

New developments

Program launched for the small grower

When members of organic certifier Organic Growers of Australia Certified Ltd (OGA) voted to join forces with the BFA Group late last year, a new name and focus was given to the OGA certification program, now known as the "BFA/OGA Small Producers Program".

This new program will take effect from 1st July this year and is a revolutionary step within the developments of organic certification in Australia.

For several years one of the major concerns relating to organic certification in Australia, and indeed worldwide, has been its growing complexity and associated costs, due in major part to the different requirements of international markets.

The complexity of standards and rising costs has become an increasing barrier to certification of smaller producers. Those producers selling at markets, from the farm gate or direct to retailers do not have the need for complex systems or to be paying for certification for export markets.

The Small Producer Program aims to provide a viable entry point for smaller growers into the organic market by taking away all of those requirements which are not relevant to the smaller grower while not diminishing in any way the organic standards. Essentially producers which are part of this program will benefit from reduced certification fees and a simplified certification process as well as licensed use of the OGA logo as guarantee of the integrity of organic production.

What constitutes a small producer? To qualify for the program a producer needs to have a gross income from organic sales of less than \$50,000 / year and not be selling product destined for export markets.

Chris Hurwood, manager for the new program says that "We have received excellent feedback so far from OGA growers and others and have received a good number of applications. The program will not only give market access to growers simply wishing to supply local markets; it will provide an entry point for growers wishing to expand into larger production at a later date.

"For these growers, the program may be used as a first step to achieving an export compliant certification such as Australian Certified Organic.

"It is important that we encourage more growers to convert to organic production if we are to assist the supply chain to develop and meet the rapidly increasing demand for organic," he says.

For more information contact the BFA Group office on 07 3350 5716 or email <oga@bfa.com.au>.

The Bud – representing the promise of the future and 20 years of achievements

This year the BFA Group celebrates its 20th year.

Forever for the BFA, the Bud logo has remained the symbol at the backdrop of 20 years of tireless work by producers, wholesalers, retailers and others to bring the industry to where it is today.

The Bud logo was initially designed by Rosemary Dunn of South Australia, one of BFA's early and still loyal members, while sitting around the Dunn's kitchen table.



The Bud represents everything that BFA is about; the growth and promise of spring, the sign of big things growing from the initial organic movement, and the strength and logic of nature and natural (biological and organic) systems in guiding our choices in life.

The Bud is a registered mark with IP Australia and is the oldest Australian organic certification mark in the country still currently in use. Most importantly the Bud represents the Australian Certified Organic program – ensuring integrity of organic products in the marketplace for consumers.

The logo is well recognised both domestically and overseas in key regions such as Asia, Europe and the US. As the industry and the market matures and reaches an ever widening group of consumers, the Bud is simplifying organic consumer's choices by being easy to recognize.

The Bud is now Australia's leading logo appearing on an estimated 70% of certified organic products in the marketplace, and bearing the simple words "Australian Certified Organic" - what consumers are demanding.

Help the BFA to Celebrate 20 Years!

The BFA will celebrate its 20th anniversary at this year's AGM on 20th October, and on the evening of the 19th October at a gala dinner to be held in Brisbane. All are invited to attend the occasion. Details will be forwarded to BFA members in the coming months. For more information contact Holly Vyner at the BFA office on (07) 3350 5716 ext 233; email <media@bfa.com.au>. ■

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