

Certified organic retail:

Certification essential

Consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental impact of conventional farming methods and the modern response has to “go organic” – showing responsibility in doing the best for a sustainable environment. Organic certified retailers are important as the last link in a supply chain of carefully grown and handled products to organic standards.

Essentially they provide assurance that what you buy is organic from paddock to plate! – Sustainable, non-chemical farming, no irradiation, no GE or GMOs, no chemical processing as well as care in storage, transport and packaging.

As organic foods become more popular there are more cases of people claiming to be organic or stock organic without certification or means of guarantee.

In certified organic retail stores, produce is clearly labelled with the certification number and certifier for the consumer’s reassurance. Certified products are only labelled as such where accompanied by an organic transaction certificate or equivalent for traceability.

Not only do certified organic stores stock organic products but store management is more environmentally aware, for example in pest control and cleaning practices, use of energy and wastage as well as workplace health and safety and staff education.

Management structure is also HACCP based for hazard and critical control point identification.

Using the example of Australian Certified Organic (ACO) certification, what does a retailer gain from becoming certified organic?

- A licence to use the ACO Bud logo for store promotion;

- A guarantee for customers that products labeled “organic” in the store are truly organic;
- A guarantee for customers that store management practices are in line with organic standard requirements;
- Knowledge that you are supporting the certified organic sector which has been established over 20 years by the organic certifiers and their members;
- Free promotion via the website product search on two websites (www.aco.net.au, www.bfa.com.au);
- Listing as a certified retailer on the Where to Buy Organics page (www.bfa.com.au); and
- Free promotional materials from the BFA.

See section 8 of the Australian Organic Standard available on www.bfa.com.au for more information on the requirements for certified organic retail.

Looking for organic products?

Visit www.bfa.com.au

Visit the Organic Product Search, type in a keyword or use the menus to access contact details of organic retailers, wholesalers, processors, producers, exporters and more Australia-wide, as well as a list of the products they supply.

Visit the Where to Buy Organic section (located under consumer resources) for lists of certified and non-certified organic retailers in every state.

Certified organic butcher Hagen’s Organic Meat, Melbourne, Victoria.

