



MPI Official Organic Assurance Programme

Summary of the changes in the revised requirements documents

25 November 2019

Ministry for Primary Industries' (MPI's) consultation on proposed changes to Official Organic Assurance Programme (OOAP) for export is complete. This paper provides a high-level summary of the changes that are being made.

A review of the OOAP standards began in 2012. MPI worked closely with Third Party Agencies (TPAs) between 2014 and 2016 to develop initial drafts. Public consultations on the requirements for recognised agencies and persons occurred in 2014, and again from December 2017 to February 2018, and for operators (including the technical rules of production) in May 2019.

<p>Currently the OOAP requirements are contained in five key standards documents:</p>	<p>These documents have been reformatted and amalgamated into two documents, now referred to as Requirements:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OOAP Standard OP1 – Accreditation, Recognition, and Performance Measurement Criteria for Third Party Agencies and their Personnel (2005) • OOAP Standard OP2 – Third Party Agency Responsibilities (2005) • OOAP Standard OP3 – Registration and Performance Measurement Criteria for Operators (2005) • OOAP Standard OP3 Appendix 2 – Technical Rules for Organic Production (2011) • OOAP Standard OP3 Appendix 2 chapter 8a – Technical Rules for Organic Wine (2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic Export Requirement: Operator Production Rules (OER: OPR); and • Organic Export Requirement Recognised Agencies and Persons (OER: RAP).

Please note that these requirements apply only to the export of organic products under the OOAP to markets where MPI has negotiated an organic trading arrangement (European Union, Japan, Switzerland, Taiwan and the United States of America, and China (pending implementation)). These requirements do not apply to organic products exported to markets not covered by the OOAP or to organic products sold on the domestic New Zealand market.

Transition periods will be provided for agencies and for operators to amend their internal quality systems and organic management plans to accommodate the changes, and demonstrate compliance to some new requirements. Following the

date the new requirements come into effect, agencies will have six months, and operators will have 21 months, to demonstrate compliance.

Revision of the OOAP (export) requirements and ongoing consideration of a regulation for organics

The revision of the export requirements under the OOAP has occurred in parallel with a broader discussion considering regulation for organics. These are different projects, and should not be confused.

The OOAP remains an export focused programme, and does not affect a trading partner's ability to export organic products for sale on the New Zealand domestic market.

The OOAP covers imported ingredients and other inputs only in as much as they are used in the production or processing of New Zealand organic products for export with an official organic assurance.

Policy work on a regulation for organics is on-going. Any impact of a revised regulatory regime for organic products on the current OOAP will be considered at the appropriate time. There will be opportunities for comments through both domestic and international consultations.

Enquiries about the regulation policy work should be directed to OrganicsConsultation@mpi.govt.nz

Enquiries about the OOAP (export) requirements should be directed to organics@mpi.govt.nz

Summary of changes to both requirements documents: Recognised Agencies and Persons, and Operator Requirements

Layout

The layout of the requirement now follows the same layout used in other MPI requirements documents.

The new MPI template is designed to clearly differentiate between requirements and guidance.

Requirements are mandatory, and must be complied with. Requirements include things that may be done, provided certain conditions are met. Guidance material is found in a box, and is clearly marked “Guidance”, and includes additional information, interpretation, suggestions, and hyperlinks. Guidance is included to help operators or recognised agencies comply with the requirements. Operators do not need to demonstrate they have complied with guidance; and MPI does not require recognised agencies to verify that operators have met guidance.

Definitions

Definitions have been aligned with those used across other MPI programmes (both legislative and non-regulatory). New definitions that either were missing in the current standards, or have become necessary as a result of changes to content have been included. Some of the currently used definitions have been amended for readability, and some of the terms have been replaced, although the definitions remain essentially the same.

For consistency MPI, decided to align the terminology of some recognised person roles in other MPI administered programmes. The recognised person role of “OMP reviewer” has been replaced with “OMP evaluator.” This role evaluates the Organic Management Plan against the OER: OPR.” MPI also changed the “assurance verifier” role to “export certificate verifier” and updated the definition to better reflect the purpose of this role being verification of operator requests for an export certificate, and declaring the eligibility of a consignment for an export certificate under the OOAP to MPI.

Linkage with other legislative requirements

Cross references to other New Zealand requirements have been fixed and clarified. Products must comply with all New Zealand’s regular export requirements for the product type before they can be considered eligible for an official organic assurance. Technical rules that are already required (or restricted/prohibited) under New Zealand legislation are (largely) not replicated in the revised text.

Linkage with the organic Overseas Market Access Requirements (OMARs)

The suite of documents that makes up the Official Organic Assurance Programme will continue to include OMARs. There is an OMAR for each market which summarises in practical terms the arrangements MPI has negotiated with that trading partner. OMARs will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to align with the revised Organic Export Requirements and will be published in due course. OMARs include specific requirements on scope (what product types are included), use of logos, restrictions or prohibitions on use of inputs or certain technical activities, the allowances for imported ingredients, and what consignment based arrangements are necessary.

Summary of changes in the requirements for Recognised Agencies and Persons

The Organic Export Requirement: Recognised Agencies and Persons (OER: RAP) has been amalgamated from the current standards: “Accreditation, Recognition, and Performance Measurement Criteria for Third Party Agencies and their Personnel - Organic Products”, and parts of “Third Party Agency Responsibilities – Organic Products”. The OER: RAP covers the requirements for recognised agencies (MPI recognised organic certification bodies, currently called “Third Party Agency (TPA)”) that verify compliance with the OOAP requirements.

The OER:RAP has been extensively reformatted. It includes requirements that were incorporated into the OOAP framework, but were not formally incorporated into the current standards rather promulgated to TPAs via letters and other communications. These requirements reflect changes in the equivalent standards of our trading partners, and some are as the result of trading partner reviews of the OOAP to ensure continued equivalence with their requirements.

Amendments include:

- moving contractual clauses that are in the current standards to a stand-alone contract for services between MPI and recognised agencies;
- allowing accreditation to ISO 17065 as an alternative to ISO 17020;
- allowing agencies to use the Key Technical Person model as an alternative to the current performance-based model;
- Clarifying the process and requirements for being recognised as a recognised agency or person, and how to maintain and continue that recognition;
- clarifying how ongoing conformance of agencies and persons will be monitored;
- introducing options and processes for managing poorly performing agencies and persons;
- introducing a review process for appealing MPI decisions;
- clarifying expectations for sampling for residue testing of products,

- clarifying expectations for random and unannounced verification audits of operators.

Summary of changes in the administrative requirements for Operators

Administrative-type requirements for operators are now all together in one requirements document. These include requirements for registration with a recognised agency, Organic Management Plans (OMPs), record keeping, traceability, subcontracting, importing, exporting, and reporting. This makes it easier for operators to find, and understand, what they can do, and for recognised agencies to know what they must verify. Of particular note:

- the requirements for what must be included in an operators OMP have been revised and collated into one section; and
- The requirements for record keeping have been revised and presented in one section.

Split production

Split production (managing only part of an operation ‘organically’) is a high risk activity. The way operators need to document how they are managing this risk has been substantively reformatted. There are now specific requirements in the sections for organic management plans, record keeping, and in section for each production scope.

Conversion labelling

The currently OOAP rules allow for the export of products labelled as “in conversion”, where the importing market permits this. In consultation with the recognised agencies, and to align with some trading partners requirements, this allowance has been removed.

In a limited number of cases, in-conversion inputs may still be used in the preparation of products to be exported with an official organic assurance, provided certain conditions are met.

Imports

The requirements on imported organic products used in products produced for export under the OOAP have been simplified. Detailed rules will be included in the OMARs , as the rules differ depending on the destination market.

Summary of changes in the requirements for Operators concerning the technical rules of production and processing

General

The general requirements section of the old standard has been substantively rearranged. Generic requirements applicable to all production and processing/handling scopes are now all together in one place. The new 'general' section includes requirements for using inputs, pest management, cleaning and sanitising activities, handling and packaging, general prohibitions, and emergency pest of disease treatment.

Plants, mushrooms and wild harvest

Overall, the requirements for plant production are largely unchanged, however the requirements for conversion and seed for planting have been clarified. The allowances and conditions for using seed-for-planting that has not been produced in accordance with the requirements have been clarified.

A new subsection has been created for mushroom production (3.8), moving this out of plant production.

A new subsection has been created for wild harvest (3.3), moving this out of plant production. Clarification on what is included and excluded from the scope of wild harvest has been provided

Livestock production

The requirements for livestock have been reformatted. Requirements applying to all species are presented first, followed by species specific requirements.

The requirements for livestock health management has undergone substantive review and restructure. In part, this is to ensure that the OOAP requirements align with, and do not contradict legislated requirements under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act (ACVM) 1997 or Animal Welfare Act 1999. In the text on managing livestock health, care has been taken to separate preventative activities that contribute to healthy livestock, and activities that involve intervention, especially with substances regulated under the ACVM Act.

Apiary production

The requirements for producing bee products are largely unchanged, with the exception of clarifying MPI involvement in decision-making on allowing supplementary feeding. Currently, requests to supplementary feed hives had to be approved by MPI in all cases. In the new requirements, recognised agencies will be able to make this decision during the dormant (winter) season. If hives must be fed during the active (summer) season due to an adverse event declared by the Minister for Primary Industries, application must continue to be made to MPI if

the organic status of the hive is to be retained once the adverse event has passed.

New sections for Aquaculture and Algae

Requirements for organic aquaculture products have been included under the OOAP. Initially the requirements will cover bivalve molluscan shellfish (bivalves) and algae (seaweed) only. Other aquaculture species may be considered for inclusion at a later date.

Note however, it will not be possible to begin exporting organic aquaculture or algae products with an official organic assurance, until MPI has negotiated (and secured) a scope extension to the access arrangements with each trading partner first.

Processing and handling

This section was previously titled “Processed Foods”. This change better reflects the scope of the OOAP which includes more than just food, and that processing covers more than just manufacturing. The definition of processing has also been revised to capture the full range of products under the OOAP.

As with the livestock requirements, general processing requirements have been provided, followed by specific requirements for different product types.

The specific requirements for most foods have been reformatted, and the requirements for using different food additives and processing aids have been clarified.

Specific new requirements have been included for processing and handling yeast used as food or feed; and algae products.

Alcoholic beverages

Currently the requirements for different alcoholic beverages are found in two separate documents. The requirements for grape wine were published in a standalone chapter. The requirements for other alcoholic beverages (beer, cider, mead, etc.) are included in the chapter on processing. These are now all together in one section (3.10).

Permitted Inputs

A comprehensive review of the tables of inputs was completed. Each input was carefully checked against the following sources:

- a) relevant New Zealand legislative requirements,
- b) the regulated standards of trading partners with whom we have an agreement, and

c) the Codex Organic Guidelines.

The inputs that can be used in organic production and processing are generally consistent with relevant trading partner standards and Codex. All inputs must be legally allowed to be used in New Zealand before any consideration can be given as to whether they can be used in organic production and processing. Moreover, most inputs can only be used in accordance with the conditions for use allowed in New Zealand.

Note however, the organic OMAR for each trading partner will continue to list any inputs a trading partner has asked that New Zealand either prohibit, or restrict, usage of in products exported to that market.

Inputs in Schedule 1 (currently Table 1) for fertilisers and soil conditioners, and Schedule 2 (currently Table 2) for crop protection have been listed in alphabetical order, and the wording of the conditions have been clarified for better understanding. In some cases a new condition has been introduced for operators to demonstrate that they have adequate plans for managing microbiological risks. Previously, only risks from chemical contamination were captured. The presentation of the list of trace elements and micronutrients has been simplified. The allowances or limits for some inputs have been tightened, e.g. the maximum of copper that can be used as a crop protection product.

Schedule 3 (livestock feed) has been restructured and re-formatted. The tables for feed materials from plant and animal origin have been deleted, as the conditions for using these types of inputs are now covered by generic clauses in the requirements for livestock feed. Feed ingredients of mineral origin, feed additives and processing aids, and trace elements have been reviewed against the ACVM Act requirements for oral nutritional compounds.

Schedule 4 (food additives and processing aids) has been extensively revised for clarity and ease of finding information. There are now ten tables in this schedule, listing food additives and processing aids for:

- foods other than alcoholic beverages or yeast,
- yeast,
- organic grape wine,
- alcoholic beverages not including grape wine or beer, and
- beer.

In addition to this reformatting, all inputs currently listed as 'food additives' or as 'processing aids' have been carefully checked against the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code to ensure the permitted uses align.

Schedule 5 (animal stocking rates and housing space) has been revised for readability.

Summary table of inputs that have been added or deleted

The following table lists the inputs that have been added or removed following revision as discussed above. This summary does not capture inputs that have been reclassified (e.g. moved into a different sub-table), or for which conditions and restrictions have been amended.

Schedule	Added	Removed
Schedule 1: Fertilisers and soil conditioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg shells • Mollusc waste • Chitin • Naturally occurring organisms 	
Schedule 2: Substances for crop protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aluminium silicate (Kaolin) • Bentonite • Carbon dioxide • Chitin • Chlorella (spirulina) extracts • Diatomaceous earth • Fat from animals • Laminarin • Maltodextrin • Mineral powders • Natural acids • Ryania • Sabadilla • Sea water • Sodium bicarbonate • Sugar • Whey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gelatine • Pyrethroids • Paraffin oil
Schedule 3: Feed materials and feed additives	<p>New silage additive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bacteria <p>New table: Flavouring compounds</p> <p>New emulsifiers, stabilisers, thickeners and gelling agents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guar gum • Sodium aluminosilicate (Zeolite) <p>New preservative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sodium formate 	<p>Previously included in the list of "Feed materials from mineral origin":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calcium gluconate • Defluorinated monocalcium phosphate • Lithotamnion and maerl • Sodium carbonate <p>Previously included in the list of "Trace elements":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sodium iodide • Calcium iodate, hexahydrate • Basic copper (II) carbonate, monohydrate • Ferrous (II) carbonate • Ammonium molybdate, • Zinc carbonate • Copper (II) oxide <p>Previously included in the list of "Certain products used in animal nutrition"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saccharomyces cerevisiae <p>Previously included in the list of "Binders, anti-caking agents and coagulants"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E551b Colloidal silica • E562 Sepiolite • E599 Perlite
Schedule 4: Food additives and processing aids	<p>New processing aids for organic grape wine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato starch • Chitosan <p>New food additive for beer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caramel 	<p>Previously included in the list of food additives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helium • Sodium ascorbate • Sodium nitrite • Potassium nitrate <p>Previously included in the list of processing aids:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazelnut shells