



Industry Advice Notice

Title: Organic Produce Certificates		Number: 2014/05
Date issued: 16 July 2014	Date of Expiry: Until Further Notice	
Distributed to: Approved Certifying Organisations	Last Notice in the category: Nil	
Instruction issued under Export Control (Organic Produce Certification) Orders		Contact details: NPGExports@agriculture.gov.au

PURPOSE

1. To remind certifying organisations of the requirements for issuing organic produce certificates.

BACKGROUND

2. The Department of Agriculture is the Australian central competent authority responsible for the export of prescribed goods, including products labelled as organic or biodynamic.
3. The legal instrument for exporting products certified as organic and biodynamic is the *Export Control (Organic Produce Certification) Orders*. The basis under which exports of these goods can occur is compliance with the National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce or importing country requirements.
4. Organic produce certificates provide importing countries with assurances that goods exported from Australia as organic or biodynamic comply with relevant organic/biodynamic standards and are truthfully labelled.
5. Australia currently has third country equivalency recognition with Japan, Taiwan, the European Union and Switzerland. Under these arrangements, certain categories of goods can be exported to these markets provided compliance with the National Standard (with some exclusions) has been demonstrated.

Country	Product to which arrangements apply	Equivalence provisions
European Union	Plant and plant products exported as food (excluding wine and yeast)	National Standard. Prohibits the use of imported organic plant products.
Japan	Plant and plant based products (excluding wine)	National Standard prohibits the use of



		• homeopathic preparations for use in soil fertilising and soil conditioning. • wetting agents whose ingredients are not listed in the Codex "guidelines for the production, processing, labelling and marketing of organically produced foods", table 2 of annex 2. • disodium diphosphate, ammonium phosphate and ammonium sulphate as food additives.
Switzerland	Plant and plant products exported as food (excluding wine and yeast)	National Standard. Prohibits the use of imported organic plant products.
Taiwan	Plant and plant products and animal and animal products, including livestock (excluding offal and bones)	National Standard. Zero tolerance for residues.

CONSIDERATION

6. The department wishes to *reinforce* the operating principles underpinning the issue of organic produce certificates for Australian origin products:
- a) Any declarations or operator certificates should be verified in accordance with a risk-based assessment process.
 - b) Full traceability of organic products should be able to be conducted.
 - c) Organic produce certificates should not be signed after shipments leave Australia unless there is evidence from a government authority of an importing country authorising such action.
 - d) Up to date and accurate records on all shipments of organic products to all overseas markets must be kept.



ACTION

7. Approved certifying organisations must:
 - a) Document and implement a risk management program for:
 - a. verifying authenticity of declarations including full traceability of products;
 - b. certified operators supplying organic products for export.
 - b) Document and implement a system for the issue and reconciliation for organic produce certificates and notify exporters/operators;
 - c) Ensure the end-of-the month report for all organic produce certificates is provided to the department.
 - d) Notify the department when issues affecting market access and equivalency arise.