

New edition - Launch of the Australian Certified Organic Standard 2009

The Australian Certified Organic Standard 2009 (formerly the Australian Organic Standard 2006), which forms the basis upon which ACO and OGA operators and products are certified by, will be released in its final form in the last months of 2009. This standard is owned by BFA members (some 1500 strong) and is available for free download by consumers and members alike.

The standard receives comments and feedback, as well as updates throughout its publication life, and a final draft for comment by industry and the public has been available from August this year prior to publication of the next edition.

The ACOS 2009 will remain using as guidance the requirements of industry standards currently in operation, including the AQIS "National Standard", as well as the Standards Australia organic standard and key international organic standards, while delivering a more comprehensive outline of

requirements, and covering many sectors not covered by other standards.

Ironing out the Differences

Extensive communication and technical information provided by BFA through 2008/9 has ensured that the minor aberrations or differences found in other standards are being ironed out. This has included such issues as wine processing, livestock feeds, cosmetics, the ripening of fruits, food safety in food processing and the tightening of requirements in relation to the notion of "legally natural" versus truly natural colours and flavours. BFA continues to lead industry in ensuring consumer expectations and the core principles of organic are upheld and maintained.

New Sections!

The ACOS 2009 maintains the tradition of comprehensively covering both mature as

well as emerging market segments, and now will include new additions of Farmers' Markets, Organic Services and R&D sites, and more recently EU specific market requirements (for those wishing access to that market in 2010 and beyond). This is in line with prior editions which have pioneered and then improved segments such as cosmetics, aquaculture, greenhouse production, retail certification and even forestry, in response to market developments and member queries.

The success of the ACOS and its prior editions has been that it has been predicated on the notion of equivalence in the international family of organic standards, which delivers simplicity of labeling and therefore choice for consumers in the Australian marketplace under the Organic Bud logo programs. Most importantly it mandates certification and independent auditing for any claims made using the Bud logo – a hallmark of all legitimate and reliable organic standards internationally.

If you find yourself or others being misled by an organic product label, finally there is someone to assist! Call The Organic Crusader!



The Organic Crusader protecting consumers

INTRODUCING... the BFA's latest member, The Organic Crusader!

This woman of integrity and strength is resolutely dedicated to the protection of the integrity of the organic marketplace. She is your friend, guide and protector if ever you find products in the marketplace which you believe are misleading to consumers.

While in Australia there is no legal protection for consumers against misleading organic labels (unless they are certified organic by an accredited body), there is a growing awareness as to what constitutes organic - particularly now with standards worldwide mostly becoming equivalent in their definitions of 'certified organic'. It is expected that products, labelled 'organic', which are contradictory to these standards, will do more damage than good to a brand's credibility in time to come.

The Organic Crusader and the BFA are determined to highlight this fact to brand owners as well as bring any examples to the attention of the ACCC which anticipates having greater clout in the court room in months to come.

The Organic Crusader lives permanently on the BFA's website and looks forward to hearing from you! Alternatively you can contact her on theorganiccrusader@bfa.com.au or ph 07 3350 5716 ext 233. <>