

IFOAM/IOIA
INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIC INSPECTION
MANUAL



IFOAM



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**INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIC INSPECTION
MANUAL**

**Compiled and Edited by
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and
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About IFOAM: The **International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements** is the worldwide umbrella organization of the organic agricultural movement with 770 member organizations and institutions in 104 countries.



About IOIA: The **Independent Organic Inspectors Association** is a professional, non-profit association of organic farm, livestock, and process inspectors with 245 members in 18 countries.

About the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Department for International Development Cooperation, Unit for Non-governmental Organizations: The primary goal of the Finnish development policy is to promote peace, cooperation, and welfare and to combat threats to these values in a world of deepening interdependence between nations. The importance of NGOs has increased in Finland's development cooperation. NGOs are a good channel for development, offering an opportunity to create networks between people and organizations of north and south. A decision-in-principle made by Finnish authorities in 1996 on development cooperation sets the goal of channeling 10-15 percent of formal development cooperation funds into development cooperation carried out by NGOs.

About the authors:

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INTRODUCTION

**"In the fields of observation chance favors only those minds which are prepared."
Louis Pasteur**

Origin. The IFOAM/IOIA International Organic Inspection Manual is written as a collaboration between the International Federation of Agriculture Movements and the Independent Organic Inspectors Association, with funding provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The manual is based on previous inspection manuals published by IOIA (1994 and 1998) and IFOAM (1987).

Purpose. This manual is the most comprehensive text on organic inspection procedures and protocols written to date. It is intended to improve the quality and increase the consistency of organic inspections worldwide. It is to be used by organic control bodies, including IOIA and IFOAM, as a training tool and reference text. It is a fundamental resource to be used in conjunction with certification standards, approved material/input lists, and accreditation criteria.

Content. The manual contains a general overview of organic standards and regulatory frameworks. It contains detailed information on inspector qualifications, responsibilities, and ethics. Protocols, methodologies, and techniques are presented for the inspection of specific types of organic operations. The manual contains instructions for risk assessment, sample collection, identification of organic control points, and audit review. It contains guidelines for both narrative and checklist inspection reports, and concludes with an extensive resource section.

Scope. There are detailed instructions for the inspection of organic farms, grower groups, wild harvest operations, livestock, poultry, apiculture, processing, and audit control systems. Inspection procedures for specialty production and processing systems, such as mushrooms, sprouts, maple syrup, aquaculture, sea vegetables, input manufacturing, companion animal food, textile processing, cosmetics, retail, and restaurants are not covered in this manual. Social justice and fair trade inspection protocols are not presented. Future modules can be written to address these systems.

Terminology. In different parts of the world, and under different certification and regulatory systems, inspectors may be called "evaluators", "auditors", "assessors", or "verification officers". For the purposes of this manual, the word "inspector" is used throughout.

Format. Readers will likely note some redundancy of information. The manual is constructed so that broad, fundamental concepts are presented first, followed by detailed instructions. Because of this format, concepts are reiterated or summarized in related sections. Readers who skip to the detailed sections, or who use the detailed sections for reference purposes, are reminded of the general concepts. Redundancy is also inserted for training purposes, so that basic information is repeated to improve comprehension and retention.

Preparation. Organic agriculture is changing the way we relate to the earth. Organic farmers strive to restore the balance of nature using ecologically sound production practices. The credibility of the organic sector is maintained by farmers and processors who adhere to organic standards, and by inspectors and certifiers who are conscientious and honest. Inspectors must be committed, inquisitive,

responsible, and well prepared. This manual is written so that organic inspectors worldwide are well prepared.

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James A. Riddle

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Project Director

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