

**FINAL REVISION DRAFT of the 2002
IFOAM Accreditation Criteria**

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FOR STAKEHOLDER MOTIONS**

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III. IFOAM Accreditation Criteria for Bodies Certifying Organic Production and Processing

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Introduction

~~This is the 4th edition of the Criteria, which~~ The IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC) were first approved by the General Assembly in 1992. IFOAM seeks to continually improve these criteria. Revision occurs ~~every few years~~ periodically and includes opportunity for input by interested parties. ~~The current edition was distributed for public comment on two occasions.~~

The revision process for these Criteria is described in IFOAM Policies. Generally speaking, the IAC establishes requirements for conduct of organic certification by the certification body, including procedures and practices of the operator that the certification body must verify.

In addition to these criteria, IFOAM has established Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing. First published in 1980 and subsequently subject to continuous review, the IFOAM Basic Standards have been adopted as the basis for national, regional and international organic standards throughout the world.

The IFOAM Criteria together with the IFOAM Basic Standards establish the requirements for certification bodies seeking IFOAM accreditation. The standards used by the certification body in their IFOAM accredited certification program at least need to meet the IFOAM Basic Standards. IFOAM accreditation is carried out under contract by the International Organic Accreditation Service Inc. (IOAS), a US based company. The structure of the IOAS and procedures for IFOAM accreditation are laid down in the IFOAM Accreditation Program Operating Manual published by the IOAS. More detailed policies and procedures are set down in the IOAS Quality Manual, ~~and the IOAS Policy Manual.~~

The criteria have been ~~strictly~~ based upon the requirements in ISO/IEC GUIDE 65:1996(E) “General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems”. However, organic certification is certification of a process and not a product and this has required some adaptation. In addition these criteria include specific requirements concerning issues confronted by a certification body operating within the organic sector.

The Criteria require that the certification body has an effective quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of the Criteria and which is appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed. It is recognized that new programs, and programs operating in economically less favored areas may have less developed quality systems. It is also recognized that cultural, traditional and social conditions may result in varying solutions. Some example of situations where maybe varying solutions could be applied are:

- Where the criteria have clearly been developed for organizations with large numbers of staff or several offices.
- Where the criteria have clearly been developed for certification bodies with large numbers of operators or more complex operations.
- Where the criteria become particularly onerous due to cultural or developmental reasons, such as poor communication systems or low levels of literacy.

Regulations or other official demands may also make it difficult or even illegal to fulfill a certain criterion. In such cases it is the prerogative of the accreditation body to determine the acceptability of the certification body’s alternative solution, based on whether the integrity of organic production and certification is maintained, and whether the purpose of the specific criterion is met.

~~The~~ Some criteria are accompanied by flexible requirements, called Guidance, and/or Explanatory Notes. The Guidance are named as such and directly follow the criterion they are

~~referring to. The Explanatory Notes are incorporated as footnotes to the criterion they are referring to. are accompanied followed by guidance notes which provide further explanation of the requirements. Sections with corresponding guidance notes are marked with an asterisk (*).~~

~~These guidance notes are provided to explain the meaning and purpose of the criteria, and to provide background information to explain the context of a particular section of criteria or a particular criterion. In short, they are provided aim to enhance understanding of the criteria.~~

~~Certification bodies are required to implement the criteria in line with the Guidance notes unless they can show that the same effect can be shown to have has been achieved by alternative methods. The ~~g~~ A Guidance notes does not constitute a binding interpretations or remove an accreditation body's rights and responsibilities to exercise its judgment in applying the criteria.~~

~~The Explanatory Notes explain the meaning and purpose of the criteria, and provide background information to explain the context of a particular section of the criteria or a particular criterion. In short, they aim to enhance understanding of the criteria.~~

~~The Criteria require that the certification body has an effective quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of the Criteria and which is appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed. It is recognized that new programs, and programs operating in economically less favored areas may have less developed quality systems. It is also recognized that cultural, traditional and social conditions may result in varying solutions. Regulations or other official demands may also make it difficult or even illegal to fulfill a certain criterion. In such cases it is the prerogative of the accreditation body to determine the acceptability of the certification body's alternative solution, based on whether the integrity of organic production and certification is maintained, and whether the purpose of the specific criterion is met.~~

~~In order to facilitate usage of the Guidance Notes, Sectionssections of the Criteria with corresponding guidance notes are marked with the note: **See also guidance notes.*~~

~~The current version of the IAC and the guidance notes can also be found is located on IFOAM's website.~~

Definitions

The following definitions apply within the context of these criteria:

Acceptance of Prior Certification: The procedure by which a certification body accepts the certification of a product by another certification body, thereby enabling the use of or further processing by the certification body's own operators.

Accreditation: Procedure by which an authoritative body gives a formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific tasks.

Appeal: Request by an operator for reconsideration of any adverse decisions made by the certification body related to its desired certification status.

Certificate of eConformity: Document issued by a certification body, declaring that an operation is in conformity with the organic production or processing standards.

Certification: The procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a clearly identified process has been methodically assessed such that adequate confidence is provided that specified products conform to specified requirements.

Certification ~~body~~Body: The body that conducts organic certification.

Certification Mark: A certification body's sign, symbol or logo which identifies product(s) as being certified to the requirements of a program operated by that certification body.

Certification Program: System operated by a certification body with its own defined requirements and procedures and management for carrying out certification of conformity

Certification Scope: The parameters defining the certification granted including the product or product types certified, where applicable the acreage and the applicable standards and certification program.

Chain of Custody: The concept that all relevant steps in the production chain including the growing, handling, processing and other processes detailed in section 2.3 of these criteria, have been inspected or certified as appropriate.

Complaint: An objection to the policies, procedures or performance of the certification body. A complaint may also be an objection to the performance or activities of a certified party lodged with the certification body by a third party.

Conflict of ~~interest~~Interest: The situation where an individual's capacity for objectivity is put at risk by financial or personal interests in conflict with their interest in conducting fair and impartial inspection or certification.

Contracted Production or Processing: The utilization of third parties by the operator for performing specific production or processing tasks

Conversion ~~period~~Period: The time between the start of the organic management and the certification of crops and/or animal husbandry as organic.

Declaration of ~~interest~~Interest: A declaration of personal and/or commercial interests in the organic industry made by those involved in the certification process to enable determination of an individual's objectivity.

Dual or multiple ~~certification~~Certification: Certification of an operation by two (dual) or more (multiple) certification bodies.

Evaluation: Systematic assessment based on all relevant information obtained in order to make a decision. With reference to a certification decision this includes, but is not limited to, the inspection.

Exception: Permission granted to an operator by a certification body to be excluded from the need- to comply with ~~normal~~ requirements of the standards. Exceptions are granted on the basis of clear criteria, with clear justification and for a limited time period only.

Genetic Engineering: A set of techniques from molecular biology (such as recombinant DNA) by which the genetic material of plants, animals, micro-organisms, cells and other biological units may be altered in ways or with results that could not be obtained by methods of natural reproduction or natural recombination.

Governing Board: Committee group or person with overall legal responsible for the affairs of the certification body.

Group Certification: Certification of an organized group of small-scale producers with similar farming and production systems. The criteria for group certification apply only to such groups when the certification applies to the group as a whole and when special inspection arrangements have been applied.

IFOAM Basic Standards: International standards for standards of organic production and processing, established by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements.

~~**Input manufacturing:** Manufacturing of production or processing inputs.~~

Input/~~O~~output ~~reconciliation~~Reconciliation: An audit that assesses the output of organic product against the supply of ingredients or in the case of trading operations, the volume of sales against the volume of purchases.

Inspection Body: Body that performs inspection services on behalf of a certification body.

Inspection: Visit on site to verify that the performance of an operation is in accordance with the production or processing standards.

Inspector: Person appointed by a certification body or by an inspection body to undertake the inspection of an operator.

Internal Control System: Part of a documented quality assurance system that allows the external certification body to delegate the annual inspection of individual group members to an identified body/unit within the certified ~~operator~~ operation.

Internal Audit: A systematic periodic review and assessment of the objectives and performance of a program that is undertaken by the certification body itself.

License: An agreement or contract that grants a certified operator the right to use certificates or certification marks in accordance with the ~~rules~~ requirements of that program.

Non-Conformity: An instance where a particular standard is not being met.

Operator: An individual or business enterprise, responsible for ensuring that products production meets, and, ~~if applicable,~~ continues to meet, the requirements on which the certification is based.

Parallel Production: Any production where the same unit is growing, breeding, handling or processing the same products both in a certified organic quality and a not certified or non-organic quality. A situation with “organic and “in conversion“ production of the same product is also parallel production.

Pre-Assessment: An inspection for the purpose of assessment, that is not intended to result in a certification decision.

Precedent: A certification decision concerning a new situation or set of circumstances that may serve to guide future decisions.

~~**Product Category:** A type of production defined in certification scope, such as crop production, input manufacturing, or aquaculture.~~

Quality System: Documented procedures which are established, implemented, and periodically audited to assure that production, handling, management, certification, accreditation and other systems meet specified requirements and outcomes by following standardized protocols.

Sanctions: Measures taken against ~~certified~~ operators who have failed to comply with the standards or other requirements of the certification body.

~~**Smallholder Group:** An organized group of small scale producers with similar farming and production systems. The criteria in section 78.3 apply only to such groups when the certification applies to the group as a whole and when special inspection arrangements have been applied.~~

Split Production: Production, breeding, handling or processing of conventional, in conversion and/or organic in the same unit.

Surveillance: The measures undertaken to provide ongoing monitoring of an operator’s compliance with standards and certification requirements.

Traceback Audits: An audit to verify that a product or its ingredients may be traced back to the original suppliers.

Transaction Certificate: Document issued by a certification body or by the operator, declaring that the specified lot or consignment of goods is derived from production that has been certified.

~~**Violation:** Infringement by a licensed operator against the standards, certification procedures or contractual obligations to the certification body. Breach of requirements other than standards.~~

1 Structure

1.1 General Requirements

1.1.1 The certification body shall have a documented and effective structure and organization that ~~provides fosters~~ confidence in its certification ~~results~~.

1.1.2 The certification body shall have documents which demonstrate that it is a legal entity.

1.1.3 The certification body shall identify the management (~~committee, group or person~~) (committee, group or person) which ~~shall have overall is responsibility responsible~~ for ~~all~~ each of the following:¹

- a. performance of ~~testing~~, inspection, evaluation and certification as defined in ~~these~~ Guide criteria,
- b. formulation of policy matters relating to the operation of the certification body,
- c. decisions on certification,
- d. supervision of the implementation of its policies,
- e. supervision of the finances of the body,
- f. delegation of authority to committees or individuals as required to undertake defined activities on its behalf,
- g. technical basis for granting certification.~~5~~

1.2 Responsibility

1.2.1 The certification body shall take full responsibility for all activities operated or sub-contracted out and maintain its responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification.

1.2.2 The certification body shall not delegate authority for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending or withdrawing certification to an outside person or body.² *See also guidance notes

1.2.3 ~~The certification body shall have a documented description of its administration, including officers and responsibility.~~ The certification body shall define document clear lines of authority, ~~and~~ responsibility and the accountability of staff personnel, officers ~~and~~ committees.

1.2.4 The Governing Board shall remain responsible for certification decisions but may delegate authority for taking certification decisions to one or more certification committees.³

1.2.5 Where decisions are delegated to individual certification officers, the certification body shall have reporting and review procedures that enable the Governing Board or the certification committee to exercise control over and responsibility for such decisions.

¹ Explanatory Note 1.1.3: This refers to the actual day to day management.

² Explanatory Note 1.2.2: An outside body or person would normally include anybody that is a separate legal entity even if linked in some way. This would not mean that assessment and evaluation cannot be undertaken by a contracted party, but that the formal certification decisions mentioned may not. This includes appeals.

³ Explanatory Note 1.2.4: This does not preclude the use of individual certification officers, as long as these persons are responsible to a certification committee or the governing board.

1.2.56 ~~When activities are delegated to committees, such e~~Committees shall have clear responsibilities and rules of procedures.

~~1.2.6 Where decisions are further delegated to individual certification officers, the certification body shall have reporting and review procedures that enables the BoardGoverning Board or the certification committee to exercise control over and responsibility for such decisions.~~

1.2.7. An appeals committee shall be established.⁴

1.3 Impartiality and Objectivity

1.3.1 The certification body shall have structures and procedures to enable it to be free to operate without undue influence from vested interests.

1.3.2 The certification body shall be impartial. Inspection and certification shall be based on an objective assessment of relevant factors, following documented procedures.

1.3.3 ~~The organizational structure of the~~ The certification body ~~structure shall enable ensure that the participation of all~~ parties significantly affected by the certification system be enabled to participate in the development of its principles and policies, principles and functioning of the certification system, in their development.* See also guidance notes.⁵

1.3.4 The certification body shall not provide any product or service which could compromise the confidentiality, objectivity or impartiality of its certification process ~~and decision making~~, unless these product/service and certification programs are clearly separated in a manner that ensures that such compromise cannot occur.

1.3.5 The certification body shall not engage in the marketing of certified products or promotion of individual products and shall have a policy and an appropriate procedure for responding to product inquiries from the trade or consumers. ~~The procedure~~This shall ensure an equal treatment for all certified ~~product operators~~. The certification body shall not solicit individual applications based on the needs of individual buyers.

Guidance: The procedure shall specify the nature of the information that may be supplied, limiting this to information related to the certification of the product as opposed to the marketing of the product.* See also guidance notes⁶

⁴ Explanatory Note 1.2.7: An appeals committee can be ad hoc, or the task can be performed by the Board.

⁵ Explanatory Note 1.3.3: The purpose of this criterion is expressed in 1.3.1. It is meant to ensure by structural means, that vested interests are unable to exert undue influence
This can be provided by a system of participatory democracy where the Board is elected by a broad based constituency of stakeholders. Stakeholders would generally be understood to mean more than only the certified operators- in the case of organic certification consumers, environmentalists, researchers and the like would also be considered stakeholders.
In the absence of a Board elected by stakeholders the certification body would need to institute some other method of ensuring sufficient influence of the stakeholders over the certification system. An Advisory Board with sufficient powers to achieve the purpose would be one such method.

⁶ Explanatory Note 1.3.5: If the policy is that no information will be supplied then no procedure is necessary.

1.3.6 Certification bodies shall ensure that activities of related bodies do not affect the confidentiality, objectivity and impartiality of its certifications.⁷ **See also guidance notes*

1.3.7 The body making or ratifying certification decisions shall be free from any commercial, financial and other pressures that might influence decisions.⁸

*Guidance:—A structure where members are chosen to provide a balance of diverse stakeholder interests and where no single interest predominates shall be deemed to satisfy this provision; Such diversity shall include that at least one general interest is represented such as consumers, scientists or environmentalists.—*See guidance notes*

~~1.3.8 Payment of inspection fees and expenses shall be made through the certification body or contracted inspection body and not directly to the inspector by the operator.*~~

~~1.3.9 The fee structure shall be such that a decision to not grant certification does not result in unreimbursed costs to the certification body~~

~~1.3.8 Fee structures and other issues related to payment should shall not compromise objectivity.~~

*Guidance: Certification bodies shall where practical avoid at least the following: direct payment of fees to inspectors, incurring significant costs such as inspections that are not readily reimbursed, and a fee structure/function that results in high leverage of certification body finances by only one or a few clients. *See also guidance notes.*

~~1.3.9 The certification body or its personnel shall not accept a substantial gift or favor. The certification body shall establish a policy on what are/are not substantial gifts.⁹ **See also guidance notes.*~~

~~1.3.10 The certification body shall have procedures for appeals and complaints. See section 3.5 and 7.8.*~~

Division of function

1.3.11~~10~~ The certification body shall have clear division of the functions of inspection, certification and appeals.

1.3.12~~9~~ Persons responsible for a decision that is being appealed may not be involved in the decision on that appeal.¹⁰ **See also guidance notes*

~~1.3.13~~10~~ The certification body shall ensure that each decision on certification is taken by person(s) different from those who carried out the inspection.~~

⁷ *Explanatory Note 1.3.6: Related bodies would mean any separate entity that is structurally linked to the certification body by, for example, common ownership, shared directors etc. In the case of organic certification bodies this could be a producer association or other association responsible for establishing the certification body. The criterion does not prohibit the relationship but requires analysis of whether the other body may exert influence in manner that compromises the impartiality and objectivity of the certification decisions. If so, measures must be taken to ensure this does not occur.*

⁸ *Explanatory Note 1.3.7: This does not mean that individuals on the Board or committee (the decision making body) cannot have commercial, financial or other interests. It means that the committee as a whole may not. To ensure this a balance of interests is necessary.*

⁹ *Explanatory Note 1.3.9: Substantial gifts are those that have a value that could potentially affect opinion, attitude, or decision of the certification body, including any of its inspectors, employees or officers.*

¹⁰ *Explanatory Note 1.3.11: This means that the certification committee or personnel that made the decision being appealed may be heard at the appeal, but may not sit on the appeal committee.*

~~1.3.14 1112~~ Where pre-assessment of production to identify areas of nonconformity is performed as an optional fee-paying part of the certification process, different personnel shall carry out the inspection and the pre-assessment.

Consulting and advising

~~1.3.15 1213-12~~ Certification bodies shall not provide consultancy services to operators.

1.3.13 Pre-assessment of production performed by a certification body to identify areas of nonconformity shall not include advice on how to overcome these non-conformities.

~~1.3.16 314~~ Specific advice given ~~by inspectors~~ to operators shall be limited to explanations of the standards or certification requirements. This information shall not be offered for additional fees and shall not prescribe solutions.

~~1.3.17 415~~ Certification bodies may provide general information (~~training, newsletters, seminars, advice concerning regulatory requirements etc.~~) -for additional fees, provided that this service shall be offered to all certified operators in a nondiscriminatory manner.¹¹ *See also guidance notes

Conflicts of interest of individuals

~~1.3.15 816~~ The certification body shall ensure that a A declaration of interest is updated annually by the Board/Governing Board and all persons involved in certification, inspection and appeals as well as by the board. - shall be on file at the certification body's (or inspection body's) office. Such declarations shall be on file and take into account both direct and indirect interests. ~~and t~~ The certification body shall review the declarations and identify decide on what constitutes a conflict.¹² *See also guidance notes

~~1.3.16 917~~ All persons with a conflict of interest shall be excluded from work, discussion and decisions in all stages of the certification process related to the potential conflict. The exclusion of such persons ~~should~~ shall be recorded in minutes or other records.¹³ *See also guidance notes

~~1.3.17 0-18~~ The certification body shall require persons engaged in inspection ~~or~~ certification and appeals to agree in writing to abstain from participating in work ~~for~~ regarding operators with whom they have personal relations or ~~to~~ those with whom they have had business relationships (either trade or advisory) in the past two years. The certification body shall require persons engaged in inspection to report on any new interests regarding the operation for a period of one year after the inspection. The certification body shall determine whether the new relations may have affected the impartiality of any work submitted by inspectors or certification personnel.¹⁴ *See also guidance notes

¹¹ Explanatory Note 1.3.15: General information might refer to training, newsletters, seminars, advice concerning regulatory requirements etc.

¹² Explanatory Note 1.3.16: The declaration should be of all interests that relate to the organic sector. The certification body should decide which, if any, of these interests are of sufficient concern to question the individual's ability to be impartial and therefore to warrant the precautionary measure of declaring them to result in a conflict of interest.

¹³ Explanatory Note 1.3.17: The certification body's responsibility is not only to determine conflict of interest, but to then use this list in its operation to ensure exclusion of the individual in cases where conflict exists.

¹⁴ Explanatory Note 1.3.18: In Criteria 1.3.16 and 1.3.17 the certification body takes responsibility for managing any conflict of interest. In 1.3.18 the individual is also required to be responsible. The purpose of the second sentence in 1.3.18 is to prevent an individual from contracting to do future work while engaged in the inspection or

1.4 Resources

Financial ~~and Personnel~~ Resources

1.4.1 The certification body shall have the financial stability and personnel resources ~~required necessary~~ for the effective operation of a certification system.

Guidance: Financial stability shall include provisions to cover liabilities in situations where there is a significant risk of being sued.

~~1.4.2 The certification body shall make adequate provision to cover liabilities which may arise from its operational activities.~~

Personnel resources

~~1.4.3-2~~ The certification body personnel, ~~shall employ or contract a sufficient number of personnel who~~ have the necessary education, training, technical knowledge and experience for performing functions relating to the type, range and volume of work performed.

~~Guidance Note: Assignment of personnel, including contracted inspectors, to inspection and certification work should be appropriate to their skills~~

1.4.3 Personnel, including contracted inspectors, shall be assigned to inspection and certification work that is appropriate to their skills.

~~1.4.4 The certification body shall have documented recruitment requirements for senior staff and inspectors regarding necessary education, training, technical knowledge and experience in organic agriculture and/or processing. In the case of For inspectors ~~The certification body shall specify the type of inspections for which the an inspector has been~~ may be employed based on these factors ~~1.4.3.~~~~

~~1.4.5-4~~ Personnel shall have ~~available clear~~ job descriptions describing their duties and responsibilities.

~~1.4.6-5~~ Personnel shall have ~~the competence and up to date,~~ documented work instructions for complex or critical certification and inspection functions. ~~to enable them to perform their various functions.~~¹⁵

~~1.4.7-6~~ The body ~~or committee~~ responsible for ~~making~~ certification decisions shall ensure that all certification decisions are based on competence in all areas for which certification is granted.¹⁶ ~~**See also guidance notes.~~

~~1.4.8-7~~ The certification body shall require all personnel involved in the certification process to sign a contract or other document by which they commit themselves to the rules and procedures of the certification body.

1.4.98 Records of the qualifications and, training and performance reviews of all personnel shall be maintained by the certification body in accordance with the requirements in 5.4.6.

certification process (a clear conflict of interest) without this immediately being known to the certification body, so that others may be assigned to the case. This is most likely to occur in the case of contracted inspectors.

¹⁵ Explanatory Note 1.4.5: Procedures can serve as work instructions if detailed enough.

¹⁶ Explanatory Note 1.4.6: This may be on the certification committee itself or at staff level.

Training

1.4.~~109~~ The certification body shall have a documented training policy, including initial and ongoing training, for all personnel, including, ~~both employed and contracted~~ ~~contracted inspectors~~, and committee members, that is sufficient to ensure continued competence.

1.4.~~10-11-10~~ The certification body shall ensure that ~~prior to~~ ~~before~~ undertaking inspection, new inspectors have ~~at least~~ successfully completed a training course in inspection of organic operations and undergone a defined on-site apprenticeship period.

Personnel records

~~1.4.11 Records of the qualifications, training and performance reviews of all personnel shall be maintained by the certification body in accordance with the requirements in 5.4.6.~~

Subcontractors

1.4.~~12-11~~ The integrity, competence and transparency of any sub-contracted components of the certification system remain the responsibility of the certification body.

1.4.~~13-12~~ When a certification body subcontracts work related to certification to an external body, or person, an agreement covering the arrangements shall be drawn up. This shall include the requirement to comply with all relevant aspects of these criteria.

~~1.4.14 The certification decision shall not be subcontracted. **See also guidance notes~~

~~1.4.15 The certification body shall ensure that operators are informed of subcontracting arrangements prior to application.~~

~~1.4.16 The certification body shall apply the requirements in 1.4.12 to 1.4.15 above when it uses, for granting its own certification, work performed by another certification body. Specific criteria for such cases are set down in section 9 of this document. *~~

2 Accessibility and Scope

2.1 Non-discrimination

2.1.1 The policies and procedures which govern the operation of the certification body shall be non-discriminatory. ~~The administration of those policies and procedures shall not discriminate in any way against particular applicants~~

2.2 Access to Services

2.2.1 The certification body shall make its services accessible for all applicants whose activities fall within its declared field of application. Certification requirements, inspections and decisions shall be confined to the scope of the certification being granted.

2.2.2 Access to certification shall not be conditional upon the size of the ~~supplier-operator~~ or membership of any association or group, nor shall certification be conditional upon the number of certificates already issued by the certification body.

2.2.3 The fee structure shall be standardized and available on request.

~~2.2.4 The certification body shall state under its declared field of application, those languages in which it operates.~~

2.3 Certification scope

2.3.1 Organic certification shall be granted solely on the basis of a determination of an operation's conformity with specified published standards. ~~These standards used by the certification body shall cover all production systems or product categories certified, and these shall at least meet the IFOAM Basic Standards.~~

Certification Scope and the eChain of eustodyCustody¹⁷

2.3.2 The certification body shall not issue any license to ~~affix-use~~ its certification mark ~~on~~ or issue any certificate for any product unless it is assured of the chain of custody of the product, ~~to that point of certification.~~ Where steps in the production chain have been certified by other certification bodies, the criteria in section 9 shall be applied. **See also guidance

2.3.3 Any entity in the chain of custody that has produced, processed, or packaged ~~or affixed a label referring to the organic production method to a product~~ an organic product shall have been certified. SubeContracted production (see below) shall have been inspected.

Guidance: The certification body is not obliged to have a system for inspection of products that are further handled after being packed in the final consumer package. For certified product not in its final packaging the certification body's responsibility shall extend to the point where the product is sold to an operator certified by a different entity. The certification body shall take action where there is reason to believe that the certification body's own standards have been or may be violated in later handling stages.¹⁸ *See guidance notes

~~2.3.4 The certification body is not obliged to have a system for inspection of products that are further handled after being packed in the final consumer package.~~

2.3.~~46~~ Certification bodies shall conduct a risk assessment to determine the necessity for, or frequency of, inspection of all storage facilities including port facilities. Where this reveals a need for inspection to protect organic integrity, inspection shall be done.¹⁹ *See also guidance notes

2.3.~~57~~ The certification body shall require that the party owning the product at the point of transport be responsible for maintaining the organic integrity in the transport process, unless transport operations are certified in their own capacity.

~~2.3.8 For certified product not in its final packaging the certification body's responsibility shall extend to the point where the product is sold to an operator certified by a different entity~~

¹⁷ Explanatory Note 2.3.2 to 2.3.5: This section of the criteria regulates the requirements for certification bodies with regard to the whole production chain. The production chain includes the farmers, storage units, processing units, packers, brokers, wholesalers, transport companies and retailers. These criteria establish when either certification or inspection is required. These functions shall either have been carried out by the certification body itself or their certification should be approved in accordance with the criteria in section 9.

¹⁸ Explanatory Note 2.3.3: An example of such a situation is fumigation in import harbours, etc.

¹⁹ Explanatory Note 2.3.4: Exceptions to the requirement for inspections may be made if a risk assessment based on the kind of storage, the product, the packaging, the prevailing storage practices (e.g. fumigation) and the period of storage has determined that further inspections are not necessary. Exceptions may also be made in the case of storage by common carriers and storage in customs houses

Certification scope and contracted production or processing²⁰ ***See also guidance notes*

2.3.9-6 The certification body shall have policies and procedures for regulating contracted production or processing, where the contracted party is not required to be certified in their own right. A certification body may not issue a certificate of any type to the contracted operator. *

2.3.10-7 The policy shall prescribe the circumstances where the contracted party is not required to be ~~themselvesitself~~ certified ~~itself~~. This shall preclude the contracted party from marketing certified products ~~themselvesitself~~ and require ~~the manufacturing process~~, the raw materials supply, and the sales to be under the control of the certified licensee. This shall normally mean that the contracted party does not take title of the product. ²¹*

2.3.11-8 The contracted party shall be inspected ~~at least annually according to the certification body's normal inspection procedures.~~ ***by the certification body before the use of the contracted product or service. Subsequent inspections shall be made annually or at a frequency determined on a case by case basis providing that the certification body documents the reasons for the reduced frequency.*

2.3.12-9 The certification body shall require that the certified operator shall be held fully responsible for the contracted production or processing and be subject to sanctions in the event of noncompliance of the contracted parties.

Guidance: The contract between the certification body and the operator shall specify the liability with respect to sanctions, unless this is already stated in the general sanctions policies. ***See also guidance notes*

2.3.13-10 The certification body shall require that the contracted party have a contractual relationship with the certification body that includes clauses regarding compliance to the standards, obligation to provide information, and access to the certification body. This may either be achieved through a direct contract between the parties or by an agreement between the operator and the contracted party in which the contracted party binds itself directly to the certification body.

Guidance: Where the certification body chooses not to have a direct contract with the contracted party it shall ensure that the contract between the operator and contracted party legally binds the contracted party to the certification body and the specified requirements. This shall mean that the contracts between the operator and the subcontractor shall be obtained in order to verify these points. ***See also guidance notes*

2.3.14-11 The certification body shall require that each contracted party ~~has the owns and understands the~~ current version of the applicable standards and a general description of the certification program. *

²⁰ *Explanatory Note: 2.3.6 to 2.3.11: This section establishes criteria applicable when a certified entity (or applicant) has sub-contracted production to an operation which is not certified. (For example, a certified processor subcontracts with a storage, handling, or processing facility which is not certified in its own right.) It also applies to situations where a processor or trader has subcontracted producers.*

²¹ *Explanatory Note 2.3.7: These provisions do not prohibit the contracted party from applying for certification in their own right*

3 Quality System for Certification

3.1 Quality Policy

~~3.1.1 The management of the certification body having executive responsibility for quality systems shall define and document its quality policy for quality and its objectives for, and commitment to, quality.~~

~~3.1.1 The Certification Body shall document its objectives for and commitment to quality in a quality policy.~~

~~3.1.2 The management shall ensure that this policy is understood, implemented and maintained at all levels of the organization.²²~~

3.2 Quality System

3.2.1 The certification body shall operate an effective quality system in accordance with the relevant elements of these criteria and appropriate for the type, range and volume of work performed. This quality system shall be documented and the documentation shall be available to, and understood by, the certification body ~~staff personnel.~~²³ **Guidance Note:** ~~The quality system shall include a system for continuous quality improvement. The certification body shall demonstrate effective implementation of the quality system, including competency and consistency in the application of policies and procedures.~~ ***See also guidance notes*

~~3.2.2 The certification body shall ensure effective implementation of the documented quality system, procedures and instructions. Certification bodies shall demonstrate a high degree of competency and consistency in the practical application of their policies and procedures.~~

~~3.2.3 The certification body shall designate a person having direct access to its highest executive level who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined authority for ensuring that a quality system is established, implemented and maintained in accordance with these criteria, and reporting on the performance of the quality system to the body's management for review and as a basis for improvement of the quality system.~~

~~3.2.4 The certification body shall demonstrate adequate arrangements for continuous quality improvement~~

~~3.3 Quality Manual~~ 3.3 Quality Documentation

~~3.3.1 The quality system shall be documented in a comprehensive Quality Manual and associated quality procedures, and the manual which shall contain or refer to at least the following:~~ The quality documentation shall include at least the following:

~~a) a quality policy statement;~~

~~b) a) a brief description of the legal status of the certification body, including~~

~~*Guidance: The description shall include the names of its owners and, if different, names of the persons who control it;*~~

~~e) b) the names, qualifications, experience and terms of reference of the **Board Governing Board of Directors**, senior executive and other certification personnel, both internal and external;~~

~~d) c) an organization chart showing lines of authority, responsibility and allocation of functions stemming from the senior executive;~~

²² Explanatory Note 3.1.1: A Quality policy can consist of a simple statement to adhere to the IFOAM accreditation System.

²³ Explanatory Note 3.2.1: An effective quality system is one which enables the CB to demonstrate continuous quality improvement.

- ~~e)d~~a description of the organization of the certification body, including ~~details of~~ the management (committee, group or person) identified in 1.1.3;
- ~~f)e~~ the policy and procedures for conducting management reviews;
- ~~g)f~~ administrative procedures including document control;
- ~~h)g~~ the operational and functional duties and services ~~pertaining to quality~~, so that the extent and limits of each person's responsibility are known to all concerned;
- ~~i)h~~ the procedure for the recruitment, ~~selection~~ and training of certification body personnel and monitoring of their performance;
- ~~j)i~~ a list of its approved subcontractors and the procedures for assessing, recording and monitoring their competence;
- ~~k)j~~ its procedures for handling nonconformities and for assuring the effectiveness of any corrective and preventive actions taken;
- ~~l)k~~ - the procedures for evaluating products and implementing the certification process, including the conditions for issue, retention and withdrawal of certification documents, and the controls over the use and application of documents employed in the certification of products;
- ~~m)l~~ the policy and procedure for dealing with appeals and complaints;
- ~~n)its procedures for conducting internal audits.~~

3.4 Internal Audits

3.4.1 The certification body shall conduct periodic internal audits ~~such that covering~~ all procedures ~~are covered~~ in a planned and systematic manner ~~over time~~, to verify that the certification system is implemented and -is effective.

The certification body shall ensure that:

- a. personnel responsible for the audited functions are informed of the outcome of the audit;
- b. corrective actions are taken in a timely and appropriate manner;
- c. the results of the audit are documented. ~~.*See also guidance notes~~

3.4.2 The ~~program's management certification body~~ shall review ~~its the management~~ system at defined intervals. Records of such reviews shall be maintained.

~~*Guidance: A management review evaluates whether procedures and policies are effective in achieving the overall goals of the organization. .**~~ ~~*See also guidance notes*~~

3.4.3 The certification body shall conduct performance reviews of ~~all inspection and certification~~ personnel including employed inspectors at least annually. Records of the outcome shall be maintained. ²⁴ ~~.*See also guidance notes~~

3.4.4 In the case of frequently used contracted inspectors the inspector shall be given periodic feedback on performance

3.5 Complaints

3.5.1 The certification body shall have procedures for consideration of complaints brought by operators or third parties concerning its own performance or concerning the compliance of certified operators with the standards.

3.5.2 Complaints shall be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner

3.5.3 When a complaint is resolved, ~~a~~ documented resolution shall be made. The complainant shall be informed of the general outcome of the complaint in a way which does not prejudice the confidentiality of the party concerned."

²⁴ ~~Explanatory Note 3.4.3: Where work is organized in teams this may be team review.~~

- 3.5.4 The certification body shall ~~*See also guidance notes~~
~~a. keep a record of all complaints and resulting corrective actions related to certification;~~
~~b.a. investigate and take appropriate subsequent action regarding complaints related to certification~~
~~b. review and take any necessary corrective action to the certification system²⁵ *~~
~~c. keep a record of all complaints and resulting actions~~
~~e. document the action taken and its effectiveness. *~~

4 Confidentiality provisions

4.1 General

4.1.1 The certification body shall have adequate arrangements to ensure confidentiality of the information regarding specific operators obtained in the course of its certification activities at all levels of its organization, including committees, contracted bodies and individuals.²⁶ ~~**See also guidance notes~~

4.1.2 ~~These~~ arrangements shall include ~~the establishment of a confidentiality policy and the requirement for all personnel to sign a confidentiality agreement~~ and the establishment of a confidentiality policy-

4.1.3 This policy shall

- specify the type of information that is not covered by confidentiality, such as name and address of operators, and
- identify the third parties that may have access to confidential the information such as accreditation bodies.
- require the CB to inform operators of who the parties are
- state potential requirements for disclosure of information under the law.
- require written consent in other cases.

~~4.1.3 Except as required in these criteria or by law, or otherwise permitted in the certifier's published rules requirements, information gained in the course of certification activities about a particular product or supplier shall not be disclosed to a third party without the written consent of the supplier.~~

4.1.4 Where the law requires information to be disclosed to a third-party, the supplier shall be informed of the information provided as permitted by the law.

~~**Guidance Note:** Certification bodies subject to voluntary (non-regulatory) accreditation should specify in their policy and in papers signed by the operator (such as the application form) that the accreditation body shall have access to their documentation.~~

5 Documentation and Document Control

5.1 General

5.1.1 The certification body shall document its certification system, make ~~appropriate relevant~~ documents available to the public on request and demonstrate control over all documents issued.

²⁵ Explanatory Note 3.5.4b: This criterion requires that complaints should not merely be resolved but that the certification body should review the complaint to determine whether the complaint indicates a structural or procedure fault and, if so, to remedy it.

²⁶ Explanatory Note 4.1.1: The system shall be transparent while records pertaining to operators remain confidential.

5.2 Public access to information

- 5.2.1 The certification body shall make publicly available, through print and or electronic media, ~~up to date~~current information on the following:²⁷ ~~*See also guidance notes~~
- information, ~~where relevant~~, describing the authority under which the certification body provides its certification service;²⁸ ~~**See also guidance notes~~
 - the ~~rule~~requirements and procedures, ~~(or a description of the procedures)~~ for evaluation of the inspection report and approval, continuation or extension of certification;
 - the ~~rule~~requirements and procedures for suspension and withdrawal of certification
 - the standards to which certification is granted;
 - a description of the certification body's sources of income and clear indications of the fees charged to applicants and current licensed operators;
 - a description of the rights and duties of applicants and suppliers of certified products, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's logo and on the ways of referring to the certification granted;
 - procedures for handling complaints and appeals;
 - a current list of certified operators, including name and location ~~and~~ the scope of the certification; if an operator is certified as a group it shall be identified as such
 - a current ~~listing~~ of contracted production parties, ~~shall also be available~~ although this may be a general list without linkage to the certified operator. ~~—**See also guidance notes.~~

5.3 Document control

- 5.3.1 The certification body shall maintain a documented system for the control of all documentation relating to the certification system and shall ensure that: ~~*See also guidance notes~~
- the current issues of the appropriate documentation are available at relevant locations;
 - all changes of documents are covered by the correct authorization;
 - all changes are processed in a manner which will ensure direct and speedy action;
 - superseded documents are removed from use throughout the organization ~~and its agencies~~;
 - all affected parties are notified of changes;
 - there is a register of all appropriate documents with the respective issue identified;
 - there is a determination of which documents are available to the public and which are not;
 - documentation clearly indicates its date of implementation. *

~~**Guidance Note:** A procedural document would normally need to be in place in order to ensure these requirements are met.~~

Guidance: The certification body shall have a documented procedure to ensure that above requirements are met.

²⁷ **Explanatory Note 5.2.1:** Make available does not mean these have to be distributed only that they should be supplied if requested. It also means that a reasonable charge may be levied. Point b, e, f and g refer to descriptions or summaries and not necessarily the formal policies or procedures themselves

²⁸ **Explanatory Note 5.2.1a:** This authority may be regulatory where a certification body has been approved under a government regulation. Authority may also be derived from the voluntary nature of the program or from linked producer or trader associations.

5.4 Records²⁹

5.4.1 The certification body shall maintain a records system and have policies and procedures governing their management. The records shall be identified, managed and disposed of in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of the information.

~~5.4.2 The certification body shall produce and make publicly available an annual report summarizing the certification activities of the previous year including elements such as the extent of the certification activities.~~

~~5.4.3-2~~ Operator files shall be up to date and contain all relevant information, including inspection reports, history, and product specifications. **See also guidance notes*
Guidance: The certification body shall have available relevant data for all certified production units, including any contracted parties and members of grower groups.

~~5.4.4-3~~ The records shall be sufficiently comprehensive so as to demonstrate that the procedures for certification decision were properly applied. ~~demonstrate the way in which each certification procedure was applied, including inspection reports and outcome of imposed sanctions.~~

~~5.4.5-4~~ Separate records shall be kept for major violations and non-conformities and resulting sanctions, precedents, exceptions, appeals, and complaints, in a way that enables easy retrieval of data.³⁰ **See also guidance notes*

~~5.4.6-5~~ All records shall be safely stored and held secure and in confidence to the operator, for a period not less than five years, ~~or for the period stipulated in relevant governmental and regional regulations where this exceeds five years.~~ Computerized records shall regularly be backed-up.³¹ **See also guidance notes*

~~5.4.7-6~~ Inspection reports, certification decisions, certificates and other relevant records shall be signed by the authorized person.³² **See also guidance notes*

~~5.4.8 The certification body shall have a policy and procedures concerning access to these records consistent with its confidentiality requirements.~~

~~5.4.9-7~~ The record keeping system shall be transparent and enable easy retrieval of information.

~~5.4.10-8~~ Operators shall have the right to have copies of inspection findings and other documentation related to the certification of their production, unless the documents are confidential (i.e. filed complaints, confidential section of inspection reports).

*Guidance: This right should shall be communicated to operators.*See also guidance notes.*

²⁹ *Explanatory Note 5.4: Requirements for records also apply to computerized systems*

³⁰ *Explanatory Note 5.4.4: Such information should be available both in the producer's file as well in a separate record, or registered in a database system. The purpose of this criterion is for those involved in certification to have access to the file in order to ensure consistency in decision making.*

³¹ *Explanatory Note 5.4.5: The records that should be maintained for the specified period would include not only the operator's records, but also records of the certification body's personnel and relevant activities such as internal audits.*

³² *Explanatory Note 5.4.6: This may be an electronic signature.*

6 Application and Inspection Procedures

6.1 Application procedures

Information for applicants

- 6.1.1 The certification body shall ensure that each applicant or ~~re-applicant~~certified operator has ~~at the time of application:~~
- a current version of the applicable standards;
 - an adequate description of the inspection, certification and appeals procedures;
 - a ~~contract or~~ sample copy of the contract or ~~license agreement~~ a description of the contractual conditions;
 - a copy of the fee schedule;

Application form

6.1.2 The certification body shall require completion of an official application form, signed by the applicant ~~or a duly authorized representative of the applicant~~. This shall determine at least the following information:

- ~~The scope of the desired certification including the production and area to be certified, and in cases where the certification body offers more than one certification program, the standards against which the product is to be certified.~~³³ ***See also guidance notes.*
- Sufficient information about the production system to enable appropriate assignment of the inspector and proper preparation by the inspector
*Guidance: This shall include disclosure of denial of organic certification by another certification body. Such a disclosure shall include the reasons for denial.*³⁴

~~e. A statement as to whether If Where relevant, if they have been denied organic certification by another certification body, and reasons therefore and the requirement to submit information regarding actions taken to correct the deficiencies leading to the denial. (Alternatively this information may be obtained during the inspection process).~~

Operator obligations

6.1.3 The certification system shall be based on written agreements and clear responsibilities with all parties involved in the chain of production of a certified product.

- 6.1.4 The certification body shall require ~~the operator~~s to sign statements in the application form or elsewhere, obliging them to:
- agree to comply with the requirements for certification including a commitment to comply with the standards, and to supply any information needed for evaluation of the production to be certified;
 - provide the right of access to all appropriate facilities including any non-organic production in the unit, or related (by ownership or management) units in ~~the~~ proximity, to both certification and accreditation personnel-;³⁵ ***See also guidance notes*

³³ **Explanatory Note 6.1.2a:** This also includes the production and area to be certified, and in cases where the certification body offers more than one certification program, the standards against which the product is to be certified

³⁴ **Explanatory Note 6.1.2c:** Regions where there is only one certification body are not considered relevant.

³⁵ **Explanatory Note 6.1.4b:** The criterion requires the right of access, but does not require that this right be exercised in all cases. Certification bodies should be able to inspect any part of an operation whether organic or not if they have reason to do. The criterion requires that the right be fully exercised in cases of parallel production.

- c. provide access to all relevant documentation including financial records to both certification and accreditation personnel. ~~.*~~

Operator documentation

6.1.5 The certification body shall specify, ~~in application documentation or elsewhere,~~ the documentation to be maintained by the operator to enable verification of compliance. ~~This~~ and shall specify which records shall be available and ~~require that they be~~ held in a form that enables verification to take place.³⁶ ~~.*See also guidance notes~~

6.1.6 The certification body shall require documented procedures defining the manner of production or processing where the absence of such procedures could adversely affect the organic quality.³⁷ ~~.*See also guidance notes~~

~~6.1.7 Documents required by 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 shall be kept for a minimum of five years.~~

6.2 Preparation for inspection

Review

6.2.1 ~~Before proceeding with the evaluation, t~~The certification body shall conduct a review of the application for certification to ensure that the requirements for certification are clearly understood and that the scope of certification sought is appropriate to the applicant.³⁸ ~~.*see also guidance note.~~

6.2.2 ~~In some circumstances (e.g. operation of multiple certification programs, international operations located in regions not usually covered by the certifier),~~For complex operations and foreign operations located in regions not usually covered by the certification body -the certification body shall assess whether it has the capability to perform the certification service with respect to the scope of the certification sought ~~and, if applicable, the location of the applicant's operations and any special requirements such as the language used by the applicant.~~

6.2.3 The certification body shall provide the inspector with sufficient information to properly prepare for the inspection.

Guidance: This includes at least an application form, and/or previous inspection findings, a description of activities/processes, maps/plans, product specifications, and used inputs, previous conditions and sanctions.

.*See also guidance notes

Assignment of inspector

~~6.2.4 The certification body, or the sub-contracted inspection body shall assign personnel appropriately qualified to perform the tasks for the specific inspection. Operators shall have neither the right to choose nor to recommend inspectors.~~

³⁶ Explanatory Note 6.1.5: These criteria refer not only to the required documentation but also to the way in which it is kept. This must allow for the specified audits to be carried out within the timeframe of an inspection.

³⁷ Explanatory Note 6.1.6: Although this is more likely to apply in processing operations it may also apply to farming operations. An example would be a procedure to ensure cleaning out of equipment in a split production situation. Conversion plans, farm plans and management plans to reduce dependence on restricted products would constitute such procedural documents

³⁸ Explanatory Note 6.2.1: An example of assessment of the scope of certification sought is that an application for group certification meets the criteria in 8.3.2.

6.2.5-4 The assignment of the inspector shall take into account any possible conflict of interest ~~in line with criterion 1.3.19.~~

6.2.6-5 The assignment of the inspector shall ensure that the same inspector shall as a rule not be assigned to an operator for more than ~~3-4~~ consecutive years and under no circumstances for more than ~~4-5 consecutive~~ years.

6.2.7-6 ~~Operators shall have neither the right to choose nor to recommend inspectors. Except for cases of unannounced visits, Operators shall have the right to be informed about the identity of the inspector before the inspection visit. Operators shall in any case have the right, and to raise objections related to any potential based on -conflict of interest or other reasons. The certification body shall rule whether the reasons are accepted. This shall not apply to unannounced inspections.~~

6.3 Visit procedures.

6.3.1 The ~~organic~~ management systems of the ~~applicant-operator~~ shall be evaluated against the ~~specified~~ standards and certification requirements.

6.3.2 Inspection procedure shall follow a ~~decided-specific~~ protocol to facilitate a nondiscriminatory and objective inspection procedure.

6.3.3 The ~~routine~~ inspection procedure shall be documented and shall at least include:³⁹
~~**See also guidance notes~~

- a. assessment of production or processing system of operator by means of visits to facilities, fields, and storage units;
- ~~b.~~ verification of the most recent information provided to the certification body by the operator
- ~~b.c.~~ identification and investigation of areas of risk;
- ~~e.d.~~ review of records and accounts;
- ~~d.e.~~ at least once every three years production/sales reconciliation on farms;
Guidance: At least every 3 years this shall be a comprehensive check.
- ~~f.~~ an input/output reconciliation and trace back audits in processing and handling;
- ~~e.g.~~ interviews with responsible persons including an exit interview;
*Guidance: The exit interview shall include findings of non-conformities made during the inspection.*⁴⁰
- ~~f.h.~~ verification that changes that have taken place in the standards and ~~rule~~ requirements of the certification body have been effectively implemented by the operator;
- ~~g.i.~~ residue sampling in accordance with the certification body's sampling policy;
- ~~h.j.~~ verification that previously imposed conditions have been fulfilled.

6.3.4 The inspection, including document review, shall include non organic units where there is reason for so doing.⁴¹ ~~**See also guidance~~

³⁹ Explanatory Note 6.3.3: An exception to this may be made in the case of unannounced visits that are made in addition to the scheduled visit or in cases where more than one announced visit is conducted in the year. Such supplementary visits may be targeted to specific concerns or to check compliance with conditions of the certification.

⁴⁰ Explanatory Note 6.3.3g Guidance: This is not the final decision on non-conformities, but the observations of the inspector. As such it may be overturned by the Certification decision.

⁴¹ Explanatory Note 6.3.4: Examples are: Parallel production and systems that are so similar that there might be undeclared parallel production, and any situation revealing high risk of cross-contamination.

6.4 Sampling and testing⁴² ~~*See also guidance notes~~

6.4.1 The certification body shall have documented policies and procedures on residue testing, ~~genetic testing (see 6.7.11)~~ and other analysis that shall at least include:

- a. indication of the cases in which samples shall be taken;
- b. the requirement that where use of a substance prohibited by the standards is suspected ~~and~~ samples ~~may provide corroborating supporting evidence, then samples may shall~~ be taken for analysis;⁴³ ~~*See also guidance notes~~
- c. the requirement that where standards set limits on residues or contamination in products, inputs or soil, analysis shall be made as appropriate;⁴⁴
- d. instructions to inspectors on sampling requirements and methods;
- ~~e. post-sampling procedures;~~
- ~~f.e.~~ indication of responsibility for payment of sampling.

6.4.2 Analyses shall be done by competent laboratories. ~~accredited laboratories, where official accreditation exists).~~

~~6.4.3 If laboratory procedures are employed, the certification body shall document the following:~~

- ~~a. the sampling protocol;~~
- ~~b. the testing procedures;~~
- ~~e. acceptable labs used to conduct such analysis.~~

6.5 Inspection Report

6.5.1 Inspection reports shall cover relevant aspects of the ~~production~~ standards, adequately validate the information provided by the operator and indicate any non-conformities.

6.5.2 Inspection reports and written documentation shall ~~indicate the applicable standard(s) and~~ provide sufficiently comprehensive information for the certification body to make competent and objective decisions.

6.5.3 Inspection reports shall follow a decided format to facilitate a non-discriminatory, objective and comprehensive analysis of the production system.

6.5.4 Reports shall be designed to allow for elaboration and analysis by the inspector ~~in cases of partial compliance or lack of clarity in the standards.~~⁴⁵

Guidance: This shall include specific information about the input output analysis.

6.5.5 ~~The r~~Reports shall contain an assessment of risk ~~of losing with regard to loss of~~ organic integrity as well as the inspector's² observations regarding conformity with standards. Inspectors shall be able to make recommendations regarding nonconformities but shall not be

⁴² **Explanatory Note 6.4:** Testing is not the basis of organic certification as it is certification of process not products. However testing is of value and the certification body shall have documented policies and procedures on residue testing, genetic testing and other analyses that meet these requirements

⁴³ **Explanatory Note 6.4.1b:** The "use of" means the deliberate utilization of a substance. For issues related to unintentional contamination, refer to the IFOAM BS as well as criteria 6.4.1c and 6.7.4

⁴⁴ **Explanatory Note 6.4.1c:** This refers to claims made in standards used by the certifying body regarding limits on contamination. For example claims on limits on heavy metals in soil. In such cases certification bodies must verify the standard by means of residue testing.

⁴⁵ **Explanatory Note 6.5.4:** An example would be: In cases of partial compliance or lack of clarity in the standards the inspector being required to elaborate.

required to make an overall judgment of whether the operator should be certified.⁴⁶ ~~See~~ also guidance notes

~~6.5.6 The operator shall be informed of the findings of nonconformities by the inspector in the inspection report.~~

6.6 Record of Inspection

6.6.1 The certification body shall require inspectors to record what occurred during the inspection visit. This shall at least include:

- a. date and duration of inspection;
- b. persons interviewed;
- c. fields and facilities visited;
- d. Type of document audits conducted (input/output; yield/sales; traceback etc).

6.7 Additional requirements and inspection regime for particular standards/circumstances⁴⁷ ~~See also guidance notes~~

Conversion period

6.7.1 The certification body shall verify full application of the standards for a period no less than that stated in the IFOAM Basic Standards, ~~prior to certification. Full application shall as a rule require active management~~6.7.2 Verification of full application of standards shall normally require that at least the minimum period stated in the IFOAM Basic Standards This shall take place following the application for certification, ~~except in the case of 6.7.3.~~⁴⁸ ~~See also guidance notes~~

~~6.7.3-2~~ Inspection shall occur during the conversion period to verify compliance with standards.

6.7.4-3 Exceptions to 6.7.2-1 above shall be on the basis of indisputable documented evidence that full application of the standards has occurred. This shall be verified by inspection. Guidance: If exceptions to the criterion 6.7.1 are granted it shall be on the basis of sound and incontrovertible evidence that full application of the standards has occurred for a period at least as long as the minimum conversion period specified in the IFOAM Basic Standards. Sound evidence shall, in addition to documentation, include an inspection visit prior to certification in which the existing and prior management system is evaluated. Affidavits and other documentary evidence shall not on their own be considered sufficient evidence. ~~See also guidance notes~~

⁴⁶ Explanatory Note 6.5.5: The criterion prohibits requiring an inspector to make an overall judgment of whether the unit should be certified or not. The overall judgment is a function of certification and not of inspection and would contravene criterion 1.3.10 if it was required of the inspector. The criterion does not prohibit the inspectors from providing an overall recommendation but does prohibit the certification body from requiring this of them. The actions in 6.7.4 are an exception based on the emergency nature of the case and the overriding need to prevent fraud.

⁴⁷ Explanatory Note Section 6.7: These criteria apply to situations, where product is being sold as organic.

⁴⁸ Explanatory Note 6.7.1: Full application of standards should normally mean active organic management not just absence of use of prohibited materials. Full application shall as a rule require active management. The IFOAM Basic Standards define organic as a management system. Certification should not occur unless this organic management system is fully in place. In order to verify this the certification body should normally not grant retrospective conversion prior to the application for certification and should require the conversion period stated in the standards to monitor the system.

Split production⁴⁹ ~~See also guidance notes~~**

~~6.7.5-4~~ When split production occurs, ~~T~~he certification program shall have additional requirements and inspection regimes ~~when split production occurs~~ to safeguard that the products are not ~~be~~-mixed or contaminated.

~~6.7.6-5~~ In cases of split production ~~T~~he certification body shall require and verify by inspection:

~~a. that prohibited materials are stored in separate locations from those where organic products are handled;~~ Remark: standards, not criteria.

~~b.a.~~ b.a. that the documentation regarding the production or processing, storage and sales is well managed and makes clear distinctions between certified and ~~not non~~ certified products;

~~e.b.~~ e.b. that the measures taken to safeguard against the risk to the organic integrity is understood at all levels of the operation.

Parallel production⁵⁰ ~~See also guidance notes~~**

~~6.7.67~~ If a farm is engaged in parallel production, the certification body shall require that in addition to the requirements for split production above: ~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~a. a.~~ a. a. non organic (or conversion) crops, livestock and produce and organic crops, livestock and produce are of different varieties and are visually distinguishable. Exceptions shall only be granted on a case by case basis in accordance with the requirements in ~~6.7.8.7~~

~~b.b.~~ b.b. accurate production estimates are recorded and shall be checked against sales records;

~~e. c.~~ e. c. the inspection includes visits to the non-organic fields and/or processing units

~~6.7.78~~ In cases where an exception has been granted to the requirements ~~for producers~~ in ~~“6.7.7a6a”:~~ ~~*~~

~~a.~~ a. Inspections shall occur ~~at more frequently than once a year and at~~ critical times. This shall normally include inspections at the time of harvest or during processing. ~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~a. Inspections shall occur more frequently than once a year whether scheduled or unannounced;~~

Genetically engineered products

~~6.7.9-8~~ Based on risk assessment ~~T~~he certification body shall implement a system to inspect and verify that genetically engineered organisms and their products or derivatives are not used

⁴⁹ Explanatory Note 6.7.4 to 6.7.7 Split production and parallel production: The criteria include requirements for two situations that may occur in organic operations. Split production is the term used when a unit is not fully dedicated to organic production processing or handling and is also producing, processing or handling conversion or non-organic produce. This is regardless of whether these are the same product or different product. If they are the same product this is termed parallel production. Parallel production is a particular form of split production. As parallel production is a higher risk situation when a product is sold as organic, specific criteria in addition to those for split production have been specified. The requirements for parallel production are in addition to those for split operations. These criteria apply to situations where product is being sold as organic.

⁵⁰ Explanatory Note 6.7.6 and 6.7.7: In all parallel production on farms 6.7.6 b and c shall be required. In addition 6.7.6a must be enforced or - if an exception is granted to this provision - then the operator must be subject to the requirements in 6.7.7.

in certified organic production and or/processing as required by the IFOAM Basic Standards.⁵¹

~~6.7.10-9 The certification body shall make available to operators information regarding those products, varieties, species and ingredients known by the certification body to be at risk of being genetically engineered.~~

6.7.11-10-9 For ~~each of these~~ GMO use and contamination -risk areas, the certification body shall adopt one or more of the following measures:

- a. review of supplier's ~~signed~~ statements verifying that the product is not genetically engineered;
- b. and/or analytical testing to defined limits;
- c. and/or inspection documentation and evaluation of suppliers GMO control systems.
- d. and/or other measure(s) determined by the ~~certifier~~ certification body to be more appropriate than a. through c., and as defined in the ~~certifier~~ certification body's policies and procedures, consistent with this criterion

~~6.7.12-11 Where the certification body identifies substantial risk of certain crops contamination with genetically modified organisms, they shall require measures to minimize it.~~

7 Certification Procedures

~~7.1~~ 7.1 ~~General requirements~~

~~7.1.1~~ 7.1.1 The certification body shall execute its certification in compliance with all its stated procedures and standards.

~~7.1.1-2~~ 7.1.1-2 The certification body shall specify ~~conditions~~ contractual requirements under which it grants, and the procedures for granting, certification

~~7.1.2-3~~ 7.1.2-3 The certification body shall have procedures to

- a. grant, maintain, withdraw and, if applicable practiced, suspend certification.⁵²;
- b. extend or reduce the scope of certification;
- c. re-evaluate the operation.⁵³ ~~*See also guidance note, in the event of changes significantly affecting the product's specification, or changes in the standards to which compliance of the product is certified, or changes in the ownership, structure or management of the supplier, if relevant, or in the case of any other information indicating that the product may no longer comply with the requirements of the certification system.~~

~~7.1.3-4~~ 7.1.3-4 The documented certification policies and procedures shall include all procedural steps in processing the application, until final certification.

⁵¹ Explanatory Note 6.7.8: This includes the conventional ingredients in a multi ingredient product. The risk assessment is for the possibility of usage of GM products or their derivatives and would therefore look at whether GM versions of the ingredients exist.

⁵² Explanatory Note 7.1.3a: The text refers to "if practiced" because certification bodies may choose to not have a suspension policy and instead simply withdraw certification for serious infringements. The exception is found in 7.7.5 where suspension is the only possibility.

⁵³ Explanatory Note 7.1.3c: Re-evaluation is indicated in the event of changes significantly affecting the product's specification, or changes in the standards to which compliance of the product is certified, or changes in the ownership, structure or management of the supplier, if relevant, or in the case of any other information indicating that the product may no longer comply with the requirements of the certification system.

~~7.1.4 The certification body shall execute its certification activities in compliance with all its stated procedures and standards~~

7.2 Certification decisions

7.2.1 All certification decisions ~~including the scope, including those concerning the maintenance of certification,~~ shall be objectively and transparent and ~~shall be recorded in such a way as to enable the decision to be traced back.~~

~~7.2.2 Compliance with standards shall result in the issue of a certification document which provides full information on the nature and validity of the certification.~~

~~7.2.3-2 Following initial inspection the c~~Certification decisions, ~~including the scope,~~ shall be recorded and clearly communicated to the operator; ~~Thereafter, operators shall be kept informed about their certification status.~~⁵⁴

7.2.4-3 When certification is denied, withdrawn or suspended, the reasons shall be clearly stated;

7.2.5-4 If exceptions are granted there shall be criteria and procedures for granting exceptions. Exceptions shall be clearly limited in time and the rationale for any exception shall be properly recorded ~~(see also 5.4.5).~~

7.2.6-5 The certification body shall have the right to impose conditions. Where conditions require corrective actions subsequent to certification, timelines shall be imposed. Mechanisms for monitoring compliance with conditions ~~and restrictions~~ shall be in place.

~~7.2.7 In cases where the certification body has permitted an operator frequent recourse to substances or practices that are restricted in standards, conditions to minimize such usage shall be imposed.~~

~~7.2.8 When a subjective judgment is required to determine compliance these shall be based on criteria and procedures.~~

7.3 The certification process

7.3.1 The procedures shall ensure ~~that:~~⁵⁵ *See also guidance notes

- a. ~~that~~ the certification status of all operators and their production and, where relevant, the scope of existing certification, ~~be~~is indicated throughout the certification process;
- b. ~~that~~ processing of inspection reports and certification decisions shall be done in a timely manner;
- c. ~~that~~ processing of any issue related to ~~violations non-conformities with~~ of standards shall be done with highest priority. — *

Guidance: Where the certification body operates more than one certification program, the applicable scope shall also be stated.

7.4 Certificates *

Certificates of conformity

⁵⁴ Explanatory Note 7.2.2: In a system where the certification is done annually the operator should be informed accordingly. In a system with an ongoing status the certification body is only required to inform the operator when there is a change in the certification status.

⁵⁵ Explanatory Note 7.3.1: This criterion requires that the current certification status (certified, conversion, non-organic) of all product or production is stated on all forms and documents used through the certification process.

7.4.1 The certification body shall issue certificates confirming conformity of a certified operation. These shall include at least:

- a. the name and address of the operator;
- b. the name and address of the certification body;
- c. the program under which the operator is certified;
- d. the scope of the certification including reference to the applicable standards, the products or product categories, and the certification status (conversion or organic) of each.⁵⁶
- e. the date of issuance;
- f. the period of validity.

Transaction certificates

7.4.2 Where the certification body issues transaction certificates ~~itself (self-declarations)~~, or provides forms for operators to issue self-declared certificates, the certification body shall ensure that certificates contain sufficient information to prevent fraudulent usage. This shall at least include:

- a. the seller;
- b. the buyer;
- c. the date of delivery and/ or date of transaction
- d. the date of issuing the certificate;
- e. a clear indication of the product and the quantity and its certification status;
- f. lot numbers and other identification (marks) of the products.
- g. reference to an invoice or bill of lading if present at the time of certificate issuance;
- h. ~~an indication of~~ the certification body and the applicable standard;
- i. i. a statement from the operator that the product is produced according to the applicable standards.

Guidance: Where for logistic or other reason this is not possible at the time of issuance of the certificate, this shall be obtained and integrated into the certification body documentation within six weeks. See guidance notes.*

7.4.3 The certification body shall take reasonable measures to verify that the information provided is correct, including verifying accumulative totals of transaction certificates issued against production estimates.

7.4.4 In the case of operator self-declarations the certification body shall require that copies of issued transaction certificates be ~~retained by the operator for 5 years and be available to the CB if required~~. Such transaction certificates shall be audited at the annual inspection.

7.4.5 Copies of all issued transaction certificates shall be stored in a manner that enables easy retrieval and audit of information on each operator.

7.5 Surveillance

Frequency of scheduled inspections

7.5.1 New applicants shall be inspected upon application, before certification.

~~7.5.1-2~~ The certification body shall have a written policy on inspection frequency of already certified operators, which shall require that: inspection of certified and contracted operators and of subcontracted operators occurs at least annually; The policy shall require that certified operators are inspected at least annually. Alternatively, (except in the cases of new applicants,

⁵⁶ Explanatory Note 7.4.1d: Product categories noted on the certificate should be as specific as the circumstances permit.

~~operators wholly in conversion or group certification) This the policy shall fulfill the following requirements:~~

- ~~a. the frequency and type of inspections is are based on the risks in the with respect to the individual operator,~~
- ~~b. the risk analysis take into account any relevant threat to the organic integrity of the production and products,~~
- ~~c. the total number of inspections per calendar year at least equals the total number of already certified operators.⁵⁷~~
- ~~d. that no operator is inspected less than once in three calendar years. This does not apply to group certification-~~
- ~~e. the certification body installs mechanisms to monitor operators to assess their risk level between very spread out inspections.⁵⁸~~

~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~7.5.2-3~~ There shall be provisions for additional ~~scheduled~~ inspections. The criteria or circumstances ~~whenfor scheduling~~ more than one inspection ~~annually will be scheduled per year~~ shall be documented and shall be based on risk analysis taking into account factors such as ~~the type of production;~~ the operator's record of compliance; ~~and~~ complexity of production, ~~and risk of non-compliance.⁵⁹~~ ~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~7.5.3-4~~ Timing of inspections shall not be so regular as to become predictable.

Unannounced ~~visits inspections~~

~~7.5.4-5~~ The certification body shall have a documented policy requiring unannounced ~~visitsinspections. that, which includes the minimum number (percentage) At least 5% of the certified operators to be carried out shall be inspected~~ annually. This is in addition to the scheduled inspections ~~referred to in 7.5.1 and 7.5.2 above.~~ ~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~7.5.5-6~~ Certification bodies shall secure the rights to conduct ~~such~~ unannounced ~~visitsinspections.~~

~~Guidance: This shall be included in agreements or other documentation signed by the operator.~~ ~~**See also guidance notes~~

~~7.5.6-7~~ Unannounced inspections shall ~~normally~~ be without ~~any~~ forewarning. ~~However certification bodies may define alternative definitions for particular circumstances where this can be justified. The definition shall address the purpose that the possible forewarning shall not be so extensive as to allow for the operator to correct substantial nonconformities.~~

~~7.5.7-8~~ The basis for selection of operators to be subject to ~~such~~ ~~unannounced~~ inspections shall be defined and include both random and targeted selection.

~~7.5.8-9~~A record of unannounced ~~visitsinspections~~ shall be maintained.

Notification of changes in licensee's operation and extension of scope.

~~7.5.9~~ The certification body shall have procedures for ~~extensionng~~ and updating certification;

⁵⁷ ~~Explanatory Note 7.5.2c: If a certification body has 5000 operators, the certification body has to perform at least 5000 inspections per calendar year plus new applications.~~

⁵⁸ ~~Explanatory note 7.5.2e: An example would be an annual form that requires sufficient information to determine whether there have been changes in risk situation.~~

⁵⁹ ~~Explanatory Note 7.5.3: This could be done on a case by case basis or according to the type of operation. Annual means the calendar year, which is not every 365 days.~~

7.5.10 The certification body shall require the operators to ~~sign contracts, agreements or affidavits obliging them to notify it the certification body of any~~ give notification of significant changes such as modification to the products, the manufacturing process, extension of acreage, or changes to management, or ownership. ~~*See also guidance notes~~

7.5.11 The certification body shall ~~have procedures for assessing~~ assess the announced scope changes ~~as well as procedures for re-inspection when necessary and have criteria for inspection or alternative action.~~ ~~*See also guidance notes.~~ The operator shall not be allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until the certification body has notified the operator accordingly. ~~Remark: Deleted sentence moved to guidance notes.~~ **Guidance: The operator shall not be allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until the certification body has granted permission.**

7.6 Use of licenses, certificates and mark certification marks of conformity

7.6.1 The certification body shall exercise control over the use of its licenses, certificates and ~~and marks of conformity (logo, seal certification marks), including a requirement for pre-approval of labels.~~

7.6.2 A certification body may permit its mark to be applied by a non-licensed party (contracted operator or seller) on behalf of a licensee provided:

- a. the non-licensed party is certified by another CB that is accepted under 9.2.1
- b. the licensee has a system for control of the label use that is regulated by contract and that this system is verified by the licensee's CB
- c. the CB of the non-licensed party agrees to control and verify label use

~~7.6.2-3~~ The certification body shall have documents which demonstrate its ownership or control of the certification mark, when such a mark exists.

~~7.6.3-4~~ The certification body shall establish ~~rules~~ requirements concerning the use of its mark certification mark or other reference to the certification. These criteria shall require that the operator only makes claims regarding certification which are consistent with the scope of the certification that has been granted.

~~7.6.4-5~~ Certification bodies shall actively investigate suspected cases of fraud ~~fraudulent situations of which they gain knowledge.~~

~~7.6.5-6~~ Incorrect references to the certification system or misleading use of licenses, certificates or mark certification marks shall be dealt with by suitable remedial actions.

~~7.6.6-7~~ The certification body shall have documented ~~detailed~~ procedures for responding to use of its name or mark certification mark or certificates by uncertified parties. Such procedures shall include all steps and include the possibility of legal action.

~~7.6.7-8~~ The certification body shall have documented procedures for withdrawal and cancellation of contracts, certificates and certification marks. These procedures shall require the operator to discontinue use of ~~certifications~~ ones and certification marks.

~~7.6.8-9~~ Certification bodies shall ensure that corrective actions related to misuse of licenses, certificates and mark certification marks have been effective.

7.7 Sanctions

7.7.1 The certification body shall have a documented range of sanctions including measures to deal with minor ~~infractions~~ infringements of non-conformities with the standards.

Guidance: The certification body will make the determination of whether an infringement non-conformity of the regulations is minor. Minor infractions non-conformities do not, by themselves, preclude the certification or continued certification of an otherwise qualified organic operator. The certification body would be free to modify the time period for correction should it believe it to be appropriate.

Infractions Non-conformities of with the standards are considered "minor" only if they do not:

- *Compromise health or safety of workers, or*
- *Involve flagrant violation non-conformities with standards.*

*Typically, minor infringements non-conformities result from shortcomings in record keeping. Minor infractions non-conformities may be considered to be flagrant if they are not addressed within a year of being identified. *See also guidance notes*

7.7.2 Documented procedures for imposing ~~such measures~~sanctions shall be in place.

7.7.3 Where an ~~infringement non-conformity~~, that affects ~~the~~ organic integrity is found, the certification body shall require that the certification mark or any other indication of ~~the~~ certification is removed from the entire production run or product affected by the ~~infringement non-conformity~~ concerned.

7.7.4 Where a serious ~~violation infringement non-conformity~~ is made by the operator, the certification body shall withdraw certification from the operator for a specified period.

7.7.5 The certification body shall have procedures for immediate ~~withdrawal suspension~~ of certification in cases where the inspector detects manifest ~~infringements non-conformities~~ or fraudulent activity.

*Guidance: This may include immediate withdrawal by the inspector as an emergency measure especially where fraud is suspected or where this is required by law, provided this is ratified by the certification body at the earliest possibility. **See also guidance notes.*

~~7.7.6 A record of sanctions imposed shall be maintained in line with criterion 45.4.5~~

~~7.7.7-6 The reasons for sanctions must shall be clearly provided to the operator.~~

7.8 Appeals

7.8.1 The certification body shall have procedures for the consideration of appeals against its certification decisions, ~~to grant or remove certification.~~⁶⁰ **See also guidance notes

7.8.2 Appeals ~~and complaints~~ shall be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner

7.8.3 When an appeal is decided, a documented resolution shall be made and forwarded to the appellant

7.8.4 The certification body shall:

- a. keep a record of all appeals (see also 5.4.5);
- b. take appropriate subsequent action;
- c. document the action taken and its effectiveness

⁶⁰ **Explanatory Note 7.8.1:** Appeals may be lodged by the operator subject to a decision or by a third party. However in the context of these criteria appeals refers to decisions regarding certification status. Third party statements concerning compliance of operators with the requirements may be considered complaints and dealt with under the complaints procedures

~~7.9 Complaints to certified processors and handlers~~

~~7.9.1 The certification body shall require that the operator takes appropriate action on complaints related to the compliance with certification requirements.~~

~~7.9.2 The certification body shall require the operator to keep a record of the above complaints and the corrective action taken (see also 5.4.5).~~

~~7.10-9 Risk Reduction between certifier certification bodies~~

~~Dual or multiple certification~~

~~7.10.19.1 The certification body shall require operators to notify it if they are certified by other parties for of all previous and current certifications within the same scope. The certification body shall inquire of the former communicate with the other certification body to ascertain if there were any major issues. if there are any issues indicating problems. Alternatively the certification body shall require the operator to submit the most recent certification decision issued by the other certification body.~~

~~7.10.2-9.2~~ In cases of dual or multiple certification with the same certification scope, the certification body shall supply the other certification body (or bodies) with copies of transaction certificates or information regarding sales and inform them in event of decertification. The certification body shall request the same information from the other certification body (or bodies).

~~7.10.1 The certification body shall require the operator to notify it if operator is certified by other certification bodies for the same scope.~~

~~7.10.2 In cases of dual or multiple certification with the same certification scope, the certification body shall supply the other certification body (or bodies) with copies of transaction certificates or information regarding sales and inform them in event of decertification. The certification body shall request the same information from the other certification body (or bodies).~~

~~7.10.3 The certification body shall require operators to notify it of all previous certifications within the scope. The certification body shall communicate with the previous certification body to ascertain if there were any major issues.~~

~~7.11-10 Changes in certification requirements~~

~~7.11.110.1~~ The certification body shall ensure that each certified operator be notified of changes in the ~~relevant procedures~~ certification requirements without unnecessary delay.

~~7.11.210.2~~ The certification body shall ~~have procedures for the verification of~~ verify the operator's' implementation in a timely manner. ~~of the required changes.~~

8 Inspection and Certification for ~~particular Specific eircumstances~~ Circumstances or sScope

8.1 Certification of wild products

8.1.1 If the certification body includes wild product within ~~their~~its certification scope, ~~they~~it shall have documented requirements and an inspection regime that at least requires that:

- a. ~~The operator managing the harvesting or gathering of the products shall be clearly identified~~

~~b.a.~~ the operator issue instructions to the collectors and any local agents (middlemen), that at least defines the area of collection and informs them about the standards and other requirements for certification;

Guidance: The collectors shall sign statements that they have followed the instructions.

~~e.~~ the collectors sign statements that they have followed the instructions;

~~d.b.~~ the operator has records of all collectors, and the quantities bought from each collector;

~~e.c.~~ any middlemen be under contract to the operator;⁶¹ ***See also guidance notes*

~~f.d.~~ the area of production be properly identified on appropriate maps, and be large and distinct enough to reduce the risk of commingling with non certified production.

~~8.1.2 The certification body shall require that the responsible operator be subject to all the normal certification requirements.~~

8.1.3-2 The inspection regime shall at least include:

a. document check

~~g.b.~~ interviews with the collectors, or a representative sample;

~~h.c.~~ visit to an appropriate proportion of the certified area;

~~i.d.~~ visits to and interviews with an appropriate proportion of ~~any~~ middlemen;

~~j.e.~~ gathering of relevant information about the area of collection from interviews of landowners and other parties (environment agencies, NGOs etc.).

8.2 *Approval or Certification of inputs*⁶² ***See also guidance notes*

Approval systems for brand name inputs

8.2.1 Where a certification body issues lists or in any other way approves brand name products without formal certification it shall document at least the following measures:

a. the application procedure, including the necessary documents to be submitted by the applicant;

b. the procedure to be followed in evaluating the products compliance with the certification body's standards;

c. the decision making authority;

d. the length of time for which approval is granted and the requirements for the manufacturer to report changes in composition or other relevant factors;

e. a clear statement of the nature and guarantee of the approval which ~~statement~~ shall appear in the listing.

*Guidance: The statement shall include the limitations of the approval - for example that it does not imply effectiveness of the product**See also guidance notes.*

8.2.2 The certification body may receive payment for its work in assessment but shall not receive any non-work related payments such as advertising endorsement payments.

8.2.3 Approval systems shall not allow for any indication of the approval on the product itself.

Certification of brand name inputs

⁶¹ Explanatory Note 8.1.1c: Middlemen in this context refers to agents or tribal authorities who may act as initial collection or storage points.

⁶² Explanatory Note Section 8.2: Certification bodies are required under the IFOAM standards to have lists of generic inputs. The criteria 8.2.1 and 8.2.3 apply to certification bodies who have produced lists of branded (proprietary) products to assist their operators in determining whether they meet the generic list. The criterion 8.2.4 and 8.2.5 are additional requirements applicable when the certification body certifies the product, allowing the operator to indicate the certification status on product, and thereby making a claim to the general public.

8.2.4 Where a certification body issues certificates or allows the use of its certification mark on input products, in addition to the measures in 78.2.1 above, the certification body shall document the inspection and certification procedures. This shall clearly indicate:

- a. the inspection frequency which may be less than annual but no less than once every 3 years;
- b. the requirements other than the composition of the product that will be checked during inspection and evaluated in making the certification decision.

*Guidance: The inspection shall verify compliance with relevant standards such as those related to separation of product, pollution resulting from the process and contamination**See also guidance notes*

~~8.2.5 The mark certification mark used in 8.2.4 may not be the same logo as used for identification of organic agricultural products or suggest that it is organically produced (from biological origin) unless it is. In cases where the product is not a certified agricultural organic product, the certification mark may only be used when it is accompanied by explanatory language that clarifies the nature of the certification/approval.~~

8.3 Group Certification⁶³ ~~of smallholder groups~~ ***See also guidance notes*

8.3.1 Certification bodies that ~~do not require annual inspection of~~ certify individual growers in smallholder groups that use internal control systems shall have policies and procedures to verify compliance of the group and the individual growers group members. The policy and procedures shall at least comply with the following criteria

Scope

8.3.2 The certification body shall limit the scope of such systems to groups that fulfill the following criteria:

- a. the group shall be constituted of operations with similar production systems.⁶⁴
~~**Guidance note:** Atypical production units shall not be included in the inspection arrangements for such groups and shall be inspected annually by the certification body and be individually certified.~~
- b. Large farming units, processing units and traders shall not be included in the inspection arrangements for such groups and shall be inspected annually by the certification body in accordance with the requirements of IAC 7.5.2. Simple processing and storage units may be included; **See also guidance notes
- c. ~~smallholdings within the group members shall be~~ are in geographic proximity;
~~arge farming units, processing units and traders shall not be included in the inspection arrangements for such groups and shall be inspected annually by the certification body and be individually certified. Simple processing and storage units may be included.*~~
- e.d. the group shall be large enough and have sufficient resources to support a viable internal control system that assures compliance of individual operators members –with production standards in an objective and transparent manner;⁶⁵ ***See also guidance notes*
- d.e. the group shall have coordinated marketing, ~~to enable oversight of the product flow.~~

⁶³ **Explanatory Note Section 8.3:** This system of certification is evolving from the need to devise a system of control and certification of small farmer groups towards a system of combined internal and external control which in situations specified in 8.3.2 appear to be more appropriate than external control alone.

⁶⁴ **Explanatory Note 8.3.2a:** This criterion does not limit the arrangement to farmers. Other operations organized collectively may also be included provided the other criteria in 8.3.2 are met.

⁶⁵ **Explanatory Note 8.3.2d:** The criterion refers to the two factors that the size of the group should ensure - sufficient resources, transparency and impartiality. The certification body must determine whether the group is large enough to satisfy these factors.

General requirements

8.3.3 The policies and procedures for ~~smallholder~~ group certification systems shall require that at least:

- a. the certified entity shall be the group as a whole. This means that individual ~~operators~~ group members may not use the certification independently (by marketing as individual producers outside of the group)
- b. an effective and documented internal control system shall be in place.

*Guidance: The system shall include a documented management structure of the internal control system**See also guidance notes.*

- c. documented inspections of all group members for compliance with production standards shall be carried out by the internal control system at least annually.⁶⁶ ***See also guidance notes*

8.3.4 The certification body shall require the management ~~body~~ of the group to sign a written contract specifying the responsibilities of the group and of the internal control system. This shall include the requirement that the management obtain signed obligations from all ~~operators~~group members to comply with the standards and to permit inspections.

8.3.5 The certification body shall ensure that all ~~operators~~group members have access to a copy of the standards or the relevant sections of standards presented in a way adapted to their language and knowledge.

8.3.6 -The certification body shall maintain and enforce a set of minimum requirements of the group in order to undertake the certification.*

Guidance: The following are considered essential requirements, although a certification body may list additional requirements.

- *There are competent personnel implementing the internal control system.*
- *The core documentation is complete, which includes:*
 - *complete farm or site appropriate maps/sketches*
 - *a complete list of group members*
 - *farm/field or processing records*
 - *signed member agreements*
 - *yield estimates*
- *The internal inspection protocol is described & implemented.*
- *A monitored and documented conversion period is in place.*
- *A mechanism to remove non-compliant ~~farmers~~ group members from the ~~Growers~~ list is in place and executed.*
- *There are procedures to accept new members*
- *Risk assessment*

**See also guidance notes*

External Inspection by the certification body

8.3.76 Annual (or more frequent) external inspection of the group shall be carried out by the certification body.

⁶⁶ Explanatory Note 8.3.3c: This does not mean that those personnel responsible for the internal control must have visited the individual at least once during the year - it means they must have done so with the specific purpose of checking compliance with standards.

8.3.98 The certification body shall assign ~~only those inspectors who have had specific training on inspection of internal control systems or who can otherwise document competency in such inspection.~~

8.3.879 The inspection visit shall include an assessment of the internal control system, of its effective application and of compliance with the standards.~~The inspection visit shall include both an evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal control system and inspection for compliance with the standards and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the internal control system.~~

8.3.10 The inspection shall include an assessment of the risks to organic integrity within the grower group itself and the environment in which it functions.⁶⁷.~~*See also guidance notes.~~

8.3.118 Re-i~~n~~ inspection of a sample of ~~operators group members~~ shall be undertaken to ~~fulfill both the functions~~ evaluate the effectiveness of the internal control system ~~in 8.3.7~~

8.3.129 The percentage of ~~operators group members~~ subject to ~~re-~~inspection shall take into account ~~the results of the risk assessment the number of operations involved and their size as well as the degree of uniformity, the production system and the management structure.~~ The certification body shall specify how it determines the number of ~~growers group members~~ to be ~~re-~~inspected.~~**See also guidance notes.~~ In cases of groups with less than 1000 operators this shall not be less than 5% or 6, whichever is the higher. In cases of groups with more than one thousand operators this shall not be less than 5% or 100, whichever is the lower.

Guidance: The IFOAM Accreditation Program accepts the ISO 62 Square root approach, which is based on a simple formula ($x=\sqrt{y}$). The following table is derived from this approach. Note that these are minimum number of re-inspections. Additional inspections may be added and shall be added when necessary.

<u>Minimum amount of growers to be inspected by external inspectors</u>			
<u>Number of group members</u>	<u>Normal risk factor 1</u>	<u>Medium risk risk factor 1,2</u>	<u>High risk risk factor 1,4</u>
<u>Minimum</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>50</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>100</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>200</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>500</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>1000</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>2000</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>63</u>
<u>5000</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>99</u>

Certification bodies shall have written rationale for other approaches to calculating re-inspection rate.

Evaluation of the Internal Control

8.3.130 In evaluating the internal control system the certification body shall ~~assure-determine whether that:~~

- a ~~all internal control documentation is in place~~

⁶⁷ **Explanatory Note 8.3.10:** The risk assessment identifies the critical aspects to the functioning of the group, from farm level through processing, transporting, etc. that is under responsibility of the group. The critical aspects must be addressed by the internal standards and internal control system. Risk assessment within the internal standards and internal control system must be regularly updated in relation to each other. For further information reference is made to the IFOAM Group Certification Guidance Manual, March 2004

- ~~a.b~~ internal inspections of all ~~operatorsgroup members~~ have been carried out at least annually;
- ~~b.c.~~ new ~~operatorsgroup members~~ are only included after internal inspections, according to procedures agreed with the certification body;
- ~~b.d.d.~~ ~~sample inspections (see 8.3.8) shall be carried out with the relevant documents from the internal control at hand, and the methods and results of the internal control shall be compared with the results of the inspection to determine whether the inspections of the internal control system have adequately addressed the compliance of operators;~~
- ~~e.d.e.~~ instances of noncompliance have been dealt with appropriately by the internal control and according to a documented system of sanctions;
- ~~d.e.f.~~ adequate records of inspections have been maintained by the internal control system;
- ~~e.f.g.~~ ~~internal records match the findings of the certification body's own sample inspections;~~
- ~~f.g.-~~ the ~~operatorsgroup members~~ understand the standards.

~~8.3.14 Sample inspections (see 8.3.8) shall be carried out with the relevant documents from the internal control at hand, and the methods and results of the internal control shall be compared with the results of the inspection to determine whether the inspections of the internal control system have adequately addressed the compliance of operators. The certification body shall maintain records of sample inspections so as to ensure that over time the inspections are representative of the group as a whole and take into account any previously identified risk.~~

~~8.3.14+15~~ The evaluation shall include (a) witness audit(s) of internal control inspections. ~~i.e. the inspector shall witness a number of internal control inspections.~~⁶⁸

~~Grower~~ Group Records

~~8.3.152~~ In addition to certification records of the groups as a whole, the certification body shall maintain basic data on all operators.

~~8.3.163-15~~ 16 Certification bodies shall have a standardized form to be completed and updated by the ~~smallholder~~ group management.

~~*See also guidance notes. The form shall include identification, name, location (at least on an area map), year of entrance into the certification system, date of last internal and external inspection, number of hectares, cash crops, and yield estimates.~~

~~*Guidance: The form shall include identification, name, location (at least on an area map), year of entrance into the certification system, date of last internal and external inspection, number of hectares, cash crops, and yield estimates; in the case of processor type of processing.*~~

Responsibility and Sanctions

~~8.3.174~~ 17 The certification body shall hold the group as a whole (the certified entity) responsible for compliance of all operators.

~~8.3.185-18~~ 18 The certification body shall have a clear sanctions policy in event of noncompliance by the group and/or its ~~operatorsmembers~~. Failure of the internal control system to detect and act on noncompliances shall invoke sanctions on the group as a whole. This shall also include provisions for withdrawal of certification from the group where the internal control system has been found to be ineffective.

⁶⁸ ~~Explanatory Note 8.3.15: (A) witness audit(s) will depend on the size of the group and the number of internal inspectors.~~

9 Acceptance of prior certification

9.1 General requirements for all methods of acceptance⁶⁹ ~~See also guidance notes~~

Guidance: These requirements may also be applicable where a certification body operates more than one organic certification program according to different standards. In such cases, the acceptance of products certified under one program for use by operators under the IFOAM accredited program shall be subject to the criteria in so far as a document review to check compliance with the appropriate standards is necessary.

9.1.1 The certification body shall take full responsibility for recognizing the certification as equivalent to its own.

~~9.1.2 The certification body shall ensure that any accepted product has been subjected to equivalent requirements as product certified by itself.~~

~~9.1.3-2~~ Acceptance of prior certification on the basis of the criteria in 9.2 and 9.3 shall only be for acceptance of product for use by the certification body's own operators and shall not confer certification status to the operator supplying the product. Acceptance of prior certification of operators seeking certification status shall only be granted on the basis of the criteria in 9.4.⁷⁰ ~~See also guidance notes~~

~~9.1.4-3~~ The procedures and responsibility for granting recognition shall be clearly documented

9.2 Acceptance of product based on recognition of a certification ~~program~~ ~~body~~

9.2.1 The certification body shall maintain a formal register of recognized certification ~~bodies~~ ~~programs~~ ~~bodies and the recognized programmes they operate~~. The register shall be subject to periodic review and updated when necessary and shall be available on request.

9.2.2 Inclusion in the register shall only be on the basis of at least one of the following:

- a. IFOAM accreditation;
- b. ISO 65 accreditation with an organic certification scope carried out by an accreditation body that participates in a peer review system. The certification body shall verify equivalency of standards and additional aspects by of these criteria which are not covered in ISO 65. Certification bodies shall obtain and assess the protocol for acceptance of prior certification practiced by the recognized certification body.⁷¹
Guidance: The assessment and decision to include a certification body on the register shall be documented. Verification of equivalence shall include elements such as the requirements for:

⁶⁹ Explanatory Note Section 9.1: It is not a requirement of organic certification that all elements of the production chain or that all inputs be certified by the same certification body. Feedstuffs, ingredients in multi-ingredient products, bulk food for pre-packing may all have been certified by a certification body different from that determining the certification of the product at the end or in the middle of the food chain. This section of the criteria establishes the acceptable methods for the acceptance of the prior certification, and the requirements for each of these methods. The general requirements apply to both acceptance based on recognition of a certification body and acceptance based on document review.

⁷⁰ Explanatory Note 9.1.2: Criteria 9.2 and 9.3 establish the requirements for permitting use by the certification body's certified operators of a product previously certified by under another certification body program. There is a measure of equivalency of procedures, policies and standards. This does not confer certification rights to the original operator. The criteria in 9.4 establish the requirements when an operator certified by another certification body seeks full certification and the associated rights.

⁷¹ Explanatory Note 9.2.2b: Peer review would mean participation in a formal peer review between accreditation bodies.

- ~~· Chain of custody (Section 2.3.2-2.3.8)~~
- ~~· Contracted production (Section 2.3.9-2.3.14)~~
- ~~· Inspection visit procedures (Section 6.3)~~
- ~~· Parallel and split production (Section 6.7)~~
- ~~· Genetically engineered products (Section 6.7)~~
- ~~· Group Certification if applicable (Section 8) **See also guidance notes*~~

~~b.c. An assessment of equivalency to IFOAM norms based on a recent and adequate evaluation visit and report conducted either by the certification body granting acceptance or by an appropriate third party. The assessment shall include the equivalency of policies and procedures; relevant ~~production~~ standards and the performance of the other certification body ~~as noted during the visit~~. The assessment and decision to include a certification body on the register shall be documented, ~~and shall show that criteria equivalent to these criteria have been used.~~⁷²~~

~~e.d. An equivalent accreditation, performed by an IFOAM accreditation body, including those other bodies that it recognizes, contracted to perform IFOAM accreditation or an accreditation body with whom the contracted body has signed an agreement. Where such accreditation does not include assessment of compliance with the IFOAM Basic Standards, the certification body shall conduct a standards equivalency assessment, ~~including standards, inspection and certification procedures and evaluation reports, shall be kept~~~~

~~An accreditation can be considered equivalent by either~~

- ~~- IFOAM has determined that another accreditation is equivalent to IFOAM Accreditation.~~
- ~~- The IFOAM accreditation body conducting IFOAM accreditation has determined that another accreditation is equivalent to IFOAM Accreditation.~~

~~9.2.3 Documentation of the registered certification bodies, including standards, inspection and certification procedures and evaluation reports, shall be kept~~

~~9.2.4-3 A ~~comprehensive~~ contract (~~unilateral, bilateral or multilateral~~) with recognized certification bodies that regulates the obligations of the parties shall be drawn up. The contract shall at least contain the following provisions:⁷³ **See also guidance notes*~~

- ~~a. the scope of the mutual recognition, specifying the applicable programs of the certification bodies and any exclusions;~~
- ~~b. the procedures and conditions for how a product certified by one party will be accepted by the other;~~
- ~~c. obligation to inform the other party in case of loss of accreditation or approval by regulatory authorities;~~
- ~~d. the obligation for parties to inform each other of major program or standards changes and the right to have access to other relevant information.~~

~~**Guidance Note:** In addition to the requirements listed, the contract should also contain the right to review the other party's performance; the right to have access to relevant information; regulation of confidentiality and dispute settlement provisions.~~

9.3 Acceptance of product based on document review

9.3.1 In the absence of a equivalency agreement or contract of recognition, the certification body shall only accept previous certification on a case by case review of the product in question.

⁷² Explanatory Note 9.2.2c: 3rd party means a body that has experience in conducting evaluation of certification bodies, e.g. governments, certification bodies.

⁷³ Explanatory Note 9.2.3: This refers to unilateral, bilateral or multilateral contracts.

9.3.2 The basis of the acceptance shall be an assessment of the information contained in the ~~previous-last~~ inspection report, last ~~inspection-certification~~ decision and other ~~relevant~~ documents against the standards and certification requirements of the accepting certification body. Acceptance may only be granted if steps have been taken with the other responsible certification body to ensure that the information is accurate, complete and up to date and that no ~~late subsequent-infringements-non-conformities~~ have occurred.

*Guidance: In conducting document review for purpose of accepting product previously certified by another CB excluding all those in the register made up under 9.2, the last inspection report shall be obtained for each ingredient and a risk analysis conducted to determine if further reports shall be obtained and reviewed in addition. *see also guidance notes*

9.3.3 ~~Minor ingredients~~ **Ingredients** that constitute less than 10% of the total weight of the product may be accepted on the basis of being certified by a certification body that has been approved by its government or has been accredited by a national accreditation body for the scope of organic certification. The total of all ingredients accepted on this basis shall not exceed 20% of the total weight of the product.

~~9.3.3-4~~ The procedures and responsibility for assessment and decision making shall be documented and follow the normal certification procedure.

~~9.3.4-5~~ Acceptance of such products shall be for a defined period.

9.4 Acceptance of applicants currently certified by another certification body

9.4.1 Certification of an operator may be transferred from another certification body provided ~~all-both~~ of the following requirements are met:

a the other certification body is currently ~~IFOAM-accredited~~ under the register indicated in 9.2.2

~~b a contract as detailed in 9.2.4 has been established with the other certification body~~
e**b** the operator is ~~currently~~ certified by the other certification body ~~and intends to remain certified by themit. (dual certification)-up to the point of transfer.~~

~~9.4.2. 9.4.4~~ Where the requirements of 9.4.1 are not met, certification acceptance of the operator's current or prior certification shall be limited to the exemption from conversion requirements. Exemption shall only be granted following assessment of relevant historical records, including a recent inspection report, obtained from the other certification body. may be awarded on the basis of information contained in the current inspection report of the previous certification body. The certification body shall ensure that the standards and requirements for a certification are met. In case of missing information a full inspection of the operator has to be carried out prior to certification.⁷⁴

~~9.4.3~~ An operation that meets Where the conditions in 9.4.1 or 9.4.2 are met the operator may be certified without prior inspection, provided that an inspection according to the certification body's own standards. This shall take place within 12 months after transfer of certification, against the certification bodies own standards provided that the requirements in 9.4.3 are met at the next scheduled inspection.

~~9.4.3~~ Inspections of the operator shall be carried out by the certification body itself or may be subcontracted to the other certification body. In cases where the inspection is subcontracted the certification body shall identify any substantial differences between its standards and those of the other certification body and ensure that compliance with these different standards is verified at the inspection visit and documented in the inspection report.

⁷⁴ Explanatory Note 9.4.2: This requires compliance with and not equivalency of the standards.

~~9.4.4 The certification body shall make its own certification decisions based on inspection reports~~

~~9.4.5 Appropriate records shall be kept.~~

9.4. ~~5634~~ Where the requirements of 9.4.1 ~~and 9.4.3~~ are not met, acceptance of the operator's current or prior certification shall be limited to the exemption from conversion requirements. Exemption shall only be granted following assessment of relevant historical records, including a recent inspection report, obtained from the other certification body.

9.5 Certification partnerships

9.5.1 Joint ventures, partnerships and similar forms of cooperation with other certification bodies shall comply with the relevant criteria for acceptance of product (9.1 to 9.4) and/or for subcontracting (1.4.12 to 1.4.15) .

9.5.2 The certification body shall take full responsibility for any work done on their behalf by the partner.

9.5.3 The certification decision shall not be “subcontracted” to the partner.

9.5.4 The arrangement between the certification bodies shall be documented.

~~10 Standards Development~~

~~10.1 General requirements~~

~~10.1.1 Standards shall either meet or exceed the current IFOAM Basic standards.*~~

~~10.1.2 Standards, or the relevant sections of standards, shall be presented in a way adapted to the language and knowledge of operators for all languages declared in the certification body's field of application (See also 2.2.4).*~~

~~10.2 Standards Review~~

~~10.2.1 The standards shall be reviewed regularly.~~

~~10.2.2 The certification body shall have adequate procedures for enabling input concerning revisions from affected parties and shall take these into account.*~~

~~10.2.3 The body responsible for review of standards shall be clearly identified and shall evidence sufficient qualifications or experience to be competent to carry out its functions, or utilize external experts as a means to achieve competency.~~

~~10.2.4 The certification body shall ensure that each certified operator be notified of changes in the standards without unnecessary delay.~~

~~10.2.5 The certification body shall have a policy for the normal time periods allowed for implementation of new standards by the operators. Where necessary, an additional time period shall be allowed for operators to implement specific major changes to the standards. In such cases the time for implementation shall be clearly stated.*~~