

Media Release: Biological Farmers of Australia, 23 March 2011

New Australian organic standard maintains consumer confidence in the organic movement's third decade of self-regulation

The new Australian Certified Organic Standard 2010 (ACOS) has been launched this month by Biological Farmers of Australia Ltd (BFA), Australia's peak member-owned organic body. The long-anticipated standard brings clarity and updated requirements to new and emerging organic sectors including cosmetics, forestry, ethical trade-organic, pet food, fibres and aquaculture production providing consumers with the benefit of confidence of organic integrity in these and traditional organic sectors.

Dr Andrew Monk, standards convenor and director for the BFA said "The launch of ACOS 2010 [the updated version to the Australian Organic Standard 2006] is significant as it is the most used and referred to standard in Australia, and the standard to which most organic product in Australia is certified to."

"Products that are certified as compliant are identified first and foremost by the widely recognised and respected Australian Certified Organic 'Bud' logo," he said.

Marking the beginning of its third decade, the Bud logo has achieved a number of important milestones in the past year, recently obtaining Certification Trade Mark status and winning the Choice Award for Best Food Endorsement Program 2010.

Dr Monk said the latter accomplishment is reflective of the transparency behind the standards setting process in addition to the integrity of the mandated auditing program and is a resounding tick of approval for the organic movement and the industry that produces the organic products to those standards.

"The ACOS 2010 is unique as it is owned and managed by Australian organic industry members and includes mandatory certification – a hallmark of the self-regulated international organic community."

"There are no mandatory standards requirements in Australia for organic products sold, hence product brands are now showing greater respect for Australian standards. Even so, consumers need to look for the 'Bud' mark or clear reference to certification to be sure they are getting what they are paying for and to ensure they are protected via existing Laws."

The BFA will soon launch a consumer version of its new edition Standard - the first of its kind – defining production points of interest for individual organic products and product categories.

"The booklet will enable shoppers to make quick purchase decisions by allowing them to understand, at a glance, the production differences between organic and non-organic, for example, the advantages of buying organic versus non-organic honey, meat or eggs," said Dr Monk. "This new summary standard will be available free of charge from April 2011 from the BFA website alongside the full version of the Standard." (See www.bfa.com.au.)



Dr Monk encourages consumers to provide their input into organic regulation.

“BFA has a number of avenues available to consumers wishing to contribute to maintaining the integrity of organic marketplace,” he said.

“The “Organic Crusader” help line is available for consumers to lodge their queries regarding misleading organic product claims, assisting BFA to regulate the market. In addition, consumers have the ability to participate in the organic standards setting process via BFA. Ongoing consumer input into, and industry member ownership of, organic standards is key and critical to the long term success of organics.”

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For a copy of the standard [click here.](#)

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BFA Group background summary

Who is BFA Ltd?

BFA Ltd is Australia's largest member-owned industry peak body for organics, representing the interests of Australian organic producers, value adders, marketers and consumers. BFA is committed to securing the industry's future by protecting and regulating the integrity of organic products in the marketplace, in addition to promoting the benefits of organic to consumers, both in Australia and internationally.

In its role as the main organic public educator in Australia, BFA delivers free programs such as the BFA Organic School Gardens Program for Australian primary school students, the Organic Crusader help line for consumers, and magazines and e-newsletters read by both industry members and consumers. All of these resources are publically available via the BFA website www.bfa.com.au. To effectively communicate the organic message, BFA works alongside celebrity organic ambassadors such as chefs Tobie Puttock, Kylie Kwong and Justin North, while exhibiting at numerous public food and gardening events each year.

Industry development

Delivering on its industry support commitments, last year BFA invested some \$200,000 directly into organic-specific R&D and expects to expand this investment across a range of sectors in the years to come to assist in market knowledge and capacity building.

BFA provides a large array of BFA member services in addition to playing host to over 20 regional and urban forums annually for industry members ranging from networking events to educational workshops.

The BFA's Advisory Groups represent the industry's key sectors, and enable the BFA to remain up to date and in close contact with what organic industry members desire in terms of standards, regulation and R&D.

BFA owns and maintains the Australian Certified Organic Standard (ACOS) which is the standard to which approximately 80% of organic products in the marketplace are certified. The ACOS is maintained with extensive industry consultation, including via BFA's Advisory Groups. The ACOS leads the international organic community in its integrity and rigour, as well as detail and comprehensive scope, including coverage of sectors such as cosmetics, forestry, fairtrade-organic and aquaculture production.

Certification services

To display the bud on your food products or other organic products, [click here](#).

For all of the latest information on organics, or to become a member, visit www.bfa.com.au, 'the voice of Australian organics'.

