



Harvest and Market the Crop

Handout 14

Basic Concepts of Organic

Agriculture

Basic Concepts of Organic Agriculture

Accreditation. A procedure by which an authoritative body evaluates and gives a formal recognition that a certification programme is in accordance with the standards of the authoritative body.

Certification. A procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a product, process or service is in conformity with certain standards. Certified organic food products are food products that have been verified to have been produced in accordance with specified standards for organic production and processing.

Certification body. An organization performing certification. Sometimes referred to as the certifier or the certification agency.

Certification label. A label or symbol indicating that compliance with standards has been verified.

Certification programme. A system of rules, procedures and management for carrying out certification. One certification body may execute several different certification programmes. Sometimes referred to as a certification system.

Competent authority. The official government agency having jurisdiction.

Control, control body. Terms commonly used by the trade when referring to inspection and an inspection body.

Inspection. An on-site visit to verify that the performance of an operation is in accordance with specific standards of a certification programme. The **inspector** is the person appointed to undertake the inspection.

Inspection body. The body performing the inspection part of certification. Where a certification body performs its own inspections, the inspection body is identical to the certification body. Sometimes referred to as the inspection agency or the control body.

License. A document issued under the rules of a certification programme, by which a certification body grants a person or body the right to use certificates or certification labels for its products, processes or services in accordance with the rules of the relevant certification programme.

Operator. Anyone carrying out activities covered by a certification programme, for instance farmers, processors, handlers.

Standards. Documented agreements containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines or definitions, to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose. Standards relating to organic food products are production and/or processing standards describing, prescribing, allowing or prohibiting procedures and materials, as well as standards for certification and labelling.

Subcontractor. Anyone carrying out activities covered by a certification programme, for instance farmers, processors, handlers, on behalf of an operator.

EN 45010.1* A European standard for accreditation developed by CEN and CENELEC.

EN 45011.* A European standard for certification developed by CEN and CENELEC.

ISO/IEC Guide 61.* An international guide to accreditation developed by the international standardization organizations ISO and IEC.

ISO/IEC Guide 65.* An international guide to certification developed by ISO and IEC.