



National Organic Program

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table

Consumers Trust the Organic Label

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October 2011



El Programa Nacional Organico

La integridad organica de la finca a la mesa
Los consumidores tienen confianza en la
etiqueta organica

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National Organic Program – Major Responsibilities

1. Develop and implement National Organic Standards for the labeling and sale of organic agricultural products.
2. Accredite organic certifying agents. Ensure certifiers implement quality verification systems throughout the world.
3. Provide support to the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), which makes recommendations regarding allowed and prohibited substances in organic agriculture.
4. Establish and monitor organic trade agreements.
5. Investigate complaints and enforce the National Organic Standards.



El Program National Organica – Responsibilidades mayores

1. Desarrollar y implementar las reglas organicas de USDA para la etiquetas y ventas de los productos organicos.
2. Accreditar los agencias de certificacion organica. Asegurar que los certificadoros implementar sistemas de calidad en todo el mundo.
3. Suportar la trabajo de al Junta de las normas organicas nacionales (NOSB).
4. Establacer y controlar acuerdos de comercio organico entre USDA y otros paises.
5. Investigar quejas y hacer cumplir las reglas organicas del USDA.



USDA Organic Regulations

1. Crops – includes requirements for organic seeds
2. Wild crops
3. Livestock
4. Handling – post harvest, distribution, processing
5. Labeling
6. Certification
7. Accreditation
8. National List
9. Compliance



Las reglas organicas de USDA

1. Cultivos – incluyendo requisitos para las semillas organicas
2. Los cultivos de silvestre
3. Ganaderia
4. Despues la cosecha, la alimental procesada
5. Etiquetas
6. Certificacion
7. Accreditation
8. La Lista Nacional
9. Conformidad



Seeds and Planting Stock Practice Standard – 7 CFR 205.204

1. The organic producer must use organic seeds.
2. Nonorganic seeds, untreated seeds may be used if organic seeds are not commercially available.
3. Commercially available is the ability to obtain organic seeds in an appropriate form, quality, or quantity as determined by the certifying agent in review of the organic system plan.
4. Seeds may be treated with natural (nonsynthetic) substances or synthetic substances on the National List.



Treated Seeds

- Use of seeds treated with prohibited substances is prohibited.
- Inspectors must report, lack of reporting use of treated seeds could lead to loss of accreditation.
- Use of treated seeds leads to loss of organic status for 3 years.



Normas de practicar para semillas – 7 CFR 205.204

1. Es un requisito para usar semillas organicas.
2. Las semillas que no estan organicas se puede usar cuando no hay semillas organicas en comercio disponible. Las semillas no se puede tratar con pesticidas, fungicidas o otras materiales prohibidas.
3. El comercio disponible es la habilidad de obtener semillas organicas en la cantidad, la calidad, y la forma apropiaba. La agencia de certificacion determine si pueda semillas organicas disponible.
4. Se puede tratar las semillas con materiales naturales o materiales que estan adentro La Lista Nacional.



Draft guidance – June 2011

The following considerations could be acceptable justifications for sourcing non-organic seeds and planting stock.

- **Form Considerations:** Site-specific agronomic or marketing characteristics required by the operation. Examples of these characteristics may include, but are not limited to: number of days until maturity and harvest; color, flavor, moisture, chemical, or nutrient profiles of the variety of the harvested crop; weight or size of harvested crop; disease and pest resistance of any part of the plant; ambient temperature range tolerance of plant, height of plant; and the plants' place in the crop rotation.



Consejos de propuesta – Junio 2011

Razones para no usar semillas organicas.

La forma: Caracteristicas agronomos y del mercado.

- Incluyendo numero de dias entre sembrar y cosechar;
- La color y sabor de la cosecha;
- Resistancia de las plagas;
- La produccion



Quality and quantity

- **Quality Considerations:** Examples may include, but are not limited to, germination rate of the seed; presence of weed seeds in the seed mix; shelf life and stability of the seeds; and disease and pest resistance.
- **Quantity Considerations:** i.e. Are the quantities available provided in sufficiently large or small amounts given the scale of the operation?



Calidad y Cantidad

- **Calidad:** Ratos de germinacion; porcentaje de las semillas zacates; tiempo de caducidad;
- **Cantidad:** Hay bastante semillas en cantidades grandes o pequenas para el tamaño de la finca.



- Certified operations should contact a minimum of three seed, or planting stock sources to ascertain the availability of organic seed or planting stock.
- Sources should include companies that offer organic seeds and planting stock.
- Documentation regarding this search should be maintained as a part of recordkeeping.



- Minimo de tres contactos
- Se necesita incluyendo companias que se vende semillas organicas
- Se necesita documentos que verificar la busca para semillas organicas.



Seed treatments

Seed Treatments or Preparations: The application of materials or processes to seeds to optimize their performance through: 1) improving germination rates; 2) optimizing ease of handling and accuracy of planting; 3) eradicating seedborne or protecting from soilborne pathogens; or 4) providing nutrients or microbial stimulants.



Materiales para proteger semillas



Allowed seed treatments

1. Peracetic acid is specifically allowed for use in disinfecting seed per § 205.601(a)(6).
2. Hydrogen chloride, is specifically approved as a seed treatment for use on organic seeds on § 205.601(n), and only for the delinting of cotton seed for planting.
3. Nonsynthetic substances that are not prohibited are allowed as seed treatments.



Allowed seed treatments

1. Chlorine materials may be used as per 205.601(a)(2) provided residual levels of chlorine in water in contact with seed do not exceed the maximum residual disinfectant limit under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
2. Other synthetic substances listed for appropriate uses in § 205.601 (e.g. for pest or disease control, or as a soil or plant amendment). Includes aqueous potassium silicate, fixed coppers, copper sulfate, hydrated lime, hydrogen peroxide, lime sulfur, elemental sulfur, potassium bicarbonate.



USDA

ORGANIC



Harmonization

- Standards –
 - limited differences
- Certification requirements –
 - Inspection during transition, Organic System Plans
- Accreditation systems –
 - Private vs. government oversight
- Enforcement



Process

- Side by side comparison
- On-site assessments to review implementation of accreditation, certification, and enforcement provisions
- Discuss and resolve differences
- Establish agreement

Benefits of Equivalence



- ❑ Results in organic producers having expanded market access without additional costs—especially important for small producers who cannot afford multiple certifications
- ❑ Reduces direct oversight burden on competent authorities
- ❑ Expanded market access encourages increased production



Benefits of Equivalence



- ❑ Encourages harmonization
- ❑ Expands communication between foreign governments and U.S. regulatory agencies
- ❑ Promotes and supports both country's organic regulations around the world



U.S.-Canada Determination of Equivalence

- ❑ **First equivalence agreement, signed June 17, 2009**
 - **USDA and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) signed the determination, deeming the two countries' organic production and handling standards equivalent**



Significance



- ❑ The determination means that agricultural products certified in accordance with the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards are eligible for sale as organic in Canada. Conversely, agricultural products certified in accordance with the Canadian Organic Regime (COR) may be sold as organic in the U.S.



Procedures for Equivalence



- Contact USDA in writing with request**
- Submit side-by-side comparison of regulations**
- Provide detailed description of conformity assessment procedures**



Negotiation Procedures



- U.S. Team: Led by USTR, with NOP and FAS**
- Conduct initial meeting**
- Several rounds of technical negotiations on differences**
- Peer review audits**

Negotiation Procedures



- ❑ Countries determine that regulations and procedures “*meet the same objectives*”
- ❑ Once agreement reached, compose exchange of letters
- ❑ Establish protocols and communication procedures:
 - Technical Working Group
 - Steering Committee

Current and Future Negotiations



- ❑ **EU – Discussions began in November 2009**
 - **Peer review audits ongoing**

