regarded as only one component of the nutrient system, and as a supplement to, and not a replacement for, nutrient recycling.

Manures containing human feces and urine should not be used unless free of human pathogens. Careful attention to hygiene is required and it is recommended that they are not applied directly to vegetation for human consumption or to soil that will be used to grow annual plants within the next six months.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.4.1** Material of microbial, plant or animal origin shall form the basis of the fertility program.
- 4.4.2** Nutrients and fertility products shall be applied in a way that protects soil, water, and biodiversity. Restrictions may be based on amounts, location, timing, treatments, methods or choice of inputs applied.
- 4.4.3** Material applied to the land or crop shall be in accordance with Appendix 2.
- 4.4.4** Manures containing human excrement (feces and urine) are prohibited for use on crops for human consumption.

Exceptions may be made where detailed sanitation requirements are established by the standard-setting organization to prevent the transmission of pests, parasites and infectious agents and to ensure that manures are not mixed with other household or industrial wastes that may contain prohibited substances.

- 4.4.5** Mineral fertilizers shall only be used in a program addressing long-term fertility needs together with other techniques such as organic matter additions, green manures, rotations and nitrogen fixation by plants.
- 4.4.6** Mineral fertilizers shall be applied in the form in which they are naturally composed and extracted and shall not be rendered more soluble by chemical treatment, other than addition of water and mixing with other naturally occurring, permitted inputs.

Under exceptional circumstances, and after consideration of all relevant information, and having regard to Appendix 1, the standard-setting organizations may grant exception to this requirement. These exceptions shall not apply to mineral fertilizers containing nitrogen.

- 4.4.7** Chilean nitrate and all synthetic nitrogenous fertilizers, including urea, are prohibited.

4.5 Pest, Disease, Weed, and Growth Management

General Principles

Organic farming systems apply biological and cultural means to prevent unacceptable losses from pests, diseases and weeds. They use crops and varieties that are well-adapted to the environment and a balanced fertility program to maintain fertile soils with high biological activity, locally adapted rotations, companion planting, green manures, and other recognized organic practices as described in these standards.

Growth and development should take place in a natural manner.

Recommendations

Pests, diseases and weeds should be managed by the knowledgeable application of one, or a combination, of the following measures:

- a. choice of appropriate species and varieties;
- b. appropriate rotation programs;
- c. mechanical cultivation;
- d. protection of natural enemies of pests through provision of favorable habitat, such as hedges, nesting sites and ecological buffer zones that maintain the original vegetation to house pest predators;
- e. diversified ecosystems. These will vary between geographical locations. For example, buffer zones to counteract erosion, agro-forestry, rotating crops, intercropping, etc.;
- f. thermal weeding;
- g. seed bed preparation;
- h. natural enemies including release of predators and parasites;
- i. acceptable biodynamic preparations from stone meal, farmyard manure or plants;
- j. mulching and mowing;
- k. grazing of animals;
- l. mechanical controls such as traps, barriers, light and sound.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.5.1** All organic production systems shall display a set of positive processes/mechanisms capable of accounting for management of significant pests, weeds and diseases under normal circumstances.
- 4.5.2** Pest, disease and weed management products that are prepared at the farm from local plants, animals and micro-organisms, are permitted when the measures in 4.5.1 are not sufficient. If the ecosystem or the quality of organic products might be jeopardized, the criteria in Appendix 1 and other relevant criteria shall be used to establish whether the product is acceptable.

4.5.3 Physical methods for pest, disease and weed management are permitted, including the application of heat. Thermal sterilization of soils to combat pests and diseases is restricted.

The standard-setting organization shall establish standards or criteria for all soil sterilization methods that are considered consistent with Appendices 1 and 3.

4.5.4 Any input applied for plant pest, disease, weed, or growth management shall appear in Appendix 3 subject to the limitations of that appendix.

4.5.5 Any formulated input shall have only active ingredients listed in Appendix 3. All other ingredients shall not be carcinogens, teratogens, mutagens, or neurotoxins.

4.6 Avoiding Contamination

General Principle

All relevant measures are taken to ensure that organic soil and food is protected from contamination.

Recommendations

Operators should take reasonable measures to identify and avoid potential contamination.

In case of risk, or reasonable suspicion of risk that contamination may occur, the standard-setting organization should set limits for the maximum application levels of heavy metals and other pollutants.

The standards should place emphasis on detection of contamination sources, improvement of the production system taking into account the procedures developed for HACCP, and the assessment of background contamination levels.

Accumulation of heavy metals and other pollutants should be limited and the appropriate remedial measures implemented where possible.

The standards should establish parameters for the acceptance/rejection of organic products based on analysis.

The standards should establish a procedure on how to evaluate organic products in case of reasonable suspicion of pollution based on due expert consideration and the precautionary principle.

Contamination that results from circumstances beyond the control of the operation does not necessarily alter the organic status of the operation.

Standards shall require that:

- 4.6.1** The operator shall employ measures including barriers and buffer zones to avoid potential contamination and limit contaminants in organic products.
- 4.6.2** In case of a reasonable suspicion of contamination, the certification body shall ensure that an analysis of the relevant products and possible sources of pollution (soil, water, air and inputs) is undertaken to determine the level of contamination and shall make the appropriate responses, such as detection of contamination sources, considering background contamination and other relevant factors.
- 4.6.3** For synthetic structure coverings, mulches, fleeces, insect netting and silage wrapping, only products based on polyethylene and polypropylene or other polycarbonates are permitted. These shall be removed from the soil after use and shall not be burned on the farmland.
- 4.6.4** All equipment from conventional farming systems shall be thoroughly cleaned of potentially contaminating materials before being used on organically managed areas.

5 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

5.1 Animal Management

General Principle

Organic livestock husbandry is based on the harmonious relationship between land, plants and livestock, respect for the physiological and behavioral needs of livestock and the feeding of good-quality organically grown feedstuffs.

Recommendations

The operator should:

- a. provide adequate good quality organically grown feedstuffs;
- b. maintain appropriate stocking rates, flock or herd sizes, and rotations to allow for natural behavior patterns and to maintain natural resources and environmental quality;
- c. practice methods of animal management that reduce stress, promote animal health and welfare, prevent disease and parasitism, and avoid the use of chemical allopathic veterinary drugs;
- d. apply management practices that promote sustainable land and water use.

Standards shall require that:

- 5.1.1 The operator shall ensure that the environment, the facilities, stocking density and flock/herd size provides for the behavioral needs of the animals and provides for:
 - a. sufficient free movement and opportunity to express normal patterns of behavior;
 - b. sufficient fresh air, water, feed and natural daylight to satisfy the needs of the animals;
 - c. access to resting areas, shelter and protection from sunlight, temperature, rain, mud and wind adequate to reduce animal stress;
 - d. the maintenance of social structures by ensuring that herd animals are not kept in isolation from other animals of the same species;
 - e. construction materials and production equipment that do not significantly harm human or animal health.

This provision does not apply to small herds for mostly self-sufficient production. Operators may isolate male animals, sick animals and those about to give birth.

- 5.1.2 Housing conditions shall ensure:

- a. ample access to fresh water and feed according to the needs of the animals;
- b. animals have sufficient space to stand naturally, lie down easily, turn around, groom themselves and assume all natural postures and movements such as stretching, and wing flapping;

- c. where animals require bedding, adequate natural materials are provided;
- d. that construction provides for insulation, heating, cooling and ventilation of the building, that permits air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity, and gas concentrations to within levels that are not harmful to the livestock;
- e. that poultry, rabbits and pigs shall not be kept in cages;
- f. that animals are protected from predation by wild and feral animals.

5.1.3 Landless animal husbandry systems are prohibited.

5.1.4 All animals shall have access to pasture or an open-air exercise area or run, whenever the physiological condition of the animal, the weather and the state of the ground permit. Such areas may be partially covered.

Animals may be temporarily confined because of inclement weather or absences of pasture due to temporary or seasonal conditions. Such animals shall still have access to an outdoor run. Animals may be fed with carried fresh fodder where this is a more sustainable way to use land resources than grazing. Animal welfare shall not be compromised.

5.1.5 The maximum hours of artificial light used to prolong natural day length shall not exceed a maximum that respects the natural behavior, geographical conditions and general health of the animals.

5.2 Length of Conversion Period

General Principle

The establishment of organic animal husbandry requires an interim period, the conversion period. Animal husbandry systems that change from conventional to organic production require a conversion period to develop natural behavior, immunity and metabolic functions.

Recommendations

All livestock on an organic farm should be converted to organic production. Conversion should be accomplished over a period of time.

Replacement poultry should be brought onto the holding at the start of the production cycle.

Standards shall require that:

5.2.1 Animal products may be sold as “product of organic agriculture” only after the land and animals have all met the appropriate established conversion requirements.

5.2.2 Land and animals may be converted simultaneously subject to the requirements for all other land and animal conversion periods.

5.2.3 Where existing animals on a farm are converted to organic they shall undergo a one-time minimum conversion period at least according to the following schedule:

PRODUCTION	CONVERSION PERIOD
• meat:	12 months
• dairy:	90 days
• eggs:	42 days

5.3 Animals Sources/Origin

General Principle

Organic animals are born and raised on organic holdings.

Recommendations

Organic animal husbandry should not be dependent on conventional raising systems.

Livestock obtained from off the farm should be from organic farms or as part of an established co-operative program between specific farms to improve herd health and fitness.

Standards shall require that:

5.3.1 Animals shall be raised organically from birth.

When organic livestock is not available conventional animals may be brought in according to the following age limits:

- a. 2 day old chickens for meat production;*
- b. 18 week old hens for egg production;*
- c. 2 weeks for any other poultry;*
- d. piglets up to 6 weeks and after weaning;*
- e. dairy calves up to 4 weeks old that have received colostrum and are fed a diet consisting mainly of full milk.*

5.3.2 Breeding stock may be brought in from conventional farms to a yearly maximum of 10% of the adult animals of the same species on the farm.

Where standards allow for exceptions of more than 10% these shall be limited to:

- a. unforeseen severe natural or man-made events;*
- b. considerable enlargement of the farm;*
- c. establishment of a new type of animal production on the farm;*
- d. holdings with less than 10 animals.*

5.4 Breeds and Breeding

General Principle

Breeds are adapted to local conditions.

Recommendations

Breeding goals should encourage and maintain the good health and welfare of the animals consistent with their natural behavior.

Breeding practices should include methods that do not depend on high technologies invasive to natural behavior and capital intensive methods.

Animals should be bred by natural reproduction techniques.

Standards shall require that:

- 5.4.1** Breeding systems shall be based on breeds that can reproduce successfully under natural conditions without human involvement.
- 5.4.2** Artificial insemination is permitted.
- 5.4.3** Embryo transfer techniques and cloning are prohibited.
- 5.4.4** Hormones are prohibited to induce ovulation and birth unless applied to individual animals for medical reasons and under veterinary supervision.

5.5 Mutilations

General Principle

Organic farming respects the animal's distinctive characteristics.

Recommendations

Operators should select species and breeds that do not require mutilation.

Exceptions for mutilations should only be made when suffering can be kept to the minimum.

Surgical treatments should only be used for reasons of safety, mitigation of suffering and the health and welfare of the livestock.

Standards shall require that:**5.5.1** Mutilations are prohibited.

The following exceptions may be used only if animal suffering is minimized and anesthetics are used where appropriate:

- a. castrations;*
- b. tail docking of lambs;*
- c. dehorning;*
- d. ringing;*
- e. mulesing only for breeds that require mulesing.*

5.6 Animal Nutrition***General Principle***

Organic animals receive their nutritional needs from organic forage and feed of good quality.

Recommendations

Operators should offer a balanced diet that provides all of the nutritional needs of the animals in a form allowing them to exhibit their natural feeding and digestive behavior.

Organic animals should be fed by-products from the organic food processing industry not suitable for human use.

Ruminants should receive a balanced diet according to their specific nutritional needs and should not be fed a diet that consists entirely of silage and concentrates.

All feed should come from the farm itself or be produced within the region.

Coloring agents in feed should not be used in organic livestock production.

All animals should have daily access to roughage.

Standards shall require that:**5.6.1** Animals shall be fed organic feed.

Operators may feed a limited percentage of non-organic feed under specific conditions for a limited time in the following cases:

- a. organic feed is of inadequate quantity or quality;*
- b. areas where organic agriculture is in early stages of development.*

In no case may the percentage of non-organic feed exceed 10% dry matter per ruminant and 15% dry matter per non-ruminant calculated on an annual basis.

Operators may feed a limited percentage of non-organic feed under specific conditions for a limited time in the following cases:

- a. unforeseen severe natural or man-made events;*
- b. extreme climatic or weather conditions.*

- 5.6.2** The prevailing part (at least more than 50%) of the feed shall come from the farm unit itself or be produced in co-operation with other organic farms in the region.

The standard-setting organization may allow exceptions with regard to local and regional conditions, and shall set a time limit.

- 5.6.3** For the calculation of feeding allowances only, feed produced on the farm unit during the first year of organic management may be classed as organic. This refers only to feed for animals that are being produced within the farm unit. Such feed may not be sold or otherwise marketed as organic.

- 5.6.4** The following substances are prohibited in the diet:

- a.** farm animal by-products (e.g. abattoir waste) to ruminants;
- b.** slaughter products of the same species;
- c.** all types of excrements including droppings, dung or other manure;
- d.** feed subjected to solvent extraction (e.g. hexane) or the addition of other chemical agents;
- e.** amino-acid isolates;
- f.** urea and other synthetic nitrogen compounds;
- g.** synthetic growth promoters or stimulants;
- h.** synthetic appetizers;
- i.** preservatives, except when used as a processing aid;
- j.** artificial coloring agents.

- 5.6.5** Animals may be fed vitamins, trace elements and supplements from natural sources.

Synthetic vitamins, minerals and supplements may be used when natural sources are not available in sufficient quantity and quality.

- 5.6.6** All ruminants shall have daily access to roughage.

- 5.6.7** Fodder preservatives such as the following may be used:

- a.** bacteria, fungi and enzymes;
- b.** by-products of food industry (e.g. molasses);
- c.** plant based products.

Synthetic chemical fodder preservatives such as acetic, formic and propionic acid and vitamins and mineral are permitted in severe weather conditions.

- 5.6.8** Young stock from mammals shall be provided maternal milk or organic milk from their own species and shall be weaned only after a minimum time that takes into account the natural behavior of the relevant animal species.

Operators may provide non-organic milk when organic milk is not available.

Operators may provide milk replacers or other substitutes only in emergencies provided that they do not contain antibiotics, synthetic additives or slaughter products.

5.7 Veterinary Medicine

General Principle

Organic management practices promote and maintain the health and well-being of animals through balanced organic nutrition, stress-free living conditions and breed selection for resistance to diseases, parasites and infections.

Recommendations

Operators should maintain animal health and practice disease prevention through the following techniques:

- a. selection of appropriate breeds or strains of animals;
- b. adoption of animal husbandry practices appropriate to the requirements of each species, such as regular exercise and access to pasture and/or open-air runs, to encourage the natural immunological defense of animal to stimulate natural immunity and tolerance to diseases;
- c. provision of good quality organic feed;
- d. appropriate stocking densities;
- e. grazing rotation and management.

Operators should use natural medicines and treatments, including homeopathy, Ayurvedic medicine and acupuncture whenever appropriate.

When illness does occur, an operator should determine the cause and prevent future outbreaks by adopting appropriate management practices.

Standards shall require that:

- 5.7.1** The operator shall take all practical measures to ensure the health and well being of the animals through preventative animal husbandry practices.

- 5.7.2** If an animal becomes sick or injured despite preventative measures that animal shall be treated promptly and adequately, if necessary in isolation and in suitable housing. Producers shall not withhold medication where it will result in unnecessary suffering of the livestock, even if the use of such medication will cause the animal to lose its organic status.

An operator may use chemical allopathic veterinary drugs or antibiotics only if:

- a. preventive and alternative practices are unlikely to be effective to cure sickness or injury;*
- b. they are used under the supervision of a veterinarian, and*
- c. withholding periods shall be not less than double of that required by legislation, or a minimum of 48 hours, whichever is longer.*

- 5.7.3** Substances of synthetic origin used to stimulate production or suppress of natural growth are prohibited.

- 5.7.4** Vaccinations are allowed with the following limitations:

- a.** when an endemic disease is known or expected to be a problem in the region of the farm and where this disease cannot be controlled by other management techniques, or
- b.** when a vaccination is legally required, and
- c.** the vaccine is not genetically engineered.

5.8 Transport and Slaughter

General Principle

Organic animals are subjected to minimum stress during transport and slaughter.

Recommendations

Animals should be transported the minimum frequencies and distances possible.

Animals should be inspected regularly during transport.

The transportation medium should be appropriate for each animal.

Animals should be watered and fed during transport depending on weather and other conditions of transport.

Those responsible for transportation and slaughtering should employ stress-reducing measures, such as:

- a.** allowing sufficient rest time to reduce stress;
- b.** maintaining existing group and social ties;

- c. avoiding contact (sight, sound or smell) of each live animal with dead animals or animals in the killing process.

Each animal should be stunned before being bled to death. The equipment used for stunning should be in good working order. Exceptions can be made according to cultural practice. Where animals are bled without prior stunning this should take place in a calm environment.

Local and mobile slaughterhouses should be used when available.

Standards shall require that:

- 5.8.1 Animals be handled calmly and gently during transport and slaughter.
- 5.8.2 The use of electric prods and other such instruments is prohibited.
- 5.8.3 Organic animals be provided with conditions during transportation and slaughter that reduce and minimize the adverse effects of:
 - a. stress;
 - b. loading and unloading;
 - c. mixing different groups of animals or animals of different sex;
 - d. quality and suitability of mode of transport and handling equipment;
 - e. temperatures and relative humidity;
 - f. hunger and thirst, and
 - g. the specific needs of each animal.
- 5.8.4 Animals shall not be treated with synthetic tranquilizers or stimulants prior to or during transport.
- 5.8.5 Each animal or group of animals shall be identifiable at each step in the transport and slaughter process.
- 5.8.6 Slaughterhouse journey times shall not exceed eight hours.

When there is no certified organic slaughterhouse within eight hours travel time, an animal may be transported for a period in excess.

5.9 Bee Keeping

General Principle

Bee keeping is an important activity that contributes to enhancement of the agriculture and forestry production through the pollinating action of bees.

Recommendations

The hives should consist of natural materials presenting no risk of contamination to the environment or the bee products.

The feeding of colonies may be undertaken with organic feed, to overcome temporary feed shortages due to climatic or other exceptional circumstances.

When bees are placed in wild areas, consideration should be given to the safety and integrity of the indigenous insect population and pollination requirements of native plants.

The treatment and management of hives should respect all the principles of organic animal husbandry contained elsewhere in these standards.

The capacity of bees to adapt to local conditions, their vitality and their resistance to disease should be taken into account.

Honey temperatures should be maintained as low as possible during the extraction and processing of products derived from bee keeping.

The collection areas should be large enough and as varied as possible to provide adequate and sufficient nutrition and access to water.

The health of bees should be based on prevention of disease, using techniques such as adequate selection of breeds, favorable environment, balanced diet and appropriate husbandry practices.

The sources of natural nectar, honeydew and pollen should consist essentially of organically produced plants and/or naturally occurring (wild) vegetation.

Standards shall require that:

- 5.9.1** Hives shall be situated in organically managed fields and/or wild natural areas. Hives may be placed in an area that ensures access to sources of honeydew, nectar and pollen that meets organic crop production requirements sufficient to supply all of the bees' nutritional needs.
- 5.9.2** The operator shall not place hives within foraging distance of fields or other areas with a high contamination risk.
- 5.9.3** At the end of the production season, hives shall be left with reserves of honey and pollen sufficient for the colony to survive the dormancy period.

Any supplementary feeding shall be carried out only between the last honey harvest

and the start of the next nectar or honeydew flow period. In such cases, organic honey or sugar shall be used.

Exceptions may be made, for a limited time, if organic sugar is not available.

- 5.9.4** Bee colonies may be converted to organic production. Introduced bees shall come from organic production units when available.

Bee products may be sold as organically produced when the requirements of these Standards have been complied with for at least one year.

During the conversion period, the wax shall be replaced by organically produced wax. Where no prohibited products have been previously used in the hive and there is no risk of contamination of wax, replacement of wax is not necessary.

In cases where all the wax cannot be replaced during a one-year period, the conversion period may be extended with the approval of the standard-setting organization.

- 5.9.5** Each beehive shall primarily consist of natural materials. Use of construction materials with potentially toxic effects is prohibited.

- 5.9.6** For pest and disease control the following are permitted:

- a. lactic, formic acid;
- b. oxalic, acetic acid;
- c. sulfur;
- d. natural essential oils (e.g. menthol, eucalyptol, camphor);
- e. *Bacillus thuringiensis*;
- f. steam, direct flame and caustic soda for hive disinfection.

- 5.9.7** Where preventative measures fail, veterinary medicinal products may be used provided that:

- a. preference is given to phyto-therapeutic and homeopathic treatment, and
- b. if allopathic chemically synthesized medicinal products are used, the bee products shall not be sold as organic;
- c. treated hives shall be placed in isolation and undergo a conversion period of one year.

The practice of destroying the male brood is permitted only to contain infestation with *Varroa jacobsoni* (mites).

- 5.9.8** The health and welfare of the hive shall be primarily achieved by hygiene and hive management.

- 5.9.9** The destruction of bees in the combs as a method of harvesting of bee products is prohibited.

- 5.9.10** Mutilations, such as clipping of the wings of queen bees, are prohibited.
- 5.9.11** Artificial insemination of queen bees is permitted.
- 5.9.12** The use of chemical synthetic bee repellents is prohibited during honey extraction operations.
- 5.9.13** The use of smoke should be kept to a minimum. Acceptable smoking materials should be natural or from materials that meet the requirements of these standards.

6 PROCESSING AND HANDLING

6.1 General

General Principle

Organic processing and handling provides consumers with nutritious, high quality supplies of organic products and organic farmers with a market without compromise to the organic integrity of their products.

Recommendations

Handlers and processors should handle and process organic products separately in both time and place from non-organic products.

Handlers and processors should identify and avoid pollution and potential contamination sources.

Standards shall require that:

- 6.1.1** Handlers and processors shall not co-mingle organic products with non-organic products.
- 6.1.2** All organic products shall be clearly identified as such, and stored and transported in a way that prevents contact with conventional product through the entire process.
- 6.1.3** The handler and processor shall take all necessary measures to prevent organic products from being contaminated by pollutants and contaminants, including the cleaning, decontamination, or if necessary disinfection of facilities and equipment.

6.2 Ingredients

General Principle

Organic processed products are only made from organic ingredients.

Recommendations

Processors should use organic ingredients whenever possible.

Enzymes, fermentation organisms, dairy cultures, and other microbiological products should be organically produced and multiplied from a medium composed of organic ingredients, and substances that appear in Appendix 4.

Standards shall require that:

6.2.1 All ingredients used in an organic processed product shall be organically produced except for those additives and processing aids that appear in Appendix 4 and non-organically produced ingredients that are in compliance with the labeling provisions.

In cases where an ingredient of organic origin is unavailable in sufficient quality or quantity, the standard-setting organization may authorize use of non-organic raw materials subject to periodic review and re-evaluation. These materials shall not be genetically engineered.

6.2.2 Water and salt may be used as ingredients in the production of organic products and are not included in the percentage calculations of organic ingredients.

6.2.3 Minerals (including trace elements), vitamins and similar isolated ingredients shall not be used unless their use is legally required or where severe dietary or nutritional deficiency can be demonstrated.

6.2.4 Preparations of micro-organisms and enzymes commonly used in food processing may be used, with the exception of genetically engineered micro-organisms and their products.

Processors shall use micro-organisms grown on substrates that consist entirely of organic ingredients and substances on Appendix 4, if available. This includes cultures that are prepared or multiplied in-house.

6.3 Processing Methods

General Principle

Organic food is processed by biological, mechanical and physical methods in a way that maintains the vital quality of each ingredient and the finished product.

Recommendations

Organic products should be processed in a way that maintains nutritional value.

Processors should choose methods that limit the number and quantity of non-organic additives and processing aids.

The IFOAM Principles of Organic Agriculture should be considered when using materials, methods, and techniques that have a functional effect or that modify, add, or remove constituents, or otherwise chemically change the composition of food.

Standards shall require that:

- 6.3.1** Techniques used to process organic food shall be biological, physical, and mechanical in nature. Any additives, processing aids, or other material that chemically react with or modify organic food shall be restricted and must appear in Appendix 4.
- 6.3.2** Extraction shall only take place with water, ethanol, plant and animal oils, vinegar, carbon dioxide, and nitrogen. These shall be of a quality appropriate for their purpose.
- 6.3.3** Irradiation is not permitted.
- 6.3.4** Filtration equipment shall not contain asbestos, or utilize techniques or substances that may negatively affect the product.
- 6.3.5** The following conditions of storage are permitted (for allowed substances in these conditions, see Appendix 4):
 - a.** controlled atmosphere;
 - b.** temperature control;
 - c.** drying;
 - d.** humidity regulation.
- 6.3.6** Ethylene gas is permitted for ripening.

6.4 Pest and Disease Control*General Principle*

Organic food is protected from pests and diseases by the use of good manufacturing practices that include proper cleaning, sanitation and hygiene, without the use of chemical treatment or irradiation.

Recommendation

Recommended treatments are physical barriers, sound, ultra-sound, light and UV-light, traps (including pheromone traps and static bait traps), temperature control, controlled atmosphere and diatomaceous earth.

Standards shall require that:

- 6.4.1** A handler or processor is required to manage pests and shall use the following methods according to these priorities:
 - a.** preventative methods such as disruption, elimination of habitat and access to facilities;
 - b.** mechanical, physical and biological methods;

- c. substances according to the Appendices of the IFOAM Basic Standards;
 - d. substances (other than pesticides) used in traps.
- 6.4.2** Prohibited pest control practices include, but are not limited to, the following substances and methods:
 - a. pesticides not contained in Appendix 3;
 - b. fumigation with ethylene oxide, methyl bromide, aluminum phosphide or other substance not contained in Appendix 4;
 - c. ionizing radiation.
- 6.4.3** The direct use or application of a prohibited method or material renders that product no longer organic. The operator shall take necessary precautions to prevent contamination, including the removal of organic product from the storage or processing facility, and measures to decontaminate the equipment or facilities. Application of prohibited substances to equipment or facilities shall not contaminate organic product handled or processed therein. Application of prohibited substances to equipment or facilities shall not compromise the organic integrity of product handled or processed therein.

6.5 Packaging

General Principle

Organic product packaging has minimal adverse impacts on the product or on the environment.

Recommendations

Processors of organic food should avoid unnecessary packaging materials.

Organic food should be packaged in reusable, recycled, recyclable, and biodegradable packaging whenever possible.

Standards shall require that:

- 6.5.1** Packaging material shall not contaminate organic food.
- 6.5.2** Packaging materials, and storage containers, or bins that contain a synthetic fungicide, preservative, or fumigant are prohibited.
- 6.5.3** Organic produce shall not be packaged in reused bags or containers that have been in contact with any substance likely to compromise the organic integrity of product or ingredient placed in those containers.

6.6 *Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Sanitizing of Food Processing Facilities*

General Principle

Organic food is safe, of high quality, and free of substances used to clean, disinfect, and sanitize food processing facilities.

Recommendations

Handlers should clearly differentiate substances used to clean, disinfect and sanitize food handling equipment and food contact surfaces from those directly applied to food.

Operators should develop a management system for cleaning and disinfecting.

Operators should design facilities, plant layout, install equipment, and devise a cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing system that prevents the contamination of food and food contact surfaces by prohibited substances, non-organic ingredients, pests, disease-causing organisms, and foreign material.

Handlers and processors should use physical and mechanical means such as dry heat, moist heat, exclusion, and other non-chemical methods, adequate water supplies and substances that appear on Appendix 4, Table 2 to prevent microbiological contamination.

Allowed substances in Appendix 4, Table 2 should be used with consideration to the environment.

The use of cleaning compounds should minimize the disposal of effluent and the use of disinfectants. Gray water recycling off-site, for uses other than handling or processing food, is preferred over either re-circulation or disposal.

Steam traps and filters should be used to remove non-volatile boiler water additives.

Operators should not use persistent cleansers and/or sanitizers that are not easily removed by an intervening event (e.g. quaternary ammonia) or have an adverse impact on the environment (e.g. halogenated compounds).

Standards shall require that:

6.6.1 Operators shall take all necessary precautions to protect organic food against contamination by substances prohibited in organic farming and handling, pests, disease-causing organisms, and foreign substances.

6.6.2 Water and substances that appear in Appendix 4, Table 2, may be used as equipment cleansers and equipment disinfectants that may come into direct contact with food.

- 6.6.3** Operations that use cleaners, sanitizers, and disinfectants on food contact surfaces shall use them in a way that maintains the food's organic integrity.
- 6.6.4** The operator shall perform an intervening event between the use of any cleaner, sanitizer, or disinfectant and the contact of organic food with that surface sufficient to prevent residual contamination of that organic food.

6.7 Textile Fiber Processing

General Principle

Organic fiber is processed from organic raw materials in an environmentally sound way that considers the entire product life cycle.

Recommendations

Organic fiber processing should use appropriate techniques that are least damaging to the environment.

Whenever possible, organic fiber products should be processed using only mechanical and/or physical methods.

The amounts of chemical substances used in organic fiber processing should be limited to the minimum quantity needed to achieve the desired product.

Operators should avoid the use of non-biodegradable, bio-accumulating input products and heavy metals.

Organic textiles should be used to the maximum extent possible and not blended with non-organic fibers.

Equipment should be constructed, maintained, and operated in a way that avoids contamination of fibers and fiber products.

Non-organic, natural or synthetic fibers blended with organic fibers should not contain toxic substances or fibers produced in a way that is hazardous to consumers, workers or the environment.

Standards shall require that:

- 6.7.1** Fiber processing shall comply with the requirements of sections 6.1 and 6.4.
- 6.7.2** Labeling of textiles shall comply with the requirements of chapter 7, “Labeling.”
- 6.7.3** Operators shall have a management system in place that ensures that any effluents released into the environment resulting from wet processing are properly treated.

7 LABELING

7.1 General

General Principle

Organic products are clearly and accurately labeled as organic.

Recommendations

When the full standards requirements have been fulfilled, products should be labeled as “produce of organic agriculture” or a similar description.

The name and address of the person or company legally responsible for the production or processing of the product should be on the label.

Product labels should identify all ingredients, processing methods, and all additives and processing aids.

Labels should contain advice on how to obtain all additional product information.

All components of additives and processing aids should be declared.

Wild ingredients or products should be declared as such, as well as organic.

Standards shall require that:

- 7.1.1** The person or company legally responsible for the production or processing of the product and the certification body shall be identifiable.
- 7.1.2** To be labeled as “produce of organic agriculture” or equivalent protected terms, a product shall comply with at least these standards.
- 7.1.3** Mixed products where not all ingredients, including additives, are of organic origin and products that are entirely in compliance with these standards, shall be labeled in the following way (percentages in this section refer to raw material weight):
 - a.** where a minimum of 95% of the ingredients are of certified organic origin, products may be labeled “certified organic” or equivalent and should carry the certification mark of the certification body;
 - b.** where less than 95% but not less than 70% of the ingredients are of certified organic origin, products may not be called “organic”. The word “organic” may be used on the principal display in statements like “made with organic ingredients” provided there is a clear statement of the proportion of the organic ingredients. An indication that

the product is covered by the certification body may be used, close to the indication of proportion of organic ingredients;

- c. where less than 70% of the ingredients are of certified organic origin, the indication that an ingredient is organic may appear in the ingredient list. Such product may not be called “organic.”

- 7.1.4** All ingredients of a multi-ingredient product shall be listed on the product label in order of their weight percentage. It shall be apparent which ingredients are of organic certified origin and which are not. All additives shall be listed with their full name.

If herbs and/or spices constitute less than 2% of the total weight of the product, they may be listed as “spices” or “herbs” without stating the percentage.

- 7.1.5** Added water and salt shall not be included in the percentage calculations of organic ingredients.
- 7.1.6** The label for conversion products shall be clearly distinguishable from the label for organic products.
- 7.1.7 (see also 2.3)** Organic products shall not be labeled as GMO-free in the context of these standards. Any reference to genetic engineering on product labels shall be limited to the production and processing methods themselves having not used GMOs.

7.2 Fiber, Textiles and Apparel

General principle

Organic fiber, textiles, and apparel are labeled in a way that accurately conveys the organic content of the product.

Recommendation

Labels and tags attached to the products should declare materials in non-textile accessories.

Standards shall require that:

- 7.2.1** Labeling of textiles follows all standards on labeling organic food with the exceptions in this section.
- 7.2.2** Only substances allowed by the certification body based upon the criteria for textile processing in Appendix 1 shall be used to process fiber products labeled as “organic.”

7.2.3 Apparel and other textile products labeled as organic consist of at least 95% by weight organic fiber as described in section 6.7*.

7.2.4 Textiles may be labeled “made with (...%) organically produced fibers” only if at least 70% of the fibers are organic as described in section 6.7*.

* (Percentages in 7.2.3 and 7.2.4 refer to the total weight of the fibers, and do not include the weight of the non-textile accessories such as buttons and zippers.)

8 SOCIAL JUSTICE

General Principle

Social justice and social rights are an integral part of organic agriculture and processing.

Recommendations

Operators should comply with all ILO conventions relating to labor welfare and the UN Charter of Rights for Children.

All employees and their families should have access to potable water, food, housing, education, transportation and health services.

Operators should provide for the basic social security needs of the employees, including benefits such as maternity, sickness and retirement benefits.

All employees should have equal opportunity and adequate wages when performing the same level of work regardless of color, creed and gender.

Workers should have adequate protection from noise, dust, light and exposure to chemicals that should be within acceptable limits in all production and processing operations.

Operators should respect the rights of indigenous peoples, and should not use or exploit land whose inhabitants or farmers have been or are being impoverished, dispossessed, colonized, expelled, exiled or killed, or which is currently in dispute regarding legal or customary local rights to its use or ownership.

Contracts should be fair, open to negotiation, and honored in good faith.

Standards shall require that:

8.1. Operators shall have a policy on social justice.

Operators who hire fewer than ten (10) persons for labor and those who operate under a state system that enforces social laws may not be required to have such a policy.

8.2. In cases where production is based on violation of basic human rights and clear cases of social injustice, that product cannot be declared as organic.

8.3 Operators not use forced or involuntary labor.

8.4 Employees and contractors of organic operations have the freedom to associate, the right to organize and the right to bargain collectively.

8.5 Operators shall provide their employees and contractors equal opportunity and treatment, and shall not act in a discriminatory way.

8.6 Operators shall not hire child labor.

Children are allowed to experience work on their family's farm or a neighboring farm provided that:

- a. such work is not dangerous or hazardous to their health and safety;*
- b. it does not jeopardize the children's educational, moral, social, and physical development;*
- c. children are supervised by adults or have authorization from a legal guardian.*

9 AQUACULTURE PRODUCTION STANDARDS

9.1 Conversion to Organic Aquaculture

General Principle

Conversion in organic aquaculture production reflects the diversity of species and production methods.

Recommendation

Production units should have an appropriate distance from contamination sources and conventional aquaculture.

Standards shall require that:

- 9.1.1** Operators comply with all the relevant general requirements of chapters 3 and 5.
- 9.1.2** The conversion period of the production unit shall be at least one life cycle of the organism or one year, whichever is shorter.
- 9.1.3** Operators shall ensure that conversion to organic aquaculture addresses environmental factors, and past use of the site with respect to waste, sediments and water quality.

9.2 Aquatic Ecosystems

General Principle

Organic aquaculture management maintains the biodiversity of natural aquatic ecosystems, the health of the aquatic environment, and the quality of surrounding aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem.

Recommendations

Production should maintain the aquatic environment and surrounding aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem, by using a combination of production practices that:

- a.** encourage and enhance biological cycles;
- b.** utilize preventive, system based methods for disease control;
- c.** provides for biodiversity through polyculture and maintenance of riparian buffers with adequate plant cover.

Standards shall require that:

- 9.2.1** Aquatic ecosystems shall be managed to comply with relevant requirements of chapter 2.
- 9.2.2** Operators shall take adequate measures to prevent escapes of introduced, or cultivated species and document any that are known to occur.
- 9.2.3** Operators shall take verifiable and effective measures to minimize the release of nutrients and waste into the aquatic ecosystem.
- 9.2.4** Fertilizers and pesticides are prohibited unless they appear in Appendices 2 and 3.

9.3 Aquatic Plants

General Principle

Organic aquatic plants are grown and harvested sustainably without adverse impacts on natural areas.

Recommendation

The act of collection should not negatively affect any natural areas.

Standards shall require that:

- 9.3.1** Aquatic plant production shall comply with the relevant requirements of chapters 2 and 4.
- 9.3.2** Harvest of aquatic plants shall not disrupt the ecosystem or degrade the collection area or the surrounding aquatic and terrestrial environment.

9.4 Breeds and Breeding

General Principle

Organic animals begin life on organic units.

Recommendations

Breeds should be locally adapted and regionally established.

Aquatic animal husbandry should not be dependent on conventional raising systems.

Aquatic animals should be reproduced and bred by natural methods.

Standards shall require that:

9.4.1 Animals shall be raised organically from birth.

If organic animals are not available, brought-in conventional animals shall spend not less than two thirds of their life span in the organic system.

When organic stock is not available, conventional sources may be used. To promote and establish the use of organic stock, standard-setting organizations shall set appropriate standards and/or time limits for the selected use of non-organic sources.

9.4.2 Operators shall not utilize artificially polyploid organisms.

9.5 Aquatic Animal Nutrition

General Principle

Organic aquatic animals receive their nutritional needs from good quality, organic and other sustainable sources.

Recommendations

Operators should design feed rations to supply most of the nutritional needs of the animal from organic plants and animals appropriate for the digestive system and metabolism of the species.

Feed brought into the operation should be comprised of by-products from organic and wild sources not otherwise suitable for human consumption.

Operators should maintain the biological diversity of areas that are managed and maintain adequate representation of naturally-occurring organisms.

Operators should design good quality balanced diets according to the physiological needs of the organism.

Operators should feed animals according to their natural feeding behavior.

Operators should feed animals efficiently, with minimum losses to the environment.

Operators should design systems so that the production area comprises the entire food chain with minimal reliance on outside inputs.

Standards shall require that:

9.5.1 Animals shall be fed organic feed.

Operators may feed a limited percentage of non-organic feed under specific conditions for a limited time in the following cases:

- a. organic feed is of inadequate quantity or quality;*
- b. areas where organic aquaculture is in early stages of development.*

In no case may the percentage of non-organic feed of agricultural origin exceed 15% dry matter calculated on an annual basis.

Operators may use non-organic aquatic animal protein and oil sources provided they:

- a. are harvested from independently verified sustainable sources;*
- b. are verified to have contamination levels below limits established by the standard-setting body, and*
- c. do not constitute 100% of the diet.*

The standard-setting or certification body shall set:

- a. an appropriate percentage requirement of organic ingredient as diet;*
- b. an implementation date for requiring at least 50% of diet be of organic ingredients.*

9.5.2 The dietary requirements for aquatic animals shall comply with the requirements of 5.6.4 and 5.6.5.

9.6 Aquatic Animal Health and Welfare

General Principles

Organic management practices promote and maintain the health and well-being of animals through balanced organic nutrition, stress-free living conditions appropriate to the species and breed selection for resistance to diseases, parasites and infections.

Recommendations

Operators should identify the cause of outbreaks of disease or infection.

Operators should implement management practices, including criteria for choosing a site that can diminish causative events and future outbreaks of disease.

Operators should use natural methods and medicines, as the first choice, when treatment is necessary.

Standards shall require that:

- 9.6.1** Operators shall comply with relevant requirements of section 5.7.
- 9.6.2** Prophylactic use of veterinary drugs is prohibited.
- 9.6.3** Use of chemical allopathic veterinary drugs and antibiotics is prohibited for invertebrates.
- 9.6.4** Synthetic hormones and growth promoters are prohibited for use to artificially stimulate growth or reproduction.
- 9.6.5** Stocking densities do not compromise animal welfare.
- 9.6.6** Operators shall routinely monitor water quality, stocking densities, health, and behavior of each cohort (school) and manage the operation to maintain water quality, health, and natural behavior.

9.7 Aquatic Animal Transport and Slaughter*General Principle*

Organic animals are subjected to minimum stress during transport and slaughter.

Recommendations

A person specifically responsible for the well being of the animals should be present during transport.

To avoid unnecessary suffering, organisms should be in a state of unconsciousness before slaughter.

Standards shall require that:

- 9.7.1** Operators shall comply with relevant requirements of section 5.8.
- 9.7.2** The operator shall handle live organisms in ways that are compatible with their physiological requirements.
- 9.7.3** Operators shall implement defined measures to ensure that organic aquatic animals are provided with conditions during transportation and slaughter that meet animal specific needs and minimize the adverse effects of:
 - a.** diminishing water quality;
 - b.** time spent in transport;
 - c.** stocking density;

- d. toxic substances;
- e. escape.

9.7.4 Aquatic vertebrates shall be stunned before killing. Operators shall ensure that equipment used to stun animals is sufficient to remove sensate ability and/or kill the organism and is maintained and monitored.

9.7.5 Animals shall be handled, transported and slaughtered in a way that minimizes stress and suffering, and respects species-specific needs.

SECTION C – APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF INPUTS, ADDITIVES, AND PROCESSING AIDS FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING

General Principles

Organic production and processing systems are based on the use of natural, biological, renewable, and regenerative resources. Organic agriculture maintains soil fertility primarily through the recycling of organic matter. Nutrient availability is primarily dependent on the activity of soil organisms. Pests, diseases, and weeds are managed primarily through cultural practices. Organic livestock are nourished primarily through organically produced feed and forage, and are kept in living conditions that allow for natural behavior and avoidance of stress. Organic foods and other products are made from organically produced ingredients that are processed primarily by biological, mechanical, and physical means.

Input Lists

The following Appendices contain lists of the inputs, food additives, processing aids, and other substances that are allowed for use in organic production, handling, and processing. The following appendices are used to indicate to certification bodies or standard-setting organizations what is acceptable, and are not intended to be comprehensive. These lists include broad categories and are not comprehensive or detailed. Compliant standards can only contain additional inputs that appear in these categories. Standards may also restrict the use of certain inputs based on the consideration of factors such as contamination, risk of nutritional imbalances, importation of inputs from outside the farm, and depletion of natural resources.

The process for adding, deleting or otherwise changing the status of an input is located in IFOAM Policy 60, which is accessible on the IFOAM website, www.ifoam.org, or can be ordered from the IFOAM Head Office.

Production Input Criteria

Inputs used in organic production are consistent with the principles of organic farming outlined in the relevant chapters of the IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) and are evaluated against criteria based upon the Precautionary Principle:

‘When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof.’

‘The process of applying the Precautionary Principle must be open, informed and democratic and must include potentially affected parties. It must also involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including no action.’

The criteria used to evaluate organic production inputs are based on the following principles:

Necessity and alternatives: Any input used is necessary for sustainable production, is essential to maintain the quantity and quality of the product, and is the best available technology.

Source and manufacturing process: Organic production is based on the use of natural, biological, and renewable resources.

Environment: Organic production and processing is sustainable for the environment.

Human health: Organic techniques promote human health and food safety.

Quality: Organic methods improve or maintain product quality.

Social, Economic, and Ethical: Inputs used in organic production meet consumer perceptions and expectations without resistance or opposition. Organic production is socially just and economically sustainable, and organic methods respect cultural diversity and protect animal welfare.

Dossiers for a given substance must address these criteria based on the data requirements and decision rules stated in the criteria below, and meet the criteria to be added to the Appendices.

A) CROP AND LIVESTOCK CRITERIA

The following criteria are applied to inputs that are used to evaluate dossiers submitted for crop production. The current IFOAM Basic Standards do not have a separate appendix for livestock inputs. Development of a procedure and application of the criteria to inputs used in livestock production is a work in progress. See chapter 5 for livestock standards and inputs that may be used in organic livestock production.

1 NECESSITY AND ALTERNATIVES

All dossiers shall document the necessity of the substance, its essential nature in organic production systems, and the availability of alternative methods, practices, and inputs.

1.1 The input is necessary to produce crops or livestock in sufficient quantity and of suitable quality; to cycle nutrients; to enhance biological activity; to provide a balanced animal diet; to protect crops and livestock from pests, parasites, and diseases; to regulate growth; and to maintain and improve soil quality.

1.2 A given substance shall be evaluated with reference to other available inputs or practices that may be used as alternatives to the substance.

- 1.3** Every input shall be evaluated in the context in which the product will be used (e.g. crop, volume, frequency of application, specific purpose).

2 SOURCE AND MANUFACTURING PROCESS

All dossiers shall document sources and manufacturing processes.

- 2.1** Biological substances require a description of the source organism(s), a verifiable statement that they are not genetically engineered as defined by IFOAM, and the processes required to breed, culture, produce, multiply, extract, or otherwise prepare the substance for use. Naturally occurring plants, animals, fungi, bacteria and other organisms are generally allowed. Substances that undergo physical transformations, such as by mechanical processing, or biological methods, like composting, fermentation, and enzymatic digestion are also generally allowed. Limitations and prohibitions may be set based on consideration of the other criteria. Substances that are modified by chemical reaction are considered synthetic and therefore subject to protocol 2.3 below.
- 2.2** Natural non-renewable resources—such as mined minerals—require a description of the deposit or occurrence in nature. Non-renewable resources are generally restricted or limited in their use. They may be used as a supplement to renewable biological resources, provided they are extracted by physical and mechanical means, and are not rendered synthetic by chemical reaction. Inputs with high levels of natural environmental contaminants, such as heavy metals, radioactive isotopes, and salinity, may be prohibited or further restricted.
- 2.3** Synthetic substances from non-renewable resources are generally prohibited. Synthetic, nature-identical products that are not available in sufficient quantities and qualities in their natural form may be allowed, provided that all other criteria are satisfied.
- 2.4** Inputs that are extracted, recovered, or manufactured by means that are environmentally destructive may be restricted or prohibited.

3 ENVIRONMENT

All dossiers shall document the substance's environmental impact.

- 3.1** The environmental impact of a substance includes, but is not limited to, the following parameters: Acute toxicity, persistence, degradability, areas of concentration; biological, chemical, and physical interactions with the environment, including known synergistic effects with other inputs used in organic production.
- 3.2** Effect of substance on the agro-ecosystem, including soil health; the effects of the substance on soil organisms; soil fertility and structure; crops and livestock.

3.3 Substances with high salt indexes, measured toxicity to non-target organisms, and persistent adverse effects may be prohibited or restricted in their use.

3.4 Inputs used for crop production shall be considered for their impact on livestock and wildlife.

4 HUMAN HEALTH

All dossiers shall document the impacts of the substance on human health.

4.1 Documentation about human health includes, but is not limited to: acute and chronic toxicity, half-lives, degradants, and metabolites. Substances reported to have adverse effects may be prohibited or restricted in their use to reduce potential risks to human health.

4.2 Dossiers shall document any human who might be exposed by all possible pathways, at every stage: workers and farmers who extract, manufacture, apply, or otherwise use the substance; neighbors who may be exposed through its release into the environment; and consumers exposed by ingestion of food-borne residues.

5 QUALITY

All dossiers shall document the substance's effect on product quality.

Quality includes, but is not limited to, nutrition, flavor, taste, storage, and appearance of the raw product.

6 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All dossiers shall document the substance's social, economic, and cultural implications.

6.1 Social and economic implications include, but are not limited to, the impact of the substance on the communities where they are made and used, whether the use of the substance favors any economic structure and scale, and the historical use of the substance in traditional foods.

6.2 Consumer perceptions of the compatibility of inputs shall be taken into account. Inputs should not meet resistance or opposition of consumers of organic products. An input might be reasonably considered by consumers to be incompatible with organic production in situations where there is scientific uncertainty about the impact of the substance on the environment or human health. Inputs should respect the general opinion of consumers about what is natural and organic, e.g. genetic engineering is neither natural nor organic.

- 6.3** Inputs used for animal feed and livestock production shall be evaluated for their impact on animal health, welfare, and behavior. Medications must either alleviate or prevent animal suffering. Animal inputs that cause suffering or have a negative influence on the natural behavior or physical functioning of animals kept at the farm may be prohibited or restricted.

B) PROCESSING AND HANDLING CRITERIA

Introduction

These criteria apply to the evaluation of food additives and food processing aids. Substances used for technical, sensory, and dietary purposes are subject to these criteria. The criteria may also apply to substances in contact with food. For food processing, an input, non-organic ingredient, additive, or processing aid shall be essential to maintain or improve human health, environmental safety, animal welfare, product quality, production efficiency, consumer acceptance, ecological protection, biodiversity, or landscape. Carriers and preservatives used in the preparation of additives and processing aids must also be taken into consideration. The following aspects and criteria should be used to evaluate additives and processing aids in organic food products. All of the criteria below shall be fully and positively documented in a dossier and review for an input to be allowed in organic processing.

1 NECESSITY AND ALTERNATIVES

All dossiers shall document the necessity of the additive, processing aid, or carrier, its essential nature in organic processing and for the proposed application, and the availability of alternative methods, practices, and inputs.

Each substance shall be evaluated with respect to its specific uses and applications, and shall be added when it is demonstrated to be absolutely essential and necessary for the production of a specific food that is consistent with organic principles stated in the IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS).

- 1.1.** All dossiers shall take into consideration the technical feasibility of the following alternatives:
- a.** Whole foods that are organically produced according to the IBS.
 - b.** Foods that are organically produced and processed according to the IBS.
 - c.** Purified products of raw materials of non-agricultural origin, e.g. salt.
 - d.** Purified products of raw materials of an agricultural origin that have not been organically produced and processed according to the IBS but appear on Appendix 4.
- 1.2** If an ingredient is required to manufacture a processed food product to independently established minimum technical specifications recognized by consumers, and no organic substitute is available, then a non-organic ingredient can be deemed essential.

- 1.3** A given additive, processing aid, or carrier shall be evaluated with reference to other available ingredients or techniques that may be used as alternatives to the substance.
- 1.4** A substance is considered essential if a processed food product requires that substance in order to meet established standards of identity, governmental regulations, or widely accepted consumer expectations.

2 SOURCE AND MANUFACTURING PROCESS

All dossiers shall document the substance's sources and manufacturing processes.

- 2.1** Additives and processing aids from biological sources, such as fermentation cultures, enzymes, flavors, and gums must be derived from naturally occurring organisms by the use of biological, mechanical, and physical methods. Non-organic forms are allowed in organic products only if there are no organic sources.
- 2.2** Natural non-renewable resources — such as salt and mined minerals — must be obtained by physical and mechanical means, and are not rendered synthetic by chemical reaction. Dossiers must document and meet Food Chemical Codex specifications for natural contaminants, such as heavy metals, radioactive isotopes, and salinity, and may be prohibited or restricted based on unacceptable levels of contamination.
- 2.3** Synthetic nature-identical products that are not available in sufficient quantities and qualities in their natural form may be allowed provided all other criteria are satisfied.
- 2.4** Synthetic substances from non-renewable resources are generally prohibited as additives and processing aids.

3 ENVIRONMENT

All dossiers shall document the substance's environmental impact.

Documentation for environmental impact:

The release of any harmful waste stream or by-products from both manufacturing and use in processing. Food additives and processing aids that result in toxic by-products or polluting waste may be restricted or prohibited. This includes persistence, degradation, and areas of concentration.

4 HUMAN HEALTH

All dossiers shall document the impacts of the substance on human health.

- 4.1** Documentation about human health includes, but is not limited to: acute and chronic

toxicity, allergenicity, half-lives, degradants, and metabolites. Substances reported to have adverse effects may be prohibited or restricted in their use to reduce potential risks to human health.

- 4.2** Dossiers shall document any human who might be exposed by all possible pathways: workers and farmers who manufacture, apply, or otherwise use the substance; neighbors who may be exposed through release into the environment; and consumers exposed by ingestion of food-borne residues.
- 4.3** IFOAM will consider only processing aids and additives evaluated by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) of the Codex Alimentarius.¹
- a.** A food additive shall have an Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) level that is either ‘not specified’ or ‘not limited’ to qualify for use without limitation.
 - b.** A food additive with any other status shall either be prohibited or have specific use restrictions to limit dietary exposure.
 - c.** Evaluation of food additives shall also take into account known allergenicity and immunological responses.
- 4.4** Information about the practical daily intake of the substance by several groups of human should be taken into account. It should be demonstrated that no group has a normal intake, which is higher than the accepted ADI.

5 QUALITY (IN PROCESSED PRODUCTS)

- 5.1** All dossiers shall document the substance’s effect on overall product quality, including but not limited to, nutrition, flavor, taste, storage, and appearance.
- 5.2** Additives and processing aids shall not detract from the nutritional quality of the product.
- 5.3** A substance shall not be used solely or primarily as a preservative, to create, recreate or improve characteristics such as flavors, colors, or textures, or to restore or improve nutritive value lost during processing, except where the replacement of nutrients is required by law.
- 5.4** Non-organic ingredients, additives, or processing aids used to process organic products shall not compromise the authenticity or overall quality of the product or deceive the consumer of the product’s value.
- 5.5** Each additive shall be evaluated with respect to its specific uses and applications without preference for any specific techniques or equipment, and shall be added to the list only when it is demonstrated to be absolutely essential and necessary for the formulation and production of a specific food that is consistent with organic principles stated in the IFOAM Basic Standards.

¹ http://apps3.fao.org/jecfa/additive_specs/foodad-q.jsp

6 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1** All dossiers shall document the substance's social, economic, and cultural implications.
- 6.2** Social, economic, implications include, but are not limited to, adverse impacts on communities caused by the manufacture and use of the substance, whether certain economic structures or scales are favored by the use of the processing aid; and the historical use of the additive or processing aid in traditional foods.
- 6.3** Consumer perceptions of the compatibility of additives and processing aids shall be taken into account. Any additives and processing aids shall respect consumer preferences and be accepted by organic consumers. An input might be reasonably considered by consumers to be incompatible with organic production in situations where there is scientific uncertainty about the impact of the substance on the environment or human health. Inputs should respect the general opinion of consumers about what is natural and organic, e.g. genetic engineering is neither natural nor organic.

C) EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR MATERIALS USED IN ORGANIC FIBER PROCESSING

In addition to the above applicable criteria, the following additional considerations apply to substances used to process and handle fiber:

Substances may be allowed in organic textile processing only if they are biodegradable, generally recognized as safe and hypoallergenic.

Substances shall be prohibited in organic textile processing if they are carcinogenic, mutagenic, teratogenic, toxic, or produced by genetically modified organisms or ionizing radiation.

APPENDIX 2: FERTILIZERS AND SOIL CONDITIONERS

SUBSTANCES DESCRIPTION, COMPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	CONDITIONS FOR USE
I. PLANT AND ANIMAL ORIGIN	
Farmyard manure, slurry and urine	
Guano	
Source separated human excrement from separated sources which are monitored for contamination	Not to be directly applied on edible parts
Vermicastings	
Blood meal, meat meal, bone, bone meal	
Hoof and horn meal, feather meal, fish and fish products, wool, fur, hair, dairy products	
Biodegradable processing by-products, plant or animal origin, e.g. by-products of food, feed, oilseed, brewery, distillery or textile processing	
Crop and vegetable residues, mulch, green manure, straw	
Wood, bark, sawdust, wood shavings, wood ash, wood charcoal	
Seaweed and seaweed products	
Peat (prohibited for soil conditioning)	Excluding synthetic additives; permitted for inclusion in potting mixes
Plant preparations and extracts	
Compost made from ingredients listed in this appendix, spent mushroom waste, humus from worms and insects, urban composts from separated sources which are monitored for contamination	
II. MINERAL ORIGIN	
Basic slag	
Calcareous and magnesium amendments	
Limestone, gypsum, marl, maerl, chalk, sugar beet lime, calcium chloride,	
Magnesium rock, kieserite and Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate)	
Mineral potassium (e.g. sulfate of potash, muriate of potash, kainite, sylvanite, patentkali)	Shall be obtained by physical procedures but not enriched by chemical processes
Natural phosphates	
Pulverized rock, stone meal	

SUBSTANCES DESCRIPTION, COMPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	CONDITIONS FOR USE
Clay (e.g. bentonite, perlite, vermiculite, zeolite)	
Sodium chloride	
Trace elements	
Sulfur	
III. MICROBIOLOGICAL	
Biodegradable processing by-products of microbial origin, e.g. by-products of brewery or distillery processing	
Microbiological preparations based on naturally occurring organisms	
IV. OTHERS	
Biodynamic preparations	
Calcium lignosulfonate	

APPENDIX 3: CROP PROTECTANTS AND GROWTH REGULATORS

SUBSTANCES DESCRIPTION, COMPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	CONDITIONS FOR USE
I. PLANT AND ANIMAL ORIGIN	
Algal preparations	
Animal preparations and oils	
Beeswax	
Chitin nematocides (natural origin)	
Coffee grounds	
Corn gluten meal (weed control)	
Dairy products (e.g. milk, casein)	
Gelatine	
Lecithin	
Natural acids (e.g. vinegar)	
Neem (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>)	
Plant oils	
Plant preparations	
Plant based repellents	
Propolis	
Pyrethrum (<i>Chrysanthemum cinerariaefolium</i>)	The synergist Piperonyl butoxide is prohibited. Where certification bodies have previously permitted its use, it shall be prohibited after 2005)
Quassia (<i>Quassia amara</i>)	
Rotenone (<i>Derris elliptica</i> , <i>Lonchocarpus</i> spp. <i>Tephrosia</i> spp.)	
Ryania (<i>Ryania speciosa</i>)	
Sabadilla	
Tobacco tea (pure nicotine is forbidden)	
II. MINERAL ORIGIN	
Chloride of lime	
Clay (e.g. bentonite, perlite, vermiculite, zeolite)	
Copper salts (e.g. sulfate, hydroxide, oxychloride, octanoate)	Max 8 kg/ha per year (on a rolling average basis)
Diatomaceous earth	
Light mineral oils (paraffin)	
Lime sulfur (Calcium polysulfide)	
Potassium bicarbonate	
Potassium permanganate	

SUBSTANCES DESCRIPTION, COMPOSITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	CONDITIONS FOR USE
Quicklime	
Silicates (e.g. sodium silicates, quartz)	
Sodium bicarbonate	
Sulfur	
III. MICROORGANISMS	
Fungal preparations	
Bacterial preparations (e.g. <i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i>)	
Release of parasites, predators and sterilized insects	
Viral preparations (e.g. granulosis virus)	
IV. OTHERS	
Biodynamic preparations	
Calcium hydroxide	
Carbon dioxide	
Ethyl alcohol	
Homeopathic and Ayurvedic preparations	
Iron phosphates (for use as molluscicide)	
Seasalt and salty water	
Soda	
Soft soap	
Sulfur dioxide	
V. TRAPS, BARRIERS, REPELLENTS	
Physical methods (e.g. chromatic traps, mechanical traps)	
Mulches, nets	
Pheromones – in traps and dispensers only	

APPENDIX 4 - TABLE 1: LIST OF APPROVED ADDITIVES² AND PROCESSING AIDS

Where the substances listed in this annex can be found in nature, natural sources are preferred. Substances of certified organic origin are preferred.

INT'L NUMBERING SYSTEM	PRODUCT	ADDITIVE	PROC. AID	LIMITATION/NOTE
INS 170	Calcium carbonate	X	X	
INS 181	Tannin		X	Only for wine
INS 184	Tannic acid		X	Filtration aid for wine
INS 220	Sulfur dioxide	X		Only for wine
INS 224	Potassium metabisulphite	X		Only for wine
INS 270	Lactic acid	X	X	
INS 290	Carbon dioxide	X	X	
INS 296	L-malic acid	X	X	
INS 300	Ascorbic acid	X		
INS 306	Tocopherols, mixed natural concentrates	X		
INS 322	Lecithin	X	X	
INS 330	Citric acid	X	X	
INS 331	Sodium citrates	X		
INS 332	Potassium citrates	X		
INS 333	Calcium citrates	X		
INS 334	Tartaric acid	X	X	Only for wine
INS 335	Sodium tartrate	X	X	
INS 336	Potassium tartrate	X	X	
INS 341	Mono calcium phosphate	X		Only for "raising flour"
INS 342	Ammonium phosphate	X		Restricted to 0.3 gm/l in wine
INS 400	Alginic acid	X		
INS 401	Sodium alginate	X		
INS 402	Potassium alginate	X		
INS 406	Agar	X		
INS 407	Carrageenan	X		
INS 410	Locust bean gum	X		
INS 412	Guar gum	X		
INS 413	Tragacanth gum	X		

² Food additives may contain carriers, which shall be evaluated.

II. | IFOAM BASIC STANDARDS

INT'L NUMBERING SYSTEM	PRODUCT	ADDITIVE	PROC. AID	LIMITATION/NOTE
INS 414	Arabic gum	X		Only for milk products, fat products, confectionery, sweets, eggs
INS 415	Xanthan gum	X		Only fat, fruit and vegetable products and cakes and biscuits
INS 440	Pectin	X		Unmodified
INS 500	Sodium carbonates	X	X	
INS 501	Potassium carbonates	X	X	
INS 503	Ammonium carbonates	X		Only for cereal products, confectionery, cakes and biscuits
INS 504	Magnesium carbonates	X		
INS 508	Potassium chloride	X		
INS 509	Calcium chloride	X	X	
INS 511	Magnesium chloride	X	X	Only for soybean products
INS 513	Sulfuric acid		X	PH adjustment of water during sugar processing
INS 516	Calcium sulfate	X		For soybean products, confectionery and in bakers' yeast
INS 517	Ammonium sulfate	X		Only for wine, restricted to 0.3 mg/l
INS 524	Sodium hydroxide	X	X	For sugar processing and for the surface treatment of traditional bakery products
INS 526	Calcium hydroxide	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food additive for maize tortilla flour • Processing aid for sugar
INS 551	Silicon dioxide (amorphous)		X	For wine, fruit and vegetable processing
INS 553	Talc		X	
INS 901	Beeswax		X	
INS 903	Carnauba wax		X	

INT'L NUMBERING SYSTEM	PRODUCT	ADDITIVE	PROC. AID	LIMITATION/NOTE
INS 938	Argon	X		
INS 941	Nitrogen	X	X	
INS 948	Oxygen	X	X	
	Activated carbon		X	
	Bentonite		X	Only for fruit and vegetable products
	Casein		X	Only for wine
	Diatomaceous earth		X	Only for sweeteners and wine
	Egg white albumen		X	Only for wine
	Ethanol		X	
	Gelatin		X	Only for wine, fruit and vegetable
	Isinglass		X	Only for wine
	Kaolin		X	
	Perlite		X	
	Preparations of bark		X	Only for sugar

Flavoring Agents

- Organic flavoring extracts (including volatile oils)
- Volatile (essential) oils produced by means of solvents such as oil, water, ethanol, carbon dioxide and mechanical and physical processes
- Natural smoke flavor
- Natural flavoring preparations are only to be approved based on the criteria in Appendix 1

Preparations of Micro-organisms and Enzymes for use in food processing (see 6.2.4.)

These may be used as ingredient or processing aids with approval based on the criteria in Appendix 1.

- Organic certified micro-organisms
- Preparations of micro-organisms
- Enzymes and enzyme preparations

**APPENDIX 4 - TABLE 2: INDICATIVE LIST OF EQUIPMENT CLEANSERS
AND EQUIPMENT DISINFECTANTS THAT MAY COME INTO DIRECT
CONTACT WITH FOOD**

PRODUCT	LIMITATION/NOTE
Acetic acid	
Alcohol, ethyl (ethanol)	
Alcohol, isopropyl (isopropanol)	
Calcium hydroxide (slaked lime)	
Calcium hypochlorite	
Calcium oxide (quicklime)	
Chloride of lime (calcium oxychloride, calcium chloride, and calcium hydroxide)	
Chlorine dioxide	
Citric acid	
Formic acid	
Hydrogen peroxide	
Lactic acid	
Natural essences of plants	
Oxalic acid	
Ozone	
Peracetic acid	
Phosphoric acid	Only for dairy equipment
Plant extracts	
Potassium soap	
Sodium carbonate	
Sodium hydroxide (caustic soda)	
Sodium hypochlorite	E.g. as liquid bleach
Sodium soap	

**III. IFOAM ACCREDITATION CRITERIA FOR
BODIES CERTIFYING ORGANIC PRODUCTION
AND PROCESSING**

Version 2005

Approved by the IFOAM World Board,
Bonn, 2nd of July 2005

INTRODUCTION

The IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC) were first approved by the General Assembly in 1992. IFOAM seeks to continually improve these criteria. Revision occurs periodically and includes opportunity for input by interested parties. The revision process for these criteria is described in IFOAM Policies.

Generally speaking, the IAC establishes requirements for the conduct of organic certification by the certification body, including procedures and practices of the operator that the certification body must verify.

In addition to these criteria, IFOAM has established Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing. First published in 1980 and subsequently subject to continual review, the IFOAM Basic Standards have been adopted as the basis for national, regional and international organic standards throughout the world.

The IFOAM Accreditation Criteria together with the IFOAM Basic Standards establish the requirements for certification bodies seeking IFOAM Accreditation. The standards used by the certification body in their IFOAM accredited certification program shall at least meet the IFOAM Basic Standards. IFOAM Accreditation is carried out under contract by the International Organic Accreditation Service Inc. (IOAS), a US based company. The structure of the IOAS and procedures for IFOAM Accreditation are laid down in the IFOAM Accreditation Program Operating Manual published by the IOAS. More detailed policies and procedures are set down in the IOAS Quality Manual.

The criteria have been based upon the requirements in ISO/IEC GUIDE 65:1996(E) “General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems”. However, organic certification is certification of a process and not a product and this has required some adaptation. In addition these criteria include specific requirements concerning issues confronted by a certification body operating within the organic sector.

The criteria require that the certification body has an effective quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of the criteria and which is appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed. It is recognized that new programs, and programs operating in economically less favored areas may have less developed quality systems. It is also recognized that cultural, traditional and social conditions may result in varying solutions.

Some examples of situations where varying solutions could be applied are:

- Where the criteria have clearly been developed for organizations with large numbers of staff or several offices.
- Where the criteria have clearly been developed for certification bodies with large numbers of operators or more complex operations.
- Where the criteria become particularly onerous due to cultural or developmental reasons, such as poor communication systems or low levels of literacy.

Regulations or other official demands may also make it difficult, or even illegal, to fulfill a certain criterion. In such cases it is the prerogative of the accreditation body to determine the acceptability of the certification body's alternative solution, based on whether the integrity of organic production and certification is maintained, and whether the purpose of the specific criterion is met.

Some criteria are accompanied by flexible requirements, called Guidance, and/or Explanatory Notes. The Guidance is named as such and directly follows the criterion it is referring to. The Explanatory Notes are incorporated as footnotes to the criterion.

Certification bodies are required to implement the criteria in line with the Guidance unless they can show that the same effect has been achieved by alternative methods. A Guidance does not constitute a binding interpretation or remove an accreditation body's rights and responsibilities to exercise its judgment in applying the criteria.

The Explanatory Notes explain the meaning and purpose of the criteria, and provide background information to explain the context of a particular section of the criteria or a particular criterion. In short, they aim to enhance understanding of the criteria.

The current version of the IAC is located on IFOAMs website.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply within the context of these criteria:

Acceptance of Prior Certification: The procedure by which a certification body accepts the certification of a product by another certification body, thereby enabling the use of, or further processing by, the certification body's own operators.

Accreditation: Procedure by which an authoritative body gives a formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

Appeal: Request by an operator for reconsideration of any adverse decisions made by the certification body related to its desired certification status.

Certificate of Conformity: Document issued by a certification body, declaring that an operation is in conformity with the organic production or processing standards.

Certification: The procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a clearly identified process has been methodically assessed such that adequate confidence is provided that specified products conform to specified requirements.

Certification Body: The body that conducts organic certification.

Certification Mark: A certification body's sign, symbol or logo which identifies product(s) as being certified to the requirements of a program operated by that certification body.

Certification Program: System operated by a certification body with defined requirements and procedures and management for carrying out certification of conformity.

Certification Scope: The parameters defining the certification granted including the product or product types certified, and, where applicable, the acreage and the applicable standards and certification program.

Chain of Custody: The concept that all relevant steps in the production chain including the growing, handling, processing and other processes detailed in section 2.3 of these criteria, have been inspected or certified as appropriate.

Complaint: An objection to the policies, procedures or performance of the certification body. A complaint may also be an objection to the performance or activities of a certified party lodged with the certification body by a third party.

Conflict of Interest: The situation where an individual's capacity for objectivity is put at risk

by financial or personal interests in conflict with their interest in conducting fair and impartial inspection or certification.

Contracted Production or Processing: The utilization of third parties by the operator for performing specific production or processing tasks.

Conversion Period: The time between the start of the organic management and the certification of crops and/or animal husbandry as organic.

Declaration of Interest: A declaration of personal and/or commercial interests in the organic industry made by those involved in the certification process to enable determination of an individual's objectivity.

Dual or Multiple Certification: Certification of an operation by two (dual) or more (multiple) certification bodies.

Evaluation: Systematic assessment based on all relevant information obtained in order to make a decision. With reference to a certification decision this includes, but is not limited to, the inspection.

Exception: Permission granted to an operator by a certification body to be excluded from the need to comply with requirements of the standards. Exceptions are granted on the basis of clear criteria, with clear justification and for a limited time period only.

Genetic Engineering: A set of techniques from molecular biology (such as recombinant DNA) by which the genetic material of plants, animals, micro-organisms, cells and other biological units may be altered in ways, or with results, that could not be obtained by methods of natural reproduction or natural recombination.

Governing Board: Committee group or person with overall legal responsibility for the affairs of the certification body.

Group Certification: Certification of an organized group of small-scale producers with similar farming and production systems. The criteria for group certification apply only to such groups when the certification applies to the group as a whole and when special inspection arrangements have been applied.

IFOAM Basic Standards: International standards for standards of organic production and processing, established by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements.

Input/Output Reconciliation: An audit that assesses the output of organic product against the supply of ingredients or in the case of trading operations, the volume of sales against the volume of purchases.

Inspection Body: Body that performs inspection services on behalf of a certification body.

Inspection: Visit on-site to verify that the performance of an operation is in accordance with the production or processing standards.

Inspector: Person appointed by a certification body or by an inspection body to undertake the inspection of an operation.

Internal Control System: Part of a documented quality assurance system that allows the external certification body to delegate the annual inspection of individual group members to an identified body/unit within the certified operation.

Internal Audit: A systematic periodic review and assessment of the objectives and performance of a program that is undertaken by the certification body itself.

License: An agreement or contract that grants a certified operator the right to use certificates or certification marks in accordance with the requirements of that program.

Non-Conformity: An instance where a particular standard is not being met.

Operator: An individual or business enterprise, responsible for ensuring that production meets, and continues to meet, the requirements on which the certification is based.

Parallel Production: Any production where the same unit is growing, breeding, handling or processing the same products both to certified organic quality and to non-certified or non-organic quality. A situation with “organic” and “in conversion” production of the same product is also parallel production.

Pre-Assessment: An inspection for the purpose of assessment that is not intended to result in a certification decision.

Precedent: A certification decision concerning a new situation or set of circumstances that may serve to guide future decisions.

Quality System: Documented procedures which are established, implemented, and periodically audited to assure that production, handling, management, certification, accreditation and other systems meet specified requirements and outcomes by following standardized protocols.

Sanctions: Measures taken against operators who have failed to comply with the standards or other requirements of the certification body.

Split Production: Production, breeding, handling or processing of conventional, in conversion and/or organic in the same unit.

Surveillance: The measures undertaken to provide ongoing monitoring of an operator's compliance with standards and certification requirements.

Trace Back Audit: An audit to verify that a product or its ingredients may be traced back to the original suppliers.

Transaction Certificate: Document issued by a certification body or by the operator, declaring that the specified lot or consignment of goods is derived from production that has been certified.

Violation: Breach of requirements other than standards.

1 STRUCTURE

1.1 General Requirements

- 1.1.1** The certification body shall have a documented and effective structure and organization that fosters confidence in its certification.
- 1.1.2** The certification body shall have documents, which demonstrate that it is a legal entity.
- 1.1.3** The certification body shall identify the management (committee, group or person) which is responsible for each of the following:¹
- a.** performance of inspection, evaluation and certification as defined in these criteria;
 - b.** formulation of policy matters relating to the operation of the certification body;
 - c.** decisions on certification;
 - d.** supervision of the implementation of its policies;
 - e.** supervision of the finances of the body;
 - f.** delegation of authority to committees or individuals as required to undertake defined activities on its behalf;
 - g.** technical basis for granting certification.

1.2 Responsibility

- 1.2.1** The certification body shall take full responsibility for all activities operated or subcontracted out and maintain its responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification.
- 1.2.2** The certification body shall not delegate authority for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification to an outside person or body.²
- 1.2.3** The certification body shall document clear lines of authority, responsibility and the accountability of personnel, officers and committees.

¹ **Explanatory Note 1.1.3:** This refers to the actual day to day management.

² **Explanatory Note 1.2.2:** An outside body or person would normally include anybody that is a separate legal entity even if linked in some way. This would not mean that assessment and evaluation cannot be undertaken by a contracted party, but that the formal certification decisions mentioned may not. This includes appeals.

- 1.2.4** The Governing Board shall remain responsible for certification decisions but may delegate authority for taking certification decisions to one or more certification committees.³
- 1.2.5** Where decisions are delegated to individual certification officers, the certification body shall have reporting and review procedures that enable the Governing Board or the certification committee to exercise control over and responsibility for such decisions.
- 1.2.6** Committees shall have clear responsibilities and rules of procedures.
- 1.2.7** An appeals committee shall be established.⁴

1.3 *Impartiality and Objectivity*

- 1.3.1** The certification body shall have structures and procedures to enable it to be free to operate without undue influence from vested interests.
- 1.3.2** The certification body shall be impartial. Inspection and certification shall be based on an objective assessment of relevant factors, following documented procedures.
- 1.3.3** The organizational structure of the certification body shall ensure that parties significantly affected by the certification system can participate in the development of its principles and policies.⁵
- 1.3.4** The certification body shall not provide any product or service which could compromise the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of its certification process, unless the product/service and certification programs are clearly separated in a manner that ensures that such compromise cannot occur.

³ **Explanatory Note 1.2.4:** This does not preclude the use of individual certification officers, as long as these persons are responsible to a certification committee or the governing board.

⁴ **Explanatory Note 1.2.7:** An appeals committee can be ad hoc, or the task can be performed by the Board.

⁵ **Explanatory Note 1.3.3:** The purpose of this criterion is expressed in 1.3.1. It is meant to ensure by structural means, that vested interests are unable to exert undue influence. This can be provided by a system of participatory democracy where the Board is elected by a broad based constituency of stakeholders. Stakeholders would generally be understood to mean more than only the certified operators- in the case of organic certification consumers, environmentalists, researchers and the like would also be considered stakeholders.

In the absence of a Board elected by stakeholders the certification body would need to institute some other method of ensuring sufficient influence of the stakeholders over the certification system. An Advisory Board with sufficient powers to achieve the purpose would be one such method.

1.3.5 The certification body shall not engage in the marketing of certified products or promotion of individual products and shall have a policy and an appropriate procedure for responding to product inquiries from the trade or consumers. This shall ensure an equal treatment for all certified operators. The certification body shall not solicit individual applications based on the needs of individual buyers.

Guidance: *The procedure shall specify the nature of the information that may be supplied, limiting this to information related to the certification of the product as opposed to the marketing of the product.*⁶

1.3.6 Certification bodies shall ensure that activities of related bodies do not affect the confidentiality, objectivity and impartiality of its certifications.⁷

1.3.7 The body making or ratifying certification decisions shall be free from any commercial, financial and other pressures that might influence decisions.⁸

Guidance: *A structure where members are chosen to provide a balance of diverse stakeholder interests and where no single interest predominates shall be deemed to satisfy this provision. Such diversity shall include that at least one general interest is represented such as consumers, scientists or environmentalists.*

1.3.8 Fee structures and other issues related to payment shall not compromise objectivity.

Guidance: *Certification bodies shall where practical avoid at least the following: direct payment of fees to inspectors, incurring significant costs such as inspections that are not readily reimbursed, and a fee structure/function that results in high leverage of certification body finances by only one or a few clients.*

1.3.9 The certification body or its personnel shall not accept a substantial gift or favor. The certification body shall establish a policy on what are/are not substantial gifts.⁹

⁶ **Explanatory Note 1.3.5 Guidance:** If the policy is that no information will be supplied then no procedure is necessary.

⁷ **Explanatory Note 1.3.6:** Related bodies would mean any separate entity that is structurally linked to the certification body by, for example, common ownership, shared directors etc. In the case of organic certification bodies this could be a producer association or other association responsible for establishing the certification body. The criterion does not prohibit the relationship but requires analysis of whether the other body may exert influence in a manner that compromises the impartiality and objectivity of the certification decisions. If so, measures must be taken to ensure this does not occur.

⁸ **Explanatory Note 1.3.7:** This does not mean that individuals on the Board or committee (the decision making body) cannot have commercial, financial or other interests. It means that the committee as a whole may not. To ensure this a balance of interests is necessary.

⁹ **Explanatory Note 1.3.9:** Substantial gifts are those that have a value that could potentially affect opinion, attitude, or decision of the certification body, including any of its inspectors, employees or officers.

Division of Function

- 1.3.10** The certification body shall have clear division of the functions of inspection, certification and appeals.
- 1.3.11** Persons responsible for a decision that is being appealed may not be involved in the decision on that appeal.¹⁰

Consulting and Advising

- 1.3.12** Certification bodies shall not provide consultancy services to operators.
- 1.3.13** Pre-assessment of production performed by a certification body to identify areas of non-conformity shall not include advice on how to overcome these non-conformities.
- 1.3.14** Specific advice given to operators shall be limited to explanations of the standards or certification requirements. This information shall not be offered for additional fees and shall not prescribe solutions.
- 1.3.15** Certification bodies may provide general information for additional fees, provided that this service shall be offered to all certified operators in a non-discriminatory manner.¹¹

Conflicts of Interest of Individuals

- 1.3.16** The certification body shall ensure that a declaration of interest is updated annually by all persons involved in certification, inspection and appeals as well as by the board. Such declarations shall be on file and take into account both direct and indirect interests. The certification body shall review the declarations and identify what constitutes a conflict.¹²
- 1.3.17** All persons with a conflict of interest shall be excluded from work, discussion and decisions in all stages of the certification process related to the potential conflict. The exclusion of such persons shall be recorded in minutes or other records.¹³

¹⁰ **Explanatory Note 1.3.11:** This means that the certification committee or personnel that made the decision being appealed may be heard at the appeal, but may not sit on the appeals committee.

¹¹ **Explanatory Note 1.3.15:** General information might refer to training, newsletters, seminars, advice concerning regulatory requirements etc.

¹² **Explanatory Note 1.3.16:** The declaration should be of all interests that relate to the organic sector. The certification body should decide which, if any, of these interests are of sufficient concern to question the individual's ability to be impartial and therefore to warrant the precautionary measure of declaring them to result in a conflict of interest.

¹³ **Explanatory Note 1.3.17:** The certification body's responsibility is not only to determine conflict of interest, but to then use this list in its operation to ensure exclusion of the individual in cases where conflict exists.

1.3.18 The certification body shall require persons engaged in inspection, certification and appeals to agree in writing to abstain from participating in work regarding operators with whom they have personal relations or those with whom they have had business relationships (either trade or advisory) in the past two years. The certification body shall require persons engaged in inspection to report on any new interests regarding the operation for a period of one year after the inspection. The certification body shall determine whether the new relations may have affected the impartiality of any work submitted by inspectors or certification personnel.¹⁴

1.4 Resources

Financial and Personnel Resources

1.4.1 The certification body shall have the financial stability and personnel resources necessary for the effective operation of a certification system.

Guidance: *Financial stability shall include provisions to cover liabilities in situations where there is a significant risk of being sued.*

1.4.2 The certification body personnel shall have the necessary education, training, technical knowledge and experience for performing functions relating to the type, range and volume of work performed.

1.4.3 Personnel, including contracted inspectors, shall be assigned to inspection and certification work that is appropriate to their skills.

1.4.4 Personnel shall have job descriptions describing their duties and responsibilities.

1.4.5 Personnel shall have documented work instructions for complex or critical certification and inspection functions.¹⁵

1.4.6 The body responsible for certification decisions shall ensure that all certification decisions are based on competence in all areas for which certification is granted.¹⁶

¹⁴ **Explanatory Note 1.3.18:** In criteria 1.3.16 and 1.3.17 the certification body takes responsibility for managing any conflict of interest. In 1.3.18 the individual is also required to be responsible. The purpose of the second sentence in 1.3.18 is to prevent an individual from contracting to do future work while engaged in the inspection or certification process (a clear conflict of interest) without this immediately being known to the certification body, so that others may be assigned to the case. This is most likely to occur in the case of contracted inspectors.

¹⁵ **Explanatory Note 1.4.5:** Procedures can serve as work instructions if detailed enough.

¹⁶ **Explanatory Note 1.4.6:** This may be on the certification committee itself or at staff level.

- 1.4.7** The certification body shall require all persons involved in the certification process to sign a contract or other document by which they commit themselves to the rules and procedures of the certification body.
- 1.4.8** Records of the qualifications and training of all personnel shall be maintained.

Training

- 1.4.9** The certification body shall have a documented training policy, including initial and ongoing training, for all personnel, including contracted inspectors, and committee members, that is sufficient to ensure continued competence.
- 1.4.10** The certification body shall ensure that before undertaking inspection, new inspectors have successfully completed a training course in inspection of organic operations and undergone a defined on-site apprenticeship period.

Subcontractors

- 1.4.11** The integrity, competence and transparency of any subcontracted components of the certification system remain the responsibility of the certification body.
- 1.4.12** When a certification body subcontracts work related to certification to an external body, or person, an agreement covering the arrangements shall be drawn up. This shall include the requirement to comply with all relevant aspects of these criteria.

2 ACCESSIBILITY AND SCOPE

2.1 *Non-Discrimination*

2.1.1 The policies and procedures which govern the operation of the certification body shall be non-discriminatory.

2.2 *Access to Services*

2.2.1 The certification body shall make its services accessible for all applicants whose activities fall within its declared field of application. Certification requirements, inspections and decisions shall be confined to the scope of the certification being granted.

2.2.2 Access to certification shall not be conditional upon the size of the operator or membership of any association or group, nor shall certification be conditional upon the number of certificates already issued by the certification body.

2.2.3 The fee structure shall be standardized and available on request.

2.3 *Certification Scope*

2.3.1 Organic certification shall be granted solely on the basis of a determination of an operation's conformity with specified published standards. These standards shall cover all production systems or product categories certified.

Certification Scope and the Chain of Custody¹⁷

2.3.2 The certification body shall not issue any license to use its certification mark or issue any certificate for any product unless it is assured of the chain of custody of the product. Where steps in the production chain have been certified by other certification bodies, the criteria in section 9 shall be applied.

¹⁷ **Explanatory Note 2.3.2 to 2.3.5:** This section of the criteria regulates the requirements for certification bodies with regard to the whole production chain. The production chain includes the farmers, storage units, processing units, packers, brokers, wholesalers, transport companies and retailers. These criteria establish when either certification or inspection is required. These functions shall either have been carried out by the certification body itself or their certification should be approved in accordance with the criteria in section 9.

2.3.3 Any entity in the chain of custody that has produced, processed, or packaged an organic product shall have been certified. Contracted production (see below) shall have been inspected.¹⁸

Guidance: *The certification body is not obliged to have a system for inspection of products that are further handled after being packed in the final consumer package. For certified product not in its final packaging the certification body's responsibility shall extend to the point where the product is sold to an operator certified by a different entity. The certification body shall take action where there is reason to believe that the certification body's own standards have been or may be violated in later handling stages.*

2.3.4 Certification bodies shall conduct a risk assessment to determine the necessity for, or frequency of, inspection of all storage facilities including port facilities. Where this reveals a need for inspection to protect organic integrity, inspection shall be done.¹⁹

2.3.5 The certification body shall require that the party owning the product at the point of transport shall be responsible for maintaining the organic integrity in the transport process, unless transport operations are certified in their own capacity.

Certification Scope and Contracted Production or Processing²⁰

2.3.6 The certification body shall have policies and procedures for regulating contracted production or processing, where the contracted party is not required to be certified in their own right. A certification body may not issue a certificate of any type to the contracted operator.

2.3.7 The policy shall prescribe the circumstances where the contracted party is not required to be certified. This shall preclude the contracted party from marketing certified products and require the raw materials supply, and the sales to be under the control of the certified licensee. This shall normally mean that the contracted party does not take title of the product.²¹

¹⁸ **Explanatory Note 2.3.3:** An example of such a situation is fumigation in import harbors, etc.

¹⁹ **Explanatory Note 2.3.4:** Exceptions to the requirement for inspections may be made if a risk assessment based on the kind of storage, the product, the packaging, the prevailing storage practices (e.g. fumigation) and the period of storage has determined that further inspections are not necessary. Exceptions may also be made in the case of storage by common carriers and storage in customs houses.

²⁰ **Explanatory Note: 2.3.6 to 2.3.11:** This section establishes criteria applicable when a certified entity (or applicant) has subcontracted production to an operation which is not certified. (For example, a certified processor subcontracts with a storage, handling, or processing facility which is not certified in its own right.) It also applies to situations where a processor or trader has subcontracted producers.

²¹ **Explanatory Note 2.3.7:** These provisions do not prohibit the contracted party from applying for certification in their own right.

2.3.8 The contracted party shall be inspected by the certification body before the use of the contracted product or service. Subsequent inspections shall be made annually or at a frequency determined on a case-by-case basis providing that the certification body documents the reasons for the reduced frequency.

2.3.9 The certification body shall require that the certified operator shall be held fully responsible for the contracted production or processing and be subject to sanctions in the event of non-compliance of the contracted parties.

Guidance: *The contract between the certification body and the operator shall specify the liability in respect to sanctions, unless this is already stated in the general sanctions policies.*

2.3.10 The certification body shall require that the contracted party have a contractual relationship with the certification body that includes clauses regarding compliance to the standards, obligation to provide information, and access to the certification body. This may either be achieved through a direct contract between the parties or by an agreement between the operator and the contracted party in which the contracted party binds itself directly to the certification body.

Guidance: *Where the certification body chooses not to have a direct contract with the contracted party it shall ensure that the contract between the operator and contracted party legally binds the contracted party to the certification body and the specified requirements. This shall mean that the contracts between the operator and the subcontractor shall be obtained in order to verify these points.*

2.3.11 The certification body shall require that each contracted party owns and understands the current version of the applicable standards and a general description of the certification program.

3 QUALITY SYSTEM FOR CERTIFICATION

3.1 *Quality Policy*

- 3.1.1** The Certification Body shall document its objectives for, and commitment to, quality in a quality policy. The management shall ensure that this policy is understood, implemented and maintained.²²

3.2 *Quality System*

- 3.2.1** The certification body shall operate an effective quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of these criteria and appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed. This quality system shall be documented and the documentation shall be available to, and understood by, the certification body personnel.²³

3.3 *Quality Documentation*

- 3.3.1** The quality documentation shall include at least the following:
- a. a brief description of the legal status of the certification body;
Guidance: The description shall include the names of its owners and, if different, names of the persons who control it.
 - b. the names, qualifications, experience and terms of reference of the Governing Board, senior executive and other certification personnel, both internal and external;
 - c. an organization chart showing lines of authority, responsibility and allocation of functions stemming from the senior executive;
 - d. a description of the organization of the certification body, including the management (committee, group or person) identified in 1.1.3;
 - e. the policy and procedures for conducting management reviews;
 - f. administrative procedures including document control;
 - g. the operational and functional duties and services, so that the extent and limits of each person's responsibility are known to all concerned;
 - h. the procedure for the recruitment and training of certification body personnel and monitoring of their performance;

²² **Explanatory Note 3.1.1:** A quality policy can consist of a simple statement to adhere to the IFOAM Accreditation System.

²³ **Explanatory Note 3.2.1:** An effective quality system is one which enables the certification body to demonstrate continuous quality improvement.

- i. a list of its approved subcontractors and the procedures for assessing, recording and monitoring their competence;
- j. its procedures for handling non-conformities and for assuring the effectiveness of any corrective and preventive actions taken;
- k. the procedures for evaluating products and implementing the certification process, including the conditions for issue, retention and withdrawal of certification documents, and the controls over the use and application of documents employed in the certification of products;
- l. the policy and procedure for dealing with appeals and complaints.

3.4 *Internal Audits*

3.4.1 The certification body shall conduct periodic internal audits such that all procedures are covered in a planned and systematic manner over time, to verify that the certification system is implemented and is effective.

The certification body shall ensure that:

- a. personnel responsible for the audited functions are informed of the outcome of the audit;
- b. corrective actions are taken in a timely and appropriate manner;
- c. the results of the audit are documented.

3.4.2 The certification body shall review the management system at defined intervals. Records of such reviews shall be maintained.

***Guidance:** A management review evaluates whether procedures and policies are effective in achieving the overall goals of the organization.*

3.4.3 The certification body shall conduct performance reviews of inspection and certification personnel including employed inspectors at least annually. Records of the outcome shall be maintained.²⁴

3.4.4 In the case of frequently used contracted inspectors, the inspector shall be given periodic feedback on performance.

²⁴ **Explanatory Note 3.4.3:** Where work is organized in teams this may be team review.

3.5 *Complaints*

- 3.5.1** The certification body shall have procedures for consideration of complaints brought by operators or third parties concerning its own performance or concerning the compliance of certified operators with the standards.
- 3.5.2** Complaints shall be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.
- 3.5.3** When a complaint is resolved, the resolution shall be documented. The complainant shall be informed of the general outcome of the complaint in a way that does not prejudice the confidentiality of the party concerned.
- 3.5.4** The certification body shall:
- a. investigate and take appropriate action regarding complaints related to certification;
 - b. review and take any necessary corrective action to the certification system;²⁵
 - c. keep a record of all complaints and resulting actions.

²⁵ **Explanatory Note 3.5.4b:** This criterion requires that complaints should not merely be resolved but that the certification body should review the complaint to determine whether the complaint indicates a structural or procedure fault and, if so, to remedy it.

4 CONFIDENTIALITY PROVISIONS

4.1 General

- 4.1.1** The certification body shall have adequate arrangements to ensure confidentiality of the information regarding specific operators obtained in the course of its certification activities at all levels of its organization, including committees, contracted bodies and individuals.²⁶
- 4.1.2** These arrangements shall include the requirement for all personnel to sign a confidentiality agreement and the establishment of a confidentiality policy.
- 4.1.3** This policy shall:
- a.** specify the type of information that is not covered by confidentiality, such as name and address of operators, and
 - b.** identify the parties that may have access to confidential information such as accreditation bodies;
 - c.** require the certification body to inform operators of who the parties are;
 - d.** state potential requirements for disclosure of information under the law;
 - e.** require written consent in other cases.
- 4.1.4** Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third-party, the supplier shall be informed of the information provided as permitted by the law.

²⁶ **Explanatory Note 4.1.1:** The system shall be transparent while records pertaining to operators remain confidential.

5 DOCUMENTATION AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

5.1 General

5.1.1 The certification body shall document its certification system, make relevant documents available to the public on request and demonstrate control over all documents issued.

5.2 Public Access to Information

5.2.1 The certification body shall make publicly available, through print and or electronic media, current information on the following:²⁷

- a.** information, describing the authority under which the certification body provides its certification service;²⁸
- b.** the requirements and procedures, (or a description of the procedures) for evaluation of the inspection report and approval, continuation or extension of certification;
- c.** the requirements and procedures for suspension and withdrawal of certification;
- d.** the standards to which certification is granted;
- e.** a description of the certification body's sources of income and clear indications of the fees charged to applicants and current licensed operators;
- f.** a description of the rights and duties of applicants and suppliers of certified products, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's logo and on the ways of referring to the certification granted;
- g.** procedures for handling complaints and appeals;
- h.** a current list of certified operators, including name, location and the scope of the certification; if an operator is certified as a group it shall be identified as such;
- i.** a current list of contracted parties, although this may be a general list without linkage to the certified operator.

²⁷ **Explanatory Note 5.2.1:** Make available does not mean these have to be distributed, only that they should be supplied if requested. It also means that a reasonable charge may be levied. Point b, e, f and g refer to descriptions or summaries and not necessarily the formal policies or procedures themselves.

²⁸ **Explanatory Note 5.2.1a:** This authority may be regulatory where a certification body has been approved under a government regulation. Authority may also be derived from the voluntary nature of the program or from linked producer or trader associations.

5.3 Document Control

- 5.3.1** The certification body shall maintain a documented system for the control of all documentation relating to the certification system and shall ensure that:
- a. the current issues of the appropriate documentation are available at relevant locations;
 - b. all changes of documents are covered by the correct authorization;
 - c. all changes are processed in a manner which will ensure direct and speedy action;
 - d. superseded documents are removed from use throughout the organization;
 - e. all affected parties are notified of changes;
 - f. there is a register of all appropriate documents with the respective issue identified;
 - g. there is a determination of which documents are available to the public and which are not;
 - h. documentation clearly indicates its date of implementation.

Guidance: *The certification body shall have a documented procedure to ensure that above requirements are met.*

5.4 Records²⁹

- 5.4.1** The certification body shall maintain a records system and have policies and procedures governing their management. The records shall be identified, managed and disposed of in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of the information.

- 5.4.2** Operator files shall be up to date and contain all relevant information, including inspection reports, history, and product specifications.

Guidance: *The certification body shall have available relevant data for all certified production units, including any contracted parties and members of grower groups.*

- 5.4.3** The records shall be sufficiently comprehensive so as to demonstrate that the procedures for certification decisions are properly applied.

- 5.4.4** Separate records shall be kept for major violations and non-conformities and resulting sanctions, precedents, exceptions, appeals, and complaints, in a way that enables easy retrieval of data.³⁰

²⁹ **Explanatory Note Section 5.4:** Requirements for records also apply to computerized systems.

³⁰ **Explanatory Note 5.4.4:** Such information should be available both in the producer's file as well in a separate record, or registered in a database system. The purpose of this criterion is for those involved in certification to have access to the file in order to ensure consistency in decision-making.

- 5.4.5** All records shall be safely stored and held secure and in confidence to the operator, for a period not less than five years. Computerized records shall be backed-up regularly.³¹
- 5.4.6** Inspection reports, certification decisions, certificates and other relevant records shall be signed by the authorized person.³²
- 5.4.7** The record keeping system shall be transparent and enable easy retrieval of information.
- 5.4.8** Operators shall have the right to have copies of inspection findings and other documentation related to the certification of their production, unless the documents are confidential (i.e. filed complaints, confidential section of inspection reports).
Guidance: *This right shall be communicated to operators.*

³¹ **Explanatory Note 5.4.5:** The records that should be maintained for the specified period would include not only the operator's records, but also records of the certification body's personnel and relevant activities such as internal audits.

³² **Explanatory Note 5.4.6:** This may be an electronic signature.

6 APPLICATION AND INSPECTION PROCEDURES

6.1 Application Procedures

Information for Applicants

- 6.1.1** The certification body shall ensure that each applicant or certified operator has:
- a. a current version of the applicable standards;
 - b. an adequate description of the inspection, certification and appeals procedures;
 - c. a sample copy of the contract or a description of the contractual conditions;
 - d. a copy of the fee schedule.

Application Form

- 6.1.2** The certification body shall require completion of an official application form, signed by the applicant. This shall determine at least the following information:
- a. the scope of the desired certification,³³
 - b. sufficient information about the production system to enable appropriate assignment of the inspector and proper preparation by the inspector.
- Guidance:** *This shall include disclosure of denial of organic certification by another certification body. Such a disclosure shall include the reasons for denial.*³⁴

Operator Obligations

- 6.1.3** The certification system shall be based on written agreements and clear responsibilities with all parties involved in the chain of production of a certified product.
- 6.1.4** The certification body shall require operators to sign statements in the application form or elsewhere, obliging them to:
- a. agree to comply with the requirements for certification including a commitment to comply with the standards, and to supply any information needed for evaluation of the production to be certified;
 - b. provide the right of access to all appropriate facilities including any non-organic production in the unit, or related (by ownership or management) units in proximity, to both certification and accreditation personnel,³⁵

³³ **Explanatory Note 6.1.2a:** This also includes the production and area to be certified, and in cases where the certification body offers more than one certification program, the standards against which the product is to be certified.

³⁴ **Explanatory Note 6.1.2b Guidance:** Regions where there is only one certification body are not considered relevant.

³⁵ **Explanatory Note 6.1.4b:** The criterion requires the right of access, but does not require that this right be exercised in all cases. Certification bodies should be able to inspect any part of an operation whether organic or not if they have reason to do so. The criterion requires that the right be fully exercised in cases of parallel production.

- c. provide access to all relevant documentation including financial records to both certification and accreditation personnel.

Operator Documentation

- 6.1.5** The certification body shall specify the documentation to be maintained by the operator to enable verification of compliance, and shall specify which records shall be available and held in a form that enables verification to take place.³⁶
- 6.1.6** The certification body shall require documented procedures defining the manner of production or processing where the absence of such procedures could adversely affect the organic quality.³⁷

6.2 Preparation for Inspection

Review

- 6.2.1** The certification body shall conduct a review of the application for certification to ensure that the requirements for certification are clearly understood and that the scope of certification sought is appropriate to the applicant.³⁸
- 6.2.2** For complex operations and foreign operations located in regions not usually covered by the certification body, the certification body shall assess whether it has the capability to perform the certification service with respect to the scope of the certification sought.
- 6.2.3** The certification body shall provide the inspector with sufficient information to prepare for the inspection.

Guidance: *This includes at least an application form, and/or previous inspection findings, a description of activities/processes, maps/plans, product specifications and used inputs, previous conditions and sanctions.*

³⁶ **Explanatory Note 6.1.5:** These criteria refer not only to the required documentation but also to the way in which it is kept. This must allow for the specified audits to be carried out within the timeframe of an inspection.

³⁷ **Explanatory Note 6.1.6:** Although this is more likely to apply in processing operations it may also apply to farming operations. An example would be a procedure to ensure cleaning out of equipment in a split production situation. Conversion plans, farm plans and management plans to reduce dependence on restricted products would constitute such procedural documents.

³⁸ **Explanatory Note 6.2.1:** An example of assessment of the scope of certification sought is that an application for group certification meets the criteria in 8.3.2.

Assignment of Inspector

- 6.2.4** The assignment of the inspector shall take into account any possible conflict of interest.
- 6.2.5** The assignment of the inspector shall ensure that the same inspector shall as a rule not be assigned to an operator for more than 4 consecutive years and under no circumstances for more than 5 consecutive years.
- 6.2.6** Operators shall have neither the right to choose nor to recommend inspectors. Except for cases of unannounced visits, operators shall have the right to be informed about the identity of the inspector before the inspection visit. Operators shall in any case have the right to raise objections based on conflict of interest or other reasons. The certification body shall rule whether the reasons are accepted.

6.3 *Visit Procedures*

- 6.3.1** The organic management systems of the operator shall be evaluated against the standards and certification requirements.
- 6.3.2** Inspection procedure shall follow a specific protocol to facilitate a non-discriminatory and objective inspection procedure.
- 6.3.3** The routine inspection procedure shall be documented and shall at least include:³⁹
 - a.** assessment of production or processing system of operator by means of visits to facilities, fields, and storage units;
 - b.** verification of the most recent information provided to the certification body by the operator;
 - c.** identification and investigation of areas of risk;
 - d.** review of records and accounts;
 - e.** production/sales reconciliation on farms;
Guidance: *At least every 3 years this shall be a comprehensive check.*
 - f.** an input/output reconciliation and trace back audit in processing and handling;
 - g.** interviews with responsible persons including an exit interview;
Guidance: *The exit interview shall include findings of non-conformities made during the inspection.*⁴⁰

³⁹ **Explanatory Note 6.3.3:** An exception to this may be made in the case of unannounced visits that are made in addition to the scheduled visit or in cases where more than one announced visit is conducted in the year. Such supplementary visits may be targeted to specific concerns or to check compliance with conditions of the certification.

⁴⁰ **Explanatory Note 6.3.3g Guidance:** This is not the final decision on non-conformities, but the observations of the inspector. As such it may be overturned by the certification decision.

- h. verification that changes that have taken place in the standards and requirements of the certification body have been effectively implemented by the operator;
- i. residue sampling in accordance with the certification body's sampling policy;
- j. verification that previously imposed conditions have been fulfilled.

6.3.4 The inspection, including document review, shall include non-organic units where there is reason for doing so.⁴¹

6.4 Sampling and Testing⁴²

6.4.1 The certification body shall have documented policies and procedures on residue testing, and other analyses that shall at least include:

- a. indication of the cases in which samples shall be taken;
- b. the requirement that where use of a substance prohibited by the standards is suspected and samples may provide supporting evidence, then samples shall be taken for analysis;⁴³
- c. the requirement that where standards set limits on residues or contamination in products, inputs or soil, analysis shall be done as appropriate;⁴⁴
- d. instructions to inspectors on sampling requirements and methods;
- e. indication of responsibility for payment of sampling.

6.4.2 Analyses shall be done by competent laboratories.

6.5 Inspection Report

6.5.1 Inspection reports shall cover relevant aspects of the standards, adequately validate the information provided by the operator and indicate any non-conformities.

⁴¹ **Explanatory Note 6.3.4:** Examples are: Parallel production and systems that are so similar that there might be undeclared parallel production, and any situation revealing high risk of cross-contamination.

⁴² **Explanatory Note Section 6.4:** Testing is not the basis of organic certification as it is certification of process not products. However, testing is of value and the certification body shall have documented policies and procedures on residue testing, genetic testing and other analyses that meet these requirements.

⁴³ **Explanatory Note 6.4.1b:** The "use of" means the deliberate utilization of a substance. For issues related to unintentional contamination, refer to the IFOAM Basic Standards as well as criteria 6.4.1c and 6.7.4.

⁴⁴ **Explanatory Note 6.4.1c:** This refers to claims made in standards used by the certifying body regarding limits on contamination. For example, claims on limits on heavy metals in soil. In such cases certification bodies must verify the standard by means of residue testing.

- 6.5.2** Inspection reports and written documentation shall indicate the applicable standard(s) and provide sufficiently comprehensive information for the certification body to make competent and objective decisions.
- 6.5.3** Inspection reports shall follow a decided format to facilitate a non-discriminatory, objective and comprehensive analysis of the production system.
- 6.5.4** Reports shall be designed to allow for elaboration and analysis by the inspector.⁴⁵
Guidance: *This shall include specific information about the input output analysis.*
- 6.5.5** Reports shall contain an assessment of risk with regard to loss of organic integrity as well as the inspector's observations regarding conformity with standards. Inspectors shall be able to make recommendations regarding non-conformities but shall not be required to make an overall judgment of whether the operator should be certified.⁴⁶

6.6 Record of Inspection

- 6.6.1** The certification body shall require inspectors to record what occurred during the inspection visit. This shall at least include:
- a. date and duration of inspection;
 - b. persons interviewed;
 - c. fields and facilities visited;
 - d. type of document audits conducted (input/output, yield/sales, trace back, etc.).

⁴⁵ **Explanatory Note 6.5.4:** An example would be: In cases of partial compliance or lack of clarity in the standards the inspector being required to elaborate.

⁴⁶ **Explanatory Note 6.5.5:** The criterion prohibits requiring an inspector to make an overall judgment of whether the unit should be certified or not. The overall judgment is a function of certification and not of inspection and would contravene criterion 1.3.10 if it was required of the inspector. The criterion does not prohibit the inspectors from providing an overall recommendation but does prohibit the certification body from requiring this of them. The actions in 6.7.4 are an exception based on the emergency nature of the case and the overriding need to prevent fraud.

6.7 **Additional Requirements and Inspection Regime for Particular Circumstances**⁴⁷

Conversion Period

- 6.7.1** The certification body shall verify full application of the standards for a period of no less than that stated in the IFOAM Basic Standards. This shall take place following the application for certification except in the case of 6.7.3.⁴⁸
- 6.7.2** Inspection shall occur during the conversion period to verify compliance with standards.
- 6.7.3** Exceptions to 6.7.1 above shall be on the basis of indisputable documented evidence that full application of the standards has occurred. This shall be verified by inspection. **Guidance:** *If exceptions to the criterion 6.7.1 are granted it shall be on the basis of sound and incontrovertible evidence that full application of the standards has occurred for a period at least as long as the minimum conversion period specified in the IFOAM Basic Standards. Sound evidence shall, in addition to documentation, include an inspection visit prior to certification in which the existing and prior management system is evaluated. Affidavits and other documentary evidence shall not on their own be considered sufficient evidence.*

Split Production⁴⁹

- 6.7.4** When split production occurs, the certification program shall have additional requirements and inspection regimes to safeguard that the products are not mixed or contaminated.

⁴⁷ **Explanatory Note Section 6.7:** These criteria apply to situations, where product is being sold as organic.

⁴⁸ **Explanatory Note 6.7.1:** Full application of standards should normally mean active organic management not just absence of use of prohibited materials. The IFOAM Basic Standards define organic as a management system. Certification should not occur unless this organic management system is fully in place. In order to verify this the certification body should normally not grant retrospective conversion prior to the application for certification and should require the conversion period stated in the standards to monitor the system.

⁴⁹ **Explanatory Note 6.7.4 to 6.7.7 - Split Production and Parallel Production:** The criteria include requirements for two situations that may occur in organic operations. Split production is the term used when a unit is not fully dedicated to organic production processing or handling and is also producing, processing or handling conversion or non-organic produce. This is regardless of whether these are the same product or different product. If they are the same product this is termed parallel production. Parallel production is a particular form of split production. As parallel production is a higher risk situation when a product is sold as organic, specific criteria in addition to those for split production have been specified. The requirements for parallel production are in addition to those for split operations. These criteria apply to situations where product is being sold as organic.

- 6.7.5** In cases of split production the certification body shall require and verify by inspection:
- a.** that the documentation regarding the production or processing, storage and sales is well managed and makes clear distinctions between certified and non- certified products;
 - b.** that the measures taken to safeguard against the risk to the organic integrity is understood at all levels of the operation.

Parallel Production⁵⁰

- 6.7.6** If a farm is engaged in parallel production, the certification body shall require that in addition to the requirements for split production above:
- a.** non-organic (or conversion) crops, livestock and produce and organic crops, livestock and produce are of different varieties and are visually distinguishable. Exceptions shall only be granted on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the requirements in 6.7.7;
 - b.** accurate production estimates are recorded and shall be checked against sales records;
 - c.** the inspection includes visits to the non-organic fields and/or processing units.
- 6.7.7** In cases where an exception has been granted to the requirements in 6.7.6a inspections shall occur more frequently than once a year and at critical times. This shall normally include inspections at the time of harvest or during processing.

Genetically Engineered Products

- 6.7.8** Based on risk assessment the certification body shall implement a system to inspect and verify that genetically engineered (GE) organisms and their products or derivatives are not used in certified organic production and or/processing as required by the IFOAM Basic Standards.⁵¹
- 6.7.9** For genetically engineered (GE) product use and contamination risk areas, the certification body shall adopt one or more of the following measures:
- a.** review of supplier's statements verifying that the product is not genetically engineered;
 - b.** and/or analytical testing to defined limits;
 - c.** and/or documentation and evaluation of suppliers' GE control systems;
 - d.** and/or other measure(s) determined by the certification body to be more appropriate than a. through c., and as defined in the certification body's policies and procedures, consistent with this criterion.

⁵⁰ **Explanatory Note 6.7.6 and 6.7.7:** In all parallel production on farms 6.7.6 b and c shall be required. In addition 6.7.6a must be enforced or - if an exception is granted to this provision - then the operator must be subject to the requirements in 6.7.7.

⁵¹ **Explanatory Note 6.7.8:** This includes the conventional ingredients in a multi ingredient product. The risk assessment is for the possibility of usage of GE products or their derivatives and would therefore look at whether GE versions of the ingredients exist.

7 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

7.1 *General Requirements*

- 7.1.1** The certification body shall execute its certification in compliance with all its stated procedures and standards.
- 7.1.2** The certification body shall specify contractual requirements under which it grants, and the procedures for granting, certification.
- 7.1.3** The certification body shall have procedures to:
- a. grant, maintain, withdraw and, if practiced, suspend certification;⁵²
 - b. extend or reduce the scope of certification;
 - c. re-evaluate the operation.⁵³
- 7.1.4** The documented certification policies and procedures shall include all procedural steps in processing the application, until final certification.

7.2 *Certification Decisions*

- 7.2.1** All certification decisions including the scope shall be objective and transparent and shall be recorded.
- 7.2.2** Following initial inspection the certification decision shall be communicated to the operator. Thereafter, operators shall be kept informed about their certification status.⁵⁴
- 7.2.3** When certification is denied, withdrawn or suspended, the reasons shall be clearly stated.

⁵² **Explanatory Note 7.1.3a:** The text refers to “if practiced” because certification bodies may choose to not have a suspension policy and instead simply withdraw certification for serious infringements. The exception is found in 7.7.5 where suspension is the only possibility.

⁵³ **Explanatory Note 7.1.3c:** Re-evaluation is indicated in the event of changes significantly affecting the product’s specification, or changes in the standards to which compliance of the product is certified, or changes in the ownership, structure or management of the supplier, if relevant, or in the case of any other information indicating that the product may no longer comply with the requirements of the certification system.

⁵⁴ **Explanatory Note 7.2.2:** In a system where the certification is done annually the operator should be informed accordingly. In a system with an ongoing status the certification body is only required to inform the operator when there is a change in the certification status.

7.2.4 If exceptions are granted there shall be criteria and procedures for granting exceptions. Exceptions shall be clearly limited in time and the rationale for any exception shall be properly recorded.

7.2.5 The certification body shall have the right to impose conditions. Where conditions require corrective actions subsequent to certification, timelines shall be imposed. Mechanisms for monitoring compliance with conditions shall be in place.

7.3 The Certification Process

7.3.1 The procedures shall ensure that:⁵⁵

- a. the certification status of all operators and their production and, where relevant, the scope of existing certification, is indicated throughout the certification process;
- b. processing of inspection reports and certification decisions shall be done in a timely manner;
- c. processing of any issue related to non-conformities with standards shall be done with highest priority.

Guidance: *Where the certification body operates more than one certification program, the applicable scope shall also be stated.*

7.4 Certificates

Certificates of Conformity

7.4.1 The certification body shall issue certificates confirming conformity of a certified operation. These shall include at least:

- a. the name and address of the operator;
- b. the name and address of the certification body;
- c. the program under which the operator is certified;
- d. the scope of the certification including reference to the applicable standards, the products or product categories, and the certification status (conversion or organic) of each;⁵⁶
- e. the date of issuance;
- f. the period of validity;
- g. an authorized signature of the certification body.

⁵⁵ **Explanatory Note 7.3.1:** This criterion requires that the current certification status (certified, conversion, non-organic) of all product or production is stated on all forms and documents used through the certification process.

⁵⁶ **Explanatory Note 7.4.1d:** Product categories noted on the certificate should be as specific as the circumstances permit.

Transaction Certificates

7.4.2 Where the certification body issues transaction certificates or provides forms for operators to issue self-declared certificates, the certification body shall ensure that certificates contain sufficient information to prevent fraudulent usage. This shall at least include:

- a. the seller;
- b. the buyer;
- c. the date of delivery and/ or date of transaction;
- d. the date of issuing the certificate;
- e. a clear indication of the product, the quantity and its certification status;
- f. lot numbers and other identification (marks) of the products;
- g. reference to an invoice or bill of lading if present at the time of certificate issuance;
- h. the certification body and the applicable standard;
- i. a statement from the operator that the product is produced according to the applicable standards.

Guidance: *Where, for logistic or other reason, this is not possible at the time of issuance of the certificate, this shall be obtained and integrated into the certification body documentation within six weeks.*

7.4.3 The certification body shall take reasonable measures to verify that the information provided is correct, including verifying accumulative totals of transaction certificates issued against production estimates.

7.4.4 In the case of operator self-declarations, the certification body shall require that copies of issued transaction certificates be retained by the operator for 5 years. Such transaction certificates shall be audited at the annual inspection.

7.4.5 Copies of all issued transaction certificates shall be stored in a manner that enables easy retrieval and audit of information on each operator.

7.5 Surveillance

Frequency of Scheduled Inspections

7.5.1 New applicants shall be inspected before certification.

7.5.2 The certification body shall have a written policy on inspection frequency of already certified operators. The policy shall require that certified operators are inspected at least annually. Alternatively, (except in the cases of new applicants, operators wholly in conversion or group certification) the policy shall fulfill the following requirements:

- a. the frequency and type of inspections are based on the risks with respect to the

individual operator;

- b. the risk analysis take into account any relevant threat to the organic integrity of the production and products;
- c. the total number of inspections per calendar year at least equals the total number of already certified operators;⁵⁷
- d. that no operator is inspected less than once in three calendar years;
- e. the certification body installs mechanisms to monitor operators to assess their risk level between very spread out inspections.⁵⁸

7.5.3 There shall be provisions for additional inspections. The criteria or circumstances for scheduling more than one inspection annually shall be documented and shall be based on risk analysis taking into account factors such as the type of production, the operator's record of compliance, complexity of production, and risk of non-compliance.⁵⁹

7.5.4 Timing of inspections shall not be so regular as to become predictable.

Unannounced Inspections

7.5.5 The certification body shall have a documented policy requiring unannounced inspections. At a minimum, the policy shall require:

- a. in the case of a risk-based approach to determine inspection frequency, at least 5% of the certified operators shall be subject to unannounced inspections;
- b. in the case of an annual inspection frequency, the number of unannounced inspections chosen randomly and the additional scheduled inspections according to 7.5.3 together shall be at least 5% of the certified operators;
- c. unannounced inspections shall be in addition to the scheduled inspections under 7.5.2.

7.5.6 Certification bodies shall secure the rights to conduct unannounced inspections.
Guidance: *This shall be included in agreements or other documentation signed by the operator.*

7.5.7 Unannounced inspections shall normally be without any forewarning. However, certification bodies may define alternative definitions for particular circumstances where this can be justified. The definition shall address the purpose that the possible

⁵⁷ **Explanatory Note 7.5.2c:** If a certification body has 5000 operators, the certification body has to perform at least 5000 inspections per calendar year plus new applications.

⁵⁸ **Explanatory note 7.5.2e:** An example would be an annual form that requires sufficient information to determine whether there have been changes in risk situation.

⁵⁹ **Explanatory Note 7.5.3:** This could be done on a case-by-case basis or according to the type of operation. Annual means the calendar year, which is not every 365 days. 7.5.3 only applies in cases where the certifier has, according to 7.5.2, chosen to inspect every certified operator annually (annual inspection frequency).

forewarning shall not be so extensive as to allow for the operator to correct substantial non-conformities.

7.5.8 The basis for selection of operators to be subject to unannounced inspections shall be defined and include both random and targeted selection.

7.5.9 A record of unannounced inspections shall be maintained.

Notification of Changes in Licensee's Operation and Extension of Scope

7.5.10 The certification body shall require the operator to give notification of significant changes such as modification to the products, the manufacturing process, extension of acreage or changes to management, or ownership.

7.5.11 The certification body shall assess the announced scope changes and have criteria for inspection or alternative action.

Guidance: *The operator shall not be allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until the certification body has granted permission.*

7.6 Use of Licenses, Certificates and Certification Marks

7.6.1 The certification body shall exercise control over the use of its licenses, certificates and certification marks.

7.6.2 A certification body may permit its mark to be applied by a non-licensed party (contracted operator or seller) on behalf of a licensee provided:

- a.** the non-licensed party is certified by another certification body that is accepted under 9.2.1;
- b.** the licensee has a system for control of the label use that is regulated by contract and that this system is verified by the licensee's certification body;
- c.** the certification body of the non-licensed party agrees to control and verify label use.

7.6.3 The certification body shall have documents, which demonstrate its ownership or control of the certification mark, when such a mark exists.

7.6.4 The certification body shall establish requirements concerning the use of its certification mark or other reference to the certification. These criteria shall require that the operator only makes claims regarding certification which are consistent with the scope of the certification that has been granted.

- 7.6.5 Certification bodies shall actively investigate suspected cases of fraud.
- 7.6.6 Incorrect references to the certification system or misleading use of licenses, certificates or certification marks shall be dealt with by suitable remedial actions.
- 7.6.7 The certification body shall have documented procedures for responding to use of its name or certification mark or certificates by uncertified parties. Such procedures shall include all steps and include the possibility of legal action.
- 7.6.8 The certification body shall have documented procedures for withdrawal and cancellation of contracts, certificates and certification marks. These procedures shall require the operator to discontinue use of certificates and certification marks.
- 7.6.9 Certification bodies shall ensure that corrective actions related to misuse of licenses, certificates and certification marks have been effective.

7.7 **Sanctions**

- 7.7.1 The certification body shall have a documented range of sanctions including measures to deal with minor non-conformities with the standards.

Guidance: *The certification body will make the determination of whether a non-conformity of the regulations is minor. Minor non-conformities do not, by themselves, preclude the certification or continued certification of an otherwise qualified organic operator. The certification body would be free to modify the time period for correction should it believe it to be appropriate.*

Non-conformities with the standards are considered “minor” only:

- a. *if they do not compromise health or safety of workers, or*
- b. *if they do not involve flagrant non-conformities with standards.*

Typically, minor non-conformities result from shortcomings in record keeping. Minor non-conformities may be considered to be flagrant if they are not addressed within a year of being identified.

- 7.7.2 Documented procedures for imposing sanctions shall be in place.
- 7.7.3 Where a non-conformity that affects organic integrity is found, the certification body shall require that the certification mark or any other indication of certification is removed from the entire production run or product affected by the non-conformity concerned.
- 7.7.4 Where a serious non-conformity is made by the operator, the certification body shall withdraw certification from the operator for a specified period.

7.7.5 The certification body shall have procedures for immediate suspension of certification in cases where the inspector detects manifest non-conformities or fraudulent activity. **Guidance:** *This may include immediate withdrawal by the inspector as an emergency measure especially where fraud is suspected or where this is required by law, provided this is ratified by the certification body at the earliest possibility.*

7.7.6 The reasons for sanctions shall be provided to the operator.

7.8 Appeals

7.8.1 The certification body shall have procedures for the consideration of appeals against its certification decisions.⁶⁰

7.8.2 Appeals shall be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.

7.8.3 When an appeal is decided, a documented resolution shall be made and forwarded to the appellant.

7.8.4 The certification body shall:

- a. keep a record of all appeals;
- b. take appropriate subsequent action;
- c. document the action taken and its effectiveness.

7.9 Risk Reduction Between Certification Bodies

7.9.1 The certification body shall require operators to notify it of all previous and current certifications within the scope. The certification body shall communicate with the other certification body to ascertain if there were any major issues. Alternatively, the certification body shall require the operator to submit the most recent certification decision issued by the other certification body.

7.9.2 In cases of dual or multiple certification with the same certification scope, the certification body shall supply the other certification body (or bodies) with copies of transaction certificates or information regarding sales and inform them in event of de-certification. The certification body shall request the same information from the other certification body (or bodies).

⁶⁰ **Explanatory Note 7.8.1:** Appeals may be lodged by the operator subject to a decision or by a third party. However, in the context of these criteria, appeals refers to decisions regarding certification status. Third party statements concerning compliance of operators with the requirements may be considered complaints and dealt with under the complaints procedures.

7.10 *Changes in Certification Requirements*

7.10.1 The certification body shall ensure that each certified operator be notified of changes in the certification requirements without unnecessary delay.

7.10.2 The certification body shall verify the operator's implementation in a timely manner.

8 INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION FOR SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES OR SCOPE

8.1 *Certification of Wild Products*

- 8.1.1** If the certification body includes wild product within its certification scope, it shall have documented requirements and an inspection regime that at least requires that:
- a. the operator issues instructions to the collectors and any local agents (middlemen), that at least defines the area of collection and informs them about the standards and other requirements for certification;
Guidance: The collectors shall sign statements that they have followed the instructions.
 - b. the operator has records of all collectors, and the quantities bought from each collector;
 - c. any middlemen shall be under contract to the operator;⁶¹
 - d. the area of production shall be properly identified on appropriate maps, and shall be large and distinct enough to reduce the risk of commingling with non-certified production.

- 8.1.2** The inspection regime shall at least include:
- a. document check;
 - b. interviews with the collectors, or a representative sample;
 - c. visit to an appropriate proportion of the certified area;
 - d. visits to and interviews with an appropriate proportion of middlemen;
 - e. gathering of relevant information about the area of collection from interviews of landowners and other parties (environment agencies, NGOs, etc.).

8.2 *Approval or Certification of Inputs*⁶²

Approval Systems for Brand Name Inputs

- 8.2.1** Where a certification body issues lists or in any other way approves brand name products without formal certification it shall document at least the following measures:
- a. the application procedure, including the necessary documents to be submitted by the applicant;
 - b. the procedure to be followed in evaluating the products compliance with the certification body's standards;

⁶¹ **Explanatory Note 8.1.1c:** Middlemen in this context refers to agents or tribal authorities who may act as initial collection or storage points.

⁶² **Explanatory Note Section 8.2:** Certification bodies are required under the IFOAM Basic Standards to have lists of generic inputs. The criteria 8.2.1 and 8.2.3 apply to certification bodies who have produced lists of branded (proprietary) products to assist their operators in determining whether they meet the generic list. The criterion 8.2.4 and 8.2.5 are additional requirements applicable when the certification body certifies the product, allowing the operator to indicate the certification status on product, and thereby making a claim to the general public.

- c. the decision making authority;
- d. the length of time for which approval is granted and the requirements for the manufacturer to report changes in composition or other relevant factors;
- e. a clear statement of the nature and guarantee of the approval which shall appear in the listing.

Guidance: *The statement shall include the limitations of the approval - for example, that it does not imply effectiveness of the product.*

8.2.2 The certification body may receive payment for its work in assessment but shall not receive any non-work related payments such as advertising endorsement payments.

8.2.3 Approval systems shall not allow for any indication of the approval on the product itself.

Certification of Brand Name Inputs

8.2.4 Where a certification body issues certificates or allows the use of its certification mark on input products, in addition to the measures in 8.2.1 above, the certification body shall document the inspection and certification procedures. This shall clearly indicate:

- a. the inspection frequency which may be less than annual but no less than once every 3 years;
- b. the requirements other than the composition of the product that will be checked during inspection and evaluated in making the certification decision.

Guidance: *The inspection shall verify compliance with relevant standards such as those related to separation of product and pollution resulting from the process and contamination.*

8.2.5 In cases where the product is not a certified agricultural organic product, the certification mark may only be used when it is accompanied by explanatory language that clarifies the nature of the certification.

8.3 *Group Certification*⁶³

8.3.1 Certification bodies that certify groups that use internal control systems shall have policies and procedures to verify compliance of the group and the individual group members. The policy and procedures shall at least comply with the following criteria.

⁶³ **Explanatory Note Section 8.3:** This system of certification is evolving from the need to devise a system of control and certification of small farmer groups towards a system of combined internal and external control which in situations specified in 8.3.2 appear to be more appropriate than external control alone.

Scope

- 8.3.2** The certification body shall limit the scope of such systems to groups that fulfill the following criteria:
- a. the group shall be constituted of operations with similar production systems;⁶⁴
 - b. large farming units, processing units and traders shall not be included in the inspection arrangements for such groups and shall be inspected by the certification body in accordance with the requirements of 7.5.2. Simple processing and storage units may be included;
 - c. group members shall be in geographic proximity;
 - d. the group shall be large enough and have sufficient resources to support a viable internal control system that assures compliance of individual members with production standards in an objective and transparent manner;⁶⁵
 - e. the group shall have coordinated marketing.

General Requirements

- 8.3.3** The policies and procedures for group certification systems shall require that at least:
- a. the certified entity shall be the group as a whole. This means that individual group members may not use the certification independently (by marketing as individual producers outside of the group);
 - b. an effective and documented internal control system shall be in place;
Guidance: The system shall include a documented management structure of the internal control system.
 - c. documented inspections of all group members for compliance with production standards shall be carried out by the internal control system at least annually.⁶⁶
- 8.3.4** The certification body shall require the management of the group to sign a written contract specifying the responsibilities of the group and of the internal control system. This shall include the requirement that the management obtain signed obligations from all group members to comply with the standards and to permit inspections.

⁶⁴ **Explanatory Note 8.3.2a:** This criterion does not limit the arrangement to farmers. Other operations organized collectively may also be included provided the other criteria in 8.3.2 are met.

⁶⁵ **Explanatory Note 8.3.2d:** The criterion refers to the three factors that the size of the group should ensure - sufficient resources, transparency and impartiality. The certification body must determine whether the group is large enough to satisfy these factors.

⁶⁶ **Explanatory Note 8.3.3c:** This does not mean that those personnel responsible for the internal control must have visited the individual at least once during the year - it means they must have done so with the specific purpose of checking compliance with standards.

8.3.5 The certification body shall ensure that all group members have access to a copy of the standards or the relevant sections of standards presented in a way adapted to their language and knowledge.

8.3.6 The certification body shall maintain and enforce a set of minimum requirements of the group.

Guidance: *The following are considered essential requirements, although a certification body may list additional requirements:*

- a. *there are competent personnel implementing the internal control system;*
- b. *the core documentation is complete, which includes:*
 - *appropriate maps/sketches,*
 - *a complete list of group members,*
 - *farm/field or processing records,*
 - *signed member agreements,*
 - *yield estimates;*
- c. *the internal inspection protocol is described and implemented;*
- d. *a monitored and documented conversion period is in place;*
- e. *a mechanism to remove non-compliant group members from the list is in place and executed;*
- f. *there are procedures to accept new members;*
- g. *risk assessment.*

External Inspection by the Certification Body

8.3.7 Annual (or more frequent) external inspections of the group shall be carried out by the certification body.

8.3.8 The certification body shall assign inspectors who have had specific training on inspection of internal control systems or who can otherwise document competency in such inspection.

8.3.9 The inspection visit shall include an assessment of the internal control system, of its effective application and of compliance with the standards.

8.3.10 The inspection shall include an assessment of the risks to organic integrity within the group itself and the environment in which it functions.⁶⁷

8.3.11 Re-inspection of a sample of group members shall be undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the internal control system.

⁶⁷ **Explanatory Note 8.3.10:** The risk assessment identifies the critical aspects to the functioning of the group, from farm level through processing, transporting, etc. that is under responsibility of the group. The critical aspects must be addressed by the internal standards and internal control system. Risk assessment within the internal standards and internal control system must be regularly updated in relation to each other. For further information reference is made to the IFOAM Guidance Manuals for Group Certification.

8.3.12 The percentage of group members subject to re-inspection shall take into account the results of the risk assessment. The certification body shall specify how it determines the number of group members to be re-inspected.

Guidance: *The IFOAM Accreditation Program accepts the ISO 62 Square root approach, which is based on a simple formula ($x=\sqrt{y}$). The following table is derived from this approach. Note that these are minimum number of re-inspections. Additional inspections may be added and shall be added when necessary.*

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF GROWERS TO BE INSPECTED BY EXTERNAL INSPECTORS			
<i>Number of group members</i>	<i>Normal risk factor 1</i>	<i>Medium risk risk factor 1,2</i>	<i>High risk risk factor 1,4</i>
Minimum	10	12	14
50	10	12	14
100	10	12	14
200	14	17	20
500	22	27	31
1000	32	38	44
2000	45	54	63
5000	71	85	99

Certification bodies shall have written rationale for other approaches to calculating re-inspection rate.

Evaluation of the Internal Control System

8.3.13 In evaluating the internal control system the certification body shall determine whether:

- a. all internal control documentation is in place;
- b. internal inspections of all group members have been carried out at least annually;
- c. new group members are only included after internal inspections, according to procedures agreed with the certification body;
- d. instances of non-compliance have been dealt with appropriately by the internal control and according to a documented system of sanctions;
- e. adequate records of inspections have been maintained by the internal control system;
- f. the group members understand the standards.

8.3.14 Sample inspections (see 8.3.11) shall be carried out with the relevant documents from the internal control at hand, and the methods and results of the internal control shall be compared with the results of the inspection to determine whether the inspections of the internal control system have adequately addressed the compliance of operators. The certification body shall maintain records of sample inspections so as to ensure that over time the inspections are representative of the group as a whole and take into account any previously identified risk.

8.3.15 The evaluation shall include (a) witness audit(s) of internal control inspections.⁶⁸

Group Records

8.3.16 Certification bodies shall have a standardized form to be completed and updated by the group management.

Guidance: *The form shall include identification, name, location (at least on an area map), year of entrance into the certification system, date of last internal and external inspection, number of hectares, cash crops, and yield estimates; in the case of processor type of processing.*

Responsibility and Sanctions

8.3.17 The certification body shall hold the group as a whole (the certified entity) responsible for compliance of all operators.

8.3.18 The certification body shall have a clear sanctions policy in event of non-compliance by the group and/or its members. Failure of the internal control system to detect and act on non-compliances shall invoke sanctions on the group as a whole. This shall also include provisions for withdrawal of certification from the group where the internal control system has been found to be ineffective.

⁶⁸ **Explanatory Note 8.3.15:** (A) witness audit(s) will depend on the size of the group and the number of internal inspectors.

9 ACCEPTANCE OF PRIOR CERTIFICATION

9.1 *General Requirements for all Methods of Acceptance*⁶⁹

Guidance: *These requirements may also be applicable where a certification body operates more than one organic certification program according to different standards. In such cases, the acceptance of products certified under one program for use by operators under the IFOAM accredited program shall be subject to the criteria in so far as a document review to check compliance with the appropriate standards is necessary.*

- 9.1.1 The certification body shall take full responsibility for recognizing the certification as equivalent to its own.
- 9.1.2 Acceptance of prior certification on the basis of the criteria in 9.2 and 9.3 shall only be for acceptance of product for use by the certification body's own operators and shall not confer certification status to the operator supplying the product. Acceptance of prior certification of operators seeking certification status shall only be granted on the basis of the criteria in 9.4.⁷⁰
- 9.1.3 The procedures and responsibility for granting recognition shall be clearly documented.

9.2 *Acceptance of Product Based on Recognition of a Certification Program*

- 9.2.1 The certification body shall maintain a formal register of recognized certification bodies and the recognized programs they operate. The register shall be subject to periodic review and updated when necessary and shall be available on request.

⁶⁹ **Explanatory Note section 9.1:** It is not a requirement of organic certification that all elements of the production chain or that all inputs be certified by the same certification body. Feedstuffs, ingredients in multi-ingredient products, bulk food for pre-packing may all have been certified by a certification body different from that determining the certification of the product at the end or in the middle of the production chain. This section of the criteria establishes the acceptable methods for the acceptance of the prior certification, and the requirements for each of these methods. The general requirements apply to both acceptance based on recognition of a certification body and acceptance based on document review.

⁷⁰ **Explanatory Note 9.1.2:** Criteria 9.2 and 9.3 establish the requirements for permitting use by the certification body's certified operators of a product certified under another certification program. There is a measure of equivalency of procedures, policies and standards. This does not confer certification rights to the original operator. The criteria in 9.4 establish the requirements when an operator certified by another certification body seeks full certification and the associated rights.

9.2.2 Inclusion in the register shall only be on the basis of at least one of the following:

- a. IFOAM Accreditation;
- b. ISO 65 accreditation with an organic certification scope carried out by an accreditation body that participates in a peer review system. The certification body shall verify equivalency of standards and additional aspects of these criteria which are not covered in ISO 65. Certification bodies shall obtain and assess the protocol for acceptance of prior certification practiced by the recognized certification body;⁷¹

Guidance: *The assessment and decision to include a certification body on the register shall be documented. Verification of equivalence shall include elements such as the requirements for:*

- Chain of Custody (section 2.3.2-2.3.5);
 - Contracted Production (section 2.3.6-2.3.11);
 - Inspection Visit Procedures (section 6.3);
 - Parallel and Split Production (section 6.7);
 - Genetically Engineered Products (section 6.7);
 - Group Certification if applicable (section 8.3).
- c. an assessment of equivalency to IFOAM Norms based on a recent and adequate evaluation visit and report conducted either by the certification body granting acceptance or by an appropriate third party. The assessment shall include the equivalency of policies and procedures, relevant standards and the performance of the other certification body. The assessment and decision to include a certification body on the register shall be documented;⁷²
 - d. an equivalent accreditation. Where such accreditation does not include assessment of compliance with the IFOAM Basic Standards, the certification body shall conduct a standards equivalency assessment.

An accreditation can be considered equivalent by either:

- IFOAM has determined that another accreditation is equivalent to IFOAM Accreditation;
- the body conducting IFOAM Accreditation has determined that another accreditation is equivalent to IFOAM Accreditation.

9.2.3 A contract with recognized certification bodies that regulates the obligations of the parties shall be drawn up. The contract shall at least contain the following provisions:⁷³

- a. the scope of the mutual recognition, specifying the applicable programs of the certification bodies and any exclusions;
- b. the procedures and conditions for how a product certified by one party will be accepted by the other;
- c. obligation to inform the other party in case of loss of accreditation or approval by regulatory authorities;
- d. the obligation for parties to inform each other of major program or standards changes and the right to have access to other relevant information.

⁷¹ **Explanatory Note 9.2.2b:** Peer review would mean participation in a formal peer review between accreditation bodies.

⁷² **Explanatory Note 9.2.2c:** Third party means a body that has experience in conducting evaluation of certification bodies, e.g. governments, certification bodies.

⁷³ **Explanatory Note 9.2.3:** This refers to unilateral, bilateral or multilateral contracts.

9.3 Acceptance of Product Based on Document Review

9.3.1 In the absence of an equivalency agreement or contract of recognition, the certification body shall only accept previous certification on a case-by-case review of the product in question.

9.3.2 The basis of the acceptance shall be an assessment of the information contained in the last inspection report, last certification decision and other relevant documents against the standards and certification requirements of the accepting certification body. Acceptance may only be granted if steps have been taken with the other responsible certification body to ensure that the information is accurate, complete and up-to-date and that no subsequent non-conformities have occurred.

***Guidance:** In conducting document review for the purpose of accepting product previously certified by another certification body excluding all those in the register made up under 9.2, the last inspection report shall be obtained for each ingredient and a risk analysis conducted to determine if further reports shall be obtained and reviewed in addition.*

9.3.3 Ingredients that constitute less than 10% of the total weight of the product may be accepted on the basis of being certified by a certification body that has been approved by its government or has been accredited by a national accreditation body for the scope of organic certification. The total of all ingredients accepted on this basis shall not exceed 20% of the total weight of the product.

9.3.4 The procedures and responsibility for assessment and decision making shall be documented and follow the normal certification procedure.

9.3.5 Acceptance of such products shall be for a defined period.

9.4 Acceptance of Applicants Currently Certified by Another Certification Body

9.4.1 Certification of an operator may be transferred from another certification body provided both of the following requirements are met:

- a.** the other certification body is currently under the register indicated in 9.2.2;
- b.** the operator is certified by the other certification body up to the point of transfer.

9.4.2 Where the requirements of 9.4.1 a are not met, certification of the operator may be awarded on the basis of information contained in the current inspection report of the previous certification body. The certification body shall ensure that the standards and requirements for a certification are met. In case of missing information a full inspection of the operator has to be carried out prior to certification.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ **Explanatory Note 9.4.2:** This requires compliance with and not equivalency of the standards.

9.4.3 An operation that meets the conditions in 9.4.1 or 9.4.2 may be certified without prior inspection, provided that an inspection according to the certification body's own standards takes place within 12 months after transfer of certification.

9.4.4 Where the requirements of 9.4.1 or 9.4.2 are not met, acceptance of the operator's current or prior certification shall be limited to the exemption from conversion requirements. Exemption shall only be granted following assessment of relevant historical records, including a recent inspection report, obtained from the other certification body.

9.5 ***Certification Partnerships***

9.5.1 Joint ventures, partnerships and similar forms of cooperation with other certification bodies shall comply with the relevant criteria for acceptance of product (9.1 to 9.4) and/or for subcontracting (1.4.11 to 1.4.12).

9.5.2 The certification body shall take full responsibility for any work done on their behalf by the partner.

9.5.3 The certification decision shall not be subcontracted to the partner.

9.5.4 The arrangement between the certification bodies shall be documented.

IV. PLANT BREEDING DRAFT STANDARDS

Introduction

The IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) are under continuous development. This often results in the development of standards on new areas that are not officially IFOAM Basic Standards. These Draft Standards are intended to be elevated to full standards. They are also intended to guide standard setting organizations in developing their own regionally adapted standards. However, even though encouraged to use them for standard setting purposes, IFOAM Accredited Certification Bodies (ACB's) are not obliged to follow Draft Standards. The revision of the Draft Standards follows the procedures applied for the revision of the IFOAM Basic Standards.

In the past, the Draft Standards were published along with the official IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) in the IFOAM Book of Norms. Some Draft Standards lingered in the IBS for many years before their elevation to full standards was approved or denied by the membership. As a consequence, there have been frequent erroneous references to the Draft Standards as part of the official IBS, which created a host of other problems. Also, sometimes portions of the Draft Standards are integrated into other sections of the IBS, making it very difficult to manage a new area as a Draft Standard, especially when the development of Draft Standards and their adoption as official standards takes more than one IBS revision cycle.

IFOAM considered this in the course of the revision of the 2002 IFOAM Basic Standards and decided to change the formatting and placement of the Draft Standards. They will no longer be published together with the IBS. In general they are only published on the draft standards section of the IFOAM website at www.ifoam.org. As an example, you find below the current Plant Breeding Draft Standards.

Background of the Development of Plant Breeding Draft Standards

The plant breeding standards were part of the “Plant Breeding and Multiplication Draft Standards” section of the 2002 IBS. This section was amended in the course of the revision of the 2002 IBS.

The following plant breeding draft standards represent the last version as published in the Committee Final Draft that was circulated for stakeholder comment in October 2004.

D1 PLANT BREEDING DRAFT STANDARDS

Explanatory Note: This section refers to breeding of organic varieties, not simply use of organic seed.

General Principles

Organic plant breeding and variety development is sustainable, enhances genetic diversity and relies on natural reproductive ability.

Organic plant breeding is a holistic approach that respects natural crossing barriers and is based on fertile plants that can establish a viable relationship with the living soil. Organic varieties are obtained by an organic plant breeding program.

The objectives of organic plant breeding are to maintain and further diversify organic production.

Recommendations

Plant breeders should use breeding methods that are suitable for organic farming. All multiplication practices should be under certified organic management.

Breeding methods and materials should minimize depletion of natural resources.

Standards shall require that:

D1.1 To be an organic variety, only suitable methods of breeding shall be used as listed in appendix D1. All multiplication practices except meristem culture shall be under certified organic management.

APPENDIX D1: DRAFT LIST OF PLANT BREEDING METHODS

	VARIATION INDUCTION TECHNIQUES	SELECTION TECHNIQUES	MAINTENANCE AND MULTIPLICATION
SUITABLE AND PERMITTED FOR ORGANIC PLANT BREEDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination breeding • Crossing varieties • Bridge crossing • Backcrossing • Hybrids with fertile F1 • Temperature treating • Grafting style • Cutting style • Untreated mentor pollen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass selection • Pedigree selection • Site-determined selection • Change in surroundings • Change in sowing time • Ear bed method • Test crossing • Indirect selections • DNA diagnostic methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generative propagation • Vegetative propagation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - partitioned tubers - scales, husks, - partitioned bulbs, brood bulbs, bulbils, offset bulbs etc. - layer, cut and graft shoots - rhizomes • Meristem culture

THE IFOAM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIC ACCREDITATION SERVICE

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What is the IFOAM Accreditation Program?

It is primarily a means of ensuring fair and orderly trade in organic products throughout the world. Accreditation is an assessment of the competence of certification bodies worldwide by confirming whether they meet IFOAM Norms - the Criteria for Certification Bodies and the IFOAM Basic Standards. But it is more than this, much more.

Why should my organization become IFOAM accredited?

There are many reasons but the main ones are:

IFOAM Norms are set by the IFOAM membership. It is a fully democratic structure open to all who work in the field of organic agriculture and production. This means that standards and operating requirements for certification bodies are set by the people who live them day to day and whose livelihood depends upon them. The mechanism is accessible, transparent and global; an elegant example of industry self-regulation.

IOAS is an international accreditation body. In fact, the IOAS is one of a small number of sector specific, international accreditation bodies that have developed a novel solution to international equivalence problems. Equivalence is not an issue when the same accreditation body oversees all certification bodies. If all certification bodies around the world became IFOAM Accredited, or if governments more fully used the services of IOAS, equivalence problems that farmers and processors worldwide experience day to day would become a thing of the past.

IOAS is made up of experts. IOAS is solely committed to organic agriculture, which means that all its resources are applied in this field. Its entire professional staff, its Board and Accreditation Committee members are experts in this field and are drawn from across the world. This means that you will be subject to a rigorous but empathetic evaluation, both technically and culturally.

Isn't government approval of certification bodies enough?

It is true that governments are increasingly interested in regulating the organic sector and that is a good thing as they provide a backdrop of enforcement. Unfortunately, the trend is towards individual countries developing their own standards and approval procedures rather than referencing international standards such as Codex and the IFOAM Norms. Currently, over 40 countries have implemented legislation on organic agriculture and another 20 are in the process of drafting such rules. The subsequent requirement that other countries then demonstrate equivalence to the rules of the importing country is complex and slow and lacks accessibility and transparency. This adds unnecessary bureaucracy and cost to organic products. As a result, most certification bodies now run multiple programs to ensure that products are seen to comply with the many regulations that have been developed. In addition, many certification bodies are being evaluated by several authorities or accreditation bodies; which is further duplicating and increasing the cost of an already complicated system. Ultimately the expansion of organic agriculture and the spread of its benefits is diminished. There is another way.

A partnership with government

IFOAM and the IOAS actively invite government involvement in the Accreditation Program and encourage them to use our expertise and services. Two or more duplicating accreditation systems across the world that do not relate to each other does not make sense. Together however, we can make a powerful team.

Currently, several country regulations require IFOAM Accreditation as their measure of equivalence for import approval. Other regulatory systems also use compliance reports prepared by the IOAS on accredited certification bodies. For instance, IOAS reports that specifically address equivalence with EU Regulation 2092/91, provide a basis for import authorizations issued by the Member State authorities. IOAS is also in discussion with several governments concerning sub-contracting certification body oversight to the IOAS and joint evaluations are already under way with three national accreditation bodies to reduce the burden of evaluation on certification bodies. Within the IOAS organization itself, one Board member and one Accreditation Committee member are already from government structures. We understand governments' caution in working with a small private NGO but we believe it is just a matter of time before common sense prevails. International accreditation is the future.

From where does IOAS get its authority?

The IOAS has not been given its authority; it has earned it.

Over a number of years IFOAM and the IOAS have worked hard to gain the respect of governments, certification bodies and the trade. This has culminated in August 2004 when the US Dept. of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology announced their recognition of IOAS as judged against ISO61 (now ISO17011), with scope of IFOAM Norms and ISO65. Hereafter, IOAS is subject to ongoing surveillance by NIST.

What's involved in the accreditation process?

Documentation from certification bodies is submitted for screening against the IFOAM requirements. Normally the screening will indicate required improvements which need to be rectified by the applicant. An evaluation visit is made by an IOAS evaluator, who then compiles a report. This report is assessed by the IOAS Accreditation Committee which makes the final accreditation decision. Accredited bodies are subject to continuous review through annual surveillance visits and complete re-evaluation every four years. Such surveillance includes office and operator visits and where relevant, visits to foreign offices and operators. The IOAS also has the power to investigate any complaints against an accredited certifier, wherever in the world the issue arises.

How can we demonstrate our accreditation?

An accreditation list is published by the IOAS office and is available from the IOAS website and in publications. This is freely available and indicates details of accreditation scope and countries of activity. IOAS also publish an annual guide to all its accredited certification bodies. As IFOAM Accreditation is primarily a business-to-business guarantee, accredited certifiers are required to indicate on operator and product certificates to which products IFOAM Accreditation applies. Accredited certification bodies may make their status known on their letterheads, and their own publicity material such as web sites and business cards. Since 1999 IFOAM Accredited Certification Bodies have also been able to sublicense the use of the IFOAM Seal to operators. The Seal is the mark of organic integrity around the world and allows consumers to directly see on product packaging the mark of what is becoming the Global Organic Guarantee.

For a complete list of IFOAM Accredited certification bodies and applicants, please check www.ioas.org

For contact information please also refer to the IOAS website at www.ioas.org. There you will find up to date contact information and information about the IOAS Board, the IOAS Accreditation Committee and the IOAS personnel.

About IFOAM

IFOAM's mission is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity. Our goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically sound systems that are based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.

Leading the organic movements worldwide, IFOAM implements the will of its broad based constituency - from farmers' organizations to multinational certification agencies, ensuring the credibility and longevity of organic agriculture as a means to ecological, economic and social sustainability.

Uniting the organic world, IFOAM provides platforms to stakeholders for a wide range of purposes. Through international conferences, committee meetings, and other forums, IFOAM facilitates the ongoing and constructive dialogue about the future and status of organic agriculture.

Assisting its membership, IFOAM implements specific projects that facilitate the adoption of organic agriculture, particularly in developing countries. IFOAM also represents the organic agriculture movements at United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies. IFOAM has observer status or is otherwise accredited by the following international institutions:

- *The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*
- *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*
- *Codex Alimentarius Commission (FAO & WHO)*
- *United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)*
- *The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)*

IFOAM's major aims and activities are:

- *To provide authoritative information about organic agriculture, and to promote its worldwide application.*
- *To exchange knowledge.*
- *To represent the organic movement at international policy making forums.*
- *To establish, maintain and regularly revise the international "IFOAM Basic Standards" as well as the "IFOAM Accreditation Criteria for Certifying Programs",*

published together as the 'IFOAM Norms.'

- *To make an agreed international guarantee of organic quality a reality via the IFOAM Accreditation Program and Seal.*
- *To build a common agenda for all stakeholders in the organic sector, including producers, farm workers, consumers, the food industry, trade and society at large.*

The IFOAM General Assembly serves as the foundation of IFOAM. It elects the World Board for a three-year term. The World Board appoints members to official committees, working groups and task forces based upon the recommendation of the IFOAM membership. IFOAM member organizations also establish regional groups and sector specific interest groups. As of August 2005, IFOAM has 771 members - farmers groups and cooperatives, processors, trade firms, scientific organizations, consulting firms and certifiers - from 108 countries.

In order to achieve its mission and address the complexity of the various components of the organic agricultural movement worldwide, IFOAM has established official committees and groups with very specific purposes, from the development of standards to the facilitation of organic agriculture in developing countries.

In pursuing the mission, IFOAM acts in a fair, inclusive and participatory manner. IFOAM values the diversity of organic agriculture movements all over the world, and strives to be reliable and professional, open and accountable, and innovative towards challenges and opportunities, while demonstrating leadership and vision in its activities.

For further information, please visit www.ifoam.org or contact the IFOAM Head Office:

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The Directory of IFOAM Members and Associates includes a listing of over 700 IFOAM members and associates from 105 countries around the world. The directory is one of IFOAM's most popular publications, a useful and comprehensive reference tool.

To order a copy, visit IFOAM webshop at www.ifoam.org