



ORGANIC CERTIFICATION WHITE PAPER

Organic Certification

Organic certification is a certification process for producers of organic food and other organic agricultural products. In general, any business directly involved in food production can be certified, including seed suppliers, farmers, food processors, retailers and restaurants. Requirements vary from country to country, and generally involve a set of production standards for growing, storage, processing, packaging and shipping that include:

- avoidance of most synthetic chemical inputs (e.g. fertilizers, pesticides, antibiotics, food additives , etc),genetically modified organism, irradiation, and the use of sewage sludge;
- use of farmland that has been free from synthetic chemicals for a number of years (often, three or more);
- keeping detailed written production and sales records (audit trail);
- maintaining strict physical separation of organic products from non-certified products;
- Undergoing periodic on-site inspections.



Providing Organic Certification consulting, Training and Certification facilitation services Across the world.

Purpose of certification

Organic certification addresses a growing worldwide demand for organic food. It is intended to assure quality and prevent fraud, and to promote commerce. For organic producers, certification identifies suppliers of products approved for use in certified operations. For consumers, "certified organic" serves as a product assurance, similar to "low fat", "100% whole wheat" or "no artificial preservatives".

Certification is essentially aimed at regulating and facilitating the sale of organic products to consumers. Individual certification bodies have their own service marks, which can act as branding to consumers—a certifier may promote the high consumer recognition value of its logo as a marketing advantage to producers.



How to get Organic Certification?

FARMING

- Improving the quality of the soil is the basis of organic
- The farms' soil must be free of prohibited substances for a minimum of three years prior to harvesting crops that will be labelled as organic.
- The national organic program m (NOP) encourages farmers to improve soil fertility and rotate crops to naturally increase crop yields and disease resistance.

HARVESTING

- Organic crops are picked, cut and cleaned in the field.
- To ensure organic integrity, certifying these operations is necessary
- Equipment used for harvesting and processing must be cleaned and sanitized in accordance with NOP requirements

PACKAGING

- Packaging may occur in the field, at a facility or where a product is cleaned, canned or bagged and given a product label name or an identification number such as a UPC code
- Organic products are verified to make sure organic integrity has been maintained through the packaging process

PROCESSING

- Organic crops can be processed further with other organic crops or spices
- To ensure the organic integrity of a product has been maintained, a USDA accredited certifying agent such as CERTIFICATION BODY, must inspect these operations to ensure that they are operating according to NOP and certify their compliance.

LABELLING

- Labelling is very important and complex part of NOP.

- How agricultural products have been handled, processed and combined with other ingredients determines how it can be labelled organic.
- 100% Organic= 100% organic ingredients and processing agents.
- Organic = At least 95% organically produced ingredients, with the remaining % from the national list of allowed ingredients.
- Made with organic ingredients = Minimum of 70% organic content with the remaining % of allowed ingredients.

SHIPPING

- Products are shipped to distributors or to retail stores.
- To ensure the continued organic integrity, products must be protected from the contamination by non-organic products.
- Prior to loading and unloading, trucks are verified for shipping practices that maintain integrity, such as the prevention of commingling of organic and nonorganic products and impermeable packaging.

DISTRIBUTION

- Products are compiled from farms, processors or other distributors to one central location in order to distribute products.
- If organic product is repackaged, perhaps to smaller sizes, CERTIFICATION BODY would confirm that organic integrity has been maintained.

TRANSPORTATION

- Similar to shipping, special accommodation must be in place to protect organic products from contamination
- Consumers can look for the USDA organic seal and a certifier's mark such as CERTIFICATION BODY's mark, to ensure that each step in the entire organic supply chain meets the NOP guidelines.

Certification Process

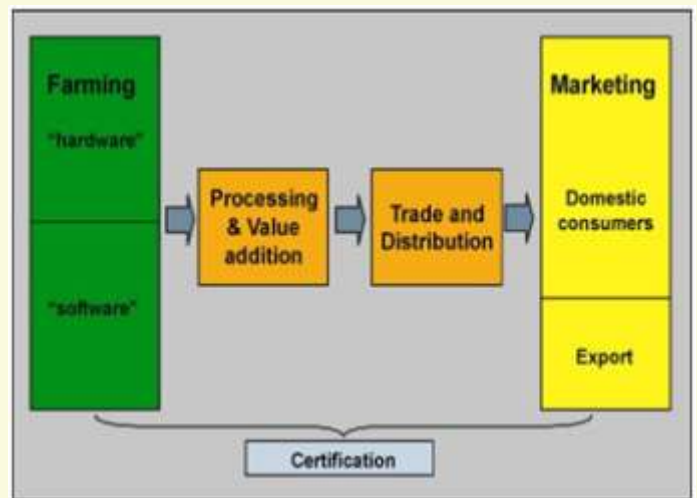
To certify the desired location, the owner/ farmer is typically required to engage in a number of new activities, in addition to normal farming operations:

- Study the organic standards, which cover in specific detail what is and is not allowed for every aspect of farming, including storage, transport and sale.
- Compliance — farm facilities and production methods must comply with the standards, which may involve modifying facilities, sourcing and changing suppliers, etc.
- Documentation — extensive paperwork is required, detailing farm history and current set-up, and usually including results of soil and water tests.
- Planning — a written annual production plan must be submitted, detailing everything from seed to sale: seed sources, field and crop locations, fertilization and pest control activities, harvest methods, storage locations, etc.
- Inspection — annual on-farm inspections are required, with a physical tour, examination of records, and an oral interview.
- Fee — an annual inspection/certification fee (depending on the agency and the size of the operation).
- Record-keeping — written, day-to-day farming and marketing records, covering all activities, must be available for inspection at any time.

In addition, short-notice or surprise inspections can be made, and specific tests (e.g. soil, water, plant tissue) may be requested.

For first-time farm certification, the soil must meet basic requirements of being free from use of prohibited substances (synthetic chemicals, etc) for a number of years. A conventional farm must adhere to organic standards for this period, often, two to three years. This is known as being in transition. Transitional crops are not considered fully organic.

Certification for operations other than farms is similar. The focus is on ingredients and other inputs, and processing and handling conditions. A transport company would be required to detail the use and maintenance of its vehicles, storage facilities, containers, and so forth. A restaurant would have its premises inspected and its suppliers verified as certified organic.



Benefits Of Organic Certification

- Organic Certification helps in building trust between consumers and organic farmers
- The Certification Mark Organic is the only means to differentiate between certified Organic and Conventional foods.
- Labels and certification marks help a consumer to recognize trust worthy organic products easily.
- Organic certification and the logo are important marketing tools.
- Organic Certification helps in getting comparatively better price.



What does Sterling International Consulting. offers for Organic Certification

We the “Sterling International Consulting” are a team of highly skilled and qualified consultants and trainers having vast industrial experience. We partner organizations across the world to implement and achieve Organic certification. Our consulting approach is highly professional, time bound and effective resulting in ease of implementation and adds value to the business processes of the client organization. We provide ORGANIC training, consulting, and implementation and certification services in India, USA, UK, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Europe and African countries.

Lakshy offers comprehensive services that will help you to achieve ORGANIC certification. We provide assistance to

- Thoroughly review organization's existing management practices and programme (gap analysis).
- Identify applicable legal requirements.
- Establish policy and objectives.
- Develop management system programme.
- Identify documentation requirements.
- Train personnel.
- Implement new programs such as internal audit and management review.
- Help you seek certification for ORGANIC.

In addition to consulting (online & onsite), we provide following training:

- Organic overview training
- Developing Organic documentation
- Organic internal auditor training

With a team of highly qualified consultants and trainers having vast industrial experience, we partner organizations across the world to implement and achieve Organic Certification.

Our consulting approach is highly professional, time bound and effective resulting in ease of implementation and adds value to the business processes of the client organization.

Contact us at info@Sterling.com to get your farms/organization/products Organic certified.





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Organic Certification
White Paper



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