

Reducing the conversion period

Proposal for the implementing rules of the new organic regulation

24th October 2007

1. Background

Normal conversion periods for land are given in Annex I.A. of Regulation 2092/91 and will be transferred into the Implementing Rules of the New Regulation.

This paper aims to clarify under which circumstances these given conversion periods can be shortened.

The conversion period is the time during which an operation:

- is subject to the inspections system,
- is under organic management, but
- has not yet achieved full organic status.

The inspection system is deemed to start at the point when the operator applies for certification under the inspection system.

2. Minimum requirements for reduction of conversion period

2.1 Arable land and permanent crops

Annex I.A. 1.2. a) and b) give conditions under which a previous time period may be considered retroactively as part of the conversion period.

When the conditions outlined in 1.2. a) are complied with for at least 24 months, we propose that the conversion period can be reduced by 12 months.

When the conditions outlined in 1.2. b) are complied with for at least 36 months, we propose that the conversion period can be reduced to zero. However, the proof necessary to establish that the conditions have been complied with must at least include:

- a written contract which describes the provisions for farming or other management (e.g. nature protection schemes, subsidy schemes with defined standards which the operator has applied for), and
- an inspection system that is operating for these schemes.

2.2 Animals

For the conversion of animals, after the land has been converted in accordance with Annex 1.A.1 (including the above reductions where relevant), then conversion times for the given species, listed in Annex I.B. 2.2.1, should be added. This means that there are no reductions in the conversion periods of the animals themselves, except under simultaneous conversion when they can happen simultaneously.