

## **Industry notification of changes to AOS**

The AOS is being slightly modified to suit changes that will be arising from 2009 in relation to EU market regulations. We are ensuring with these measures that your Australian Organic Standard, owned by the members of the BFA, remains focused on Australian conditions and realities, while equally allowing maximum flexibility for market access overseas for others.

If you are either a producer, or a buyer of products for this market, please ensure that your operations comply with these additional requirements.

Regularly we are asked “when will there be one single standard for organics?” regrettably the answer is no time soon, and possibly never. Importing country requirements are always paramount for exporters, and while it could be argued that life might be simpler for all if we ensured the AOS simply covered all those requirements, this is not feasible for industry members, and would in fact lead possibly to a halving or more of those compliant to such requirements!

With this in mind, and always striving to ensure there is both choice and flexibility, as well as meeting the needs of our industry members, please note that the following changes to the AOS will be effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009, and will then be incorporated into the new edition of the AOS, expected mid-end 2009.

### **Changes or clarifications to the AOS, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009:**

#### **Processing, Packaging and Labelling**

##### **3.4.2 Addition:**

Where an operator considers or suspects that a product which they have produced, prepared, imported or been delivered from another operator, is not in compliance with this Standard, they shall initiate procedures either to withdraw from this product any reference to the organic production method or to separate and identify the product. They only may put it into processing or packaging or on the market after elimination of that doubt, unless it is placed on the market without indication referring to the organic production method. In case of such doubt, the operator shall immediately inform the CO. The CO may require that the product cannot be placed on the market with indications referring to the organic production method until it is satisfied, by the information received from the operator or from other sources, that the doubt has been eliminated.

##### **3.5.1 Addition:**

following: (*shall include the following details on all packaging bound for retail sale*) or sale to wholesalers or value adding operations:

- the name of the product or a description of the compound feeding stuff.

##### **3.5.4 Addition:**

Labelling reference to In Conversion to Organic status of the product must not be less than the sales description of the product, including the words “Organic” anywhere on the packaging. Single agricultural ingredient items may be sold as “In Conversion to Organic”. Multi agricultural ingredient items may not be sold as “In Conversion to Organic”.

##### **3.5.6 Addition:**

The operator shall ensure that where certified products may be transported to other operations, including wholesalers and retailers, appropriate packaging, containers or vehicles shall be managed and/or enclosed in such a manner that substitution of the content cannot be achieved without manipulation or damage of a seal or other equivalent means.

For the EU market: The closing of packaging, containers or vehicles is not required where transportation is direct between a producer and another operator who are both subject to an equivalent certification system and the products are accompanied by a document giving the information outlined in 3.5.1, and the certification office of both the expediting and the receiving operators have been informed of such transport operations and have agreed thereto. Such agreement might be provided for one or more transport operation(s).

**3.5.9 Addition:**

“No claim may be made on the label or advertising material that suggests to the purchaser that the certified organic products for sale constitutes a guarantee of superior organoleptic, nutritional or salubrious quality.”

**3.5.12 Deletion and addition:**

reference to “*where less than 95% of product is of certified origin*” should read “for all products with multiple ingredients – organic or non organic”. And add: “If herbs and/or spices constitute less than 2% of the total weight of the product, they may be listed as "spices" or "herbs" without stating the percentage.”

**6.1.27 Addition:**

If processing of certified products is not carried out at regular times or on a fixed day, they must be announced in advance, with a deadline agreed on with the CO. This where relevant shall be noted in the OHP.

## **Primary Production**

**4.8.12 Addition:**

“Prohibited materials shall be stored in separate locations from those where organic products are handled.”

## **Livestock**

**4.2.7 Addition:**

Following “*....stocking rates should not add more than 170 kg of N per Hectare per Annum...*” add the words “in the form of both manures and fertilizers”.

**5.1.4 Addition:**

With the exceptions of vaccines and compulsory State eradication schemes, and notwithstanding table 5a, certified livestock may not be treated with treatments that are otherwise prohibited for certified livestock including chemically-synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products or antibiotics, with more than 2 (or in the case of livestock with production cycles less than one year no more than one) treatments within any given year to regain certification.

The storage of allopathic veterinary medicinal products and antibiotics is permitted on certified farm units provided that they have been prescribed by a veterinarian in connection with mandated

or welfare oriented treatment, that they are stored in a supervised location and that they are entered in the farm register.

**5.1.10 Addition:**

For the EU market, note that no more than 40% of the herd in any one year may arise from non organic sources, and only following approval from the CO.

The percentages laid down in this clause shall not apply to production units with less than 10 equine or bovine animals, or with less than five porcine, ovine or caprine animals. For these units, any renewal, as mentioned above shall be limited to a maximum of one animal per year.

**5.1.26 Addition:**

For In Conversion livestock, In conversion feed stuffs may be fed up to a maximum of 60% of total diet based on the percentage of dry matter in the feed ration, where such feed is produced on the same farm unit. For the EU market, In Conversion livestock may only otherwise be fed a maximum of 30% of the total diet based on the percentage of dry matter in the feed ration.

**5.1.32 Addition:**

The keeping of livestock in conditions, or on diets, which may encourage anemia is prohibited.

**5.1.34 Addition:**

For the EU market, at least 60% of the feed ration for ruminants must come from roughage, fresh or dried fodder or silage. This may be reduced, following approval from the CO, to 50% for dairy cattle for a maximum period of three months during early lactation.

**5.1.40 Addition:**

Livestock housing must have smooth, but not slippery floors. At least half of the total floor area must be solid, that is, not of slatted or of grid construction.

**5.1.43 Addition:**

Whatever the case, the size of the group must depend on their stage of development, and the behavioural needs of the species concerned to ensure high levels of both animal welfare and best environmental management outcomes are achieved and maintained.

Storage facilities for livestock manure must be of a capacity to preclude the pollution of water by direct discharge or by run-off and infiltration of the soil. Storage capacity shall exceed the requirements for storage of volumes where there may be extended periods that preclude application of such fertilizer onto lands, such as (in the case of the EU) where this is prohibited in accordance with good agricultural practices, or where the production facility is within a designated nitrate vulnerable zone.

**5.1.43 Addition:**

In relation to bovine bulls, a minimum of 10 m<sup>2</sup> per head shall be maintained for housing, and for dairy cows a minimum of 6 m<sup>2</sup> per head for housing.

## **Poultry**

**5.2.5 Addition:**

For the EU, in relation to perch space, a minimum of 18 cm per perch space per bird shall be maintained.

**5.2.7 Addition:**

Note for the EU market: Poultry must have exit/entry pop-holes of a size adequate for the birds, and these pop-holes must have a combined length of at least 4 m per 100 m (squared) area of the house available to the birds. Each poultry house must not contain more than: 4,800 chickens, 3,000 laying hens, 5,200 guinea fowl, 4,000 female Muscovy or Peking ducks or 3,200 male Muscovy or Peking ducks or other ducks, 2,500 capons, geese or turkeys. The total usable area of poultry houses for meat production on any single production unit, must not exceed 1 600 sq m.

**5.2.22 Addition:**

For the EU market, the minimum age at slaughter shall be 81 days. 150 days for capons, 49 days for Peking ducks, 70 days for female Muscovy ducks, 84 days for male Muscovy ducks, 92 days for Mallard ducks, 94 days for guineafowl, 140 days for turkeys and roasting geese. Where producers do not apply these minimum slaughter ages, they must use slow-growing strains.

**5.2.32 Addition:**

Water fowl must have access to a stream, pond or lake whenever the weather conditions permit in order to respect animal welfare requirements and hygienic conditions.

## **Pigs**

**5.3.9 Addition:**

Sows must be kept in groups, except in the last stages of pregnancy and during the suckling period.

## **Honey**

**7.1.16 Addition:**

The following information shall be entered in the register of the apiaries with regard to the use of artificial feeding: type of product, dates, quantities and hives where it is used.

**7.1.28 Addition**

The use of combs, which contain broods, is prohibited for honey extraction.

## **Mushrooms**

**7.4.3 Delete current wording.**

Addition: “For the EU market, at least 75% of the source manure must come from certified organic sources, with no more than 25% of all inputs coming from non certified organic sources.”

## **Special Projects**

**7.8.1 Addition:** “while group members shall be in geographic proximity.”

**4.7.17 Operators shall not hire child labor.**

Children are allowed to experience work on their family’s farm or a neighbouring farm provided that:

- a. such work is not dangerous or hazardous to their health and safety;
- b. it does not jeopardize the children’s educational, moral, social and physical development;
- c. children are supervised by adults or have authorization from a legal guardian

